

Unveiling Gsang phu Madhyamaka Thought in Xixia: The Tangut Version of the *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*

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ABSTRACT

Among the Tangut Buddhist texts discovered from Khara-Khoto, there emerges a text entitled *Gu tsja yiej tsjir tshji kji*, which means ‘*Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*.’ Intriguingly, a Tibetan treatise composed by Rgya dmar ba Byang chub grags (fl. 12th century) bears the same title. A comparison between the texts in both languages shows that about 50% of their contents are the same. Although the Tangut text cannot be regarded as a translation of the Tibetan text we see today, the complex relationship between both texts and the history of the transmission of the Tibetan treatise is worth investigating.

KEYWORDS

Tangut, Tibetan Buddhism, Madhyamaka, Rgya dmar ba, Gsang phu ne’u thog, *Dbu ma de kho na nyid*

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite its being a marginal and relatively short-lived state in Chinese history, Xixia 西夏 (1038–1227), or the Tangut Xia, has become increasingly crucial in deepening our understanding of the dynamics of intellectual exchanges between China and Inner Asia from the 11th century onwards. Given the extraordinarily rich textual materials written in the Tangut language, which have been discovered in Khara-Khoto and other sites, and with advancements in making sense of the Tangut language, scholars now have many opportunities to explore a variety of subjects related to the connections between Xixia and its neighbours: the Song, the Liao, Tibet, the Uyghurs, and

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others. One of these topics concerns the rise of Tibetan Buddhism from the 12th to 13th centuries in Xixia, which had a large Buddhist population.

While in the past decade scholars have been able to identify a series of significant Tibetan Buddhist tantric materials received by the Tanguts, recently, a growing number of Tibetan doctrinal and philosophical works translated into Tangut have also been uncovered. In particular, we are now aware that the Tanguts were trained in several treatises on Buddhist epistemology and logic (Skt. *pramāṇa*, Tib. *tshad ma*) related to the Gsang phu ne'u thog (henceforth Gsang phu) scholastic tradition initiated by Rngog Lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab (ca. 1059–1109) (Ma 2021a, 2021b, 2022); but we have good reasons to surmise that the Tangut reception of Gsang phu scholars' teachings went far beyond the field of Buddhist epistemology. Traces of the Tanguts' interest in topics of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and the Resolve to Become a Buddha (Skt. *cittotpāda*, Tib. *sems bskyed*) in connection with the Gsang phu tradition have been attested (Nie 2002; Solonin and Xie 2021). Furthermore, a Tibetan manuscript fragment of Rngog Lo tsā ba's topical outline of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* has been discovered in the former Tangut land (Kano 2008). With the scholarly pursuit in this direction, ultimately, one may well find full-fledged assimilation of the Gsang phu tradition in Xixia.

In this paper, to provide a further driving force for the pursuit, I will delve into yet another field of the Gsang phu scholastic tradition in Xixia – namely, Madhyamaka. Solonin (2015, 2016, 2022: 448–449) has laid the foundation for our inquiry by surveying a group of Tangut texts related to Atiśa's teachings. Furthermore, by examining the Tangut translation of the Tibetan basic text of Atiśa's *Satyadvayaavatāra*, Solonin and Liu (2017) have shown the popularity of Madhyamaka thought transmitted via the medium of Tibetan in Xixia. Much of the previous scholarship, however, focuses on the influence of the Bka' gdams school in general in Xixia, without investigating further into the circulation of the thought of Gsang phu masters. In comparison, the primary subject of this paper is a Tangut text entitled *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka* (解藏蔘風既藏, hereafter *Analysis*), a text that has heretofore remained unnoticed by scholars. Simply by looking at the name of this text, we can relate it immediately to a Tibetan treatise from roughly the same period, entitled *Dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par dpyod pa*¹ – an exact translation of which would be *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*. The Tibetan work, composed by the renowned Gsang phu master Rgya dmar ba Byang chub grags (fl. 12th c.), stands in an important position in the development of Gsang phu Madhyamaka thought between Rngog Lo tsā ba and Rgya dmar ba's own student, Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169).²

Although one may naturally conjecture, based on their shared title, that the Tangut text is nothing but a translation of the Tibetan, this assumption is only partly valid. Notwithstanding the obvious strong philological connections between the texts of both languages, it is almost impossible to conclude that the Tangut text is a faithful translation of its Tibetan counterpart, due to

¹ The original title in the Tibetan manuscript has *spyod pa* ('practice') instead of *dpyod pa* ('analysis'). However, *spyod pa*, in all probability, should be a mistake because the whole text is about speculative thinking and has nothing to do with practice. This paper will thus use *dpyod pa* consistently.

² For Rgya dmar ba and his Madhyamaka thought, see Akahane 2010: 77–81; 2013 and Nishizawa 2019: 73–132. Their scholarship focuses more on Rgya dmar ba's other Madhyamaka work, namely his subcommentary on Jñānagarbha's *Satyadvayaavibhaṅgavṛtti*. The interest in his *Analysis* is represented primarily by Hugon and Vose's project that started in 2017 (see below). See also Hugon 2020a, 2020b and Vose 2020 for the scholarship on the *Analysis*. Both works of Rgya dmar ba share many parallels, but a remarkable feature of the *Analysis*, apart from being a Gsang phu 'summary'-like treatise, is that it contains much information about other Gsang phu masters' thoughts.



the many differences between them. As I presume, however, this complexity of textual relationship is precisely what makes a study of it more significant as an academic contribution and more compelling as an intellectual exploration, not only because such a study will reveal the existence of a certain transregional Buddhist connection, but also because of its many qualitative aspects – textual fluidity, translational practises, scholastic approaches to foreign subjects, and so on. For these reasons, much of the present paper (sections 3–6) is devoted to inquiries into the nature of the Tangut text and its relationship to the Tibetan work, with a methodological preliminary (section 2) and further remarks on Rgya dmar ba's influence in Xixia (section 7). What I hope to achieve in this paper transcends the limited endeavour of knotting together two texts; it aims to unveil some fascinating intellectual networks between two cultures.

2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In order to engage effectively with the complexity of textual relationships, it would be helpful to determine the possible scenarios between two related texts in two different languages. Here, we are concerned primarily with Tangut and Tibetan texts. When we break the whole text into small segments, which may be either a sentence or a clause (or even a phrase), it is my supposition that there could be four situations that apply to a segment in one text and its equivalent in the other:

- Established philological connection: An established philological connection means the general word-to-word correspondence between the two segments. When comparing a Tangut text with its Tibetan counterpart, the unit of analysis may even be reduced to that of the morpheme because of the close genetic relationship between the two languages, as attested in the Tangut translation of the Tibetan *Nyāyabindu* (Ma 2021b). Also, since Tangut and Tibetan share the same SOV typology, linguistic elements such as the same word order could make the connection even more evident. It should be noted, though, that several absences and varied representations of the words and phrases in the other segment do not break the connection. These segments, if necessary for purposes of identification, are marked with superscript numbers such as ^{[1][2][3]} in this paper.
- Loose philological connection: This means the two segments have relatively the same meaning, but not a general word-to-word correspondence. For example, a double negation in one segment might be formulated as an affirmation in its counterpart. Other features such as the addition/omission of key information and the alternation of the positions of expressions may also fall into the category. This happens quite often in some Tangut tantric texts whose Tibetan counterparts might have undergone a different oral transmission.³ These segments are marked with superscript numbers as well, but also include dashed underlines (_ _ _ _ _).
- No connection: Two segments, in spite of their corresponding positions in their individual texts, mean barely the same thing. These segments are marked with the same superscript numbers, but are also marked with wave underlines (~~~~~).
- Absence: A segment in one text cannot by any means find its corresponding segment in the other text. In the text of the segment, it is marked by superscript numbers such as ^[1] with dotted underlines (.....); in the corresponding text, the place where the segment is absent is marked by superscript numbers with dashes, such as ^{-[1]-}.

³ For some examples of this, see Solonin (in press).



It is apparent that, in order to arrive firmly at the conclusion that text *y* is a translation of text *x*, it is necessary that they have at least the former two kinds of connections. If that is not the case, however, we may try also to make sense of both texts by means of accounting for the other scenarios.

The only Tibetan text of Rgya dmar ba's work which is currently available is a 31-folio manuscript collected in the *Bka' gdams gsung 'bum* (see *Rnam dpyod*). In addition, despite its being a 'work-in-progress' in the project of Pascale Hugon and Kevin Vose, an edition based on this manuscript has been prepared by Hugon and Vose (2022a), with more than half of it critically edited and the rest transliterated. Since almost every passage discussed in the present paper is contained in the critically edited portion, I will in general reproduce the text from Hugon and Vose's edition, with most of their conventions retained. A remarkable feature of the Tibetan manuscript, as Hugon (2020b) has pointed out and discussed in detail, is the many interlinear and marginal notes (Tib. *mchan bu*) written beside the main text. These notes are also closely related to many of the discussions in this paper; hence, they are reproduced for some quotations, though the triple square brackets [[[]]] used by Hugon and Vose to indicate the notes are replaced in the present paper by single square brackets []. Since the sources of quotations in the text have been identified in their edition, I will not try to reduplicate the effort in this paper.

For each Tangut passage discussed in relation to its corresponding Tibetan passage, I will transcribe the Tangut text⁴ and translate it on the left side. The corresponding Tibetan text is presented with my translation on the right side. Additionally, Hugon and Vose (2022b) have also made a work-in-progress translation of more than half of the Tibetan text, which can be referred to. For our convenience throughout the present paper – and particularly in the discussion (section 6) of the textual relationship – I have numbered all the cases of corresponding passages presented in this paper with (1)(2)(3), and so on.

3. THE TANGUT WORK

3.1. The Two Manuscripts from Khara-Khoto

When Gorbacheva and Kychanov (1963: 103) were cataloguing Tangut texts from Khara-Khoto, they realised that two manuscripts, #889 and #5032, though they both lacked beginnings, bore the same title 中道真性根釋 at their ends. Hence, they put them under the same catalogue number, 169 (hereafter Tang. 169), and translated the title into Chinese as *Zhongdao zhen xing gen shi* 中道真性根釋, the 'Root Explanation on the True Nature of the Middle Way'. Nishida (1977: 30), who is renowned for having identified certain Tangut Buddhist texts translated from Tibetan, regarded the text in his catalogue as 'translated from Chinese', without further explanation. In his later catalogue, Kychanov (1999: 520–521) likewise did not provide any further discussion regarding either manuscript, apart from some information about their formats. In the recent catalogue compiled by Hui and Duan (2015: 207), they indeed surmised that the text 'should be translated from Tibetan', but did not attempt to identify its original. All the later catalogues followed Gorbacheva and Kychanov's rendering, translating the Tangut title into Chinese as 'Root Explanation on the True Nature of the Middle Way'.

⁴ The Tangut text is transcribed in an edited form instead of a diplomatic form, which means original editorial marks in the manuscripts such as corrections of characters are not presented. Punctuation marks are added.



The major problem of this rendering is that *gen shi* 根釋, ‘root explanation’, is nothing but a ‘character-to-character’ calque of the Tangut 𐽀𐽂𐽄, and cannot reflect its true meaning. The reason for all the catalogues’ overlooking of this point is that 𐽀𐽂𐽄 is not two words but one, which means ‘to analyse’ or ‘analysis’. For example, 𐽀𐽂𐽄 often translates Tibetan *dpyod pa/dpyad pa*, as attested by the Tangut translation of the *Nyāyabindu* (Ma 2021b: 822). Consequently, with *dbu ma*, the Tibetan equivalent of 𐽀𐽂𐽄, and *de kho na nyid*, the equivalent of 𐽀𐽂𐽄 (if the text were indeed translated from Tibetan), the reconstructed title could well be **Dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par dpyod pa*,⁵ matching exactly the title of Rgya dmar ba’s treatise.

The 27th volume of the *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia* (see ECMS) contains the facsimiles of both manuscripts, thus allowing us to examine their contents. Although I do not intend to repeat what Kychanov (1999: 520–521) has in his catalogue for the formats of the manuscripts, I will demonstrate some important features I have observed from the facsimiles.

Manuscript #889 (hereafter M1) consists of 17 frames in the facsimile. It is a scroll manuscript joined by 17 papers, and is written in regular script. Despite lacking the beginning, the manuscript is mostly intact. Following the title at the end, it says 𐽀𐽂𐽄, meaning the ‘upper volume’. This indicates the text is only a part of a larger Work, with either two volumes (‘upper’ and ‘lower’), or three volumes (‘upper’, ‘middle’, and ‘lower’).⁶ After that, in smaller sized script, it reads 𐽀𐽂𐽄, ‘proofread once’, suggesting the scribe’s efforts at producing an accurate text; corrections in the manuscript are witnesses to such efforts. Interlinear notes found sporadically in the manuscript also attest to the actual use of the manuscript for scholastic training.

Something that must be addressed at this juncture is that certain problems may otherwise imperil our use of the facsimile of M1. They involve the facsimile itself, the modern hands that handled the manuscript, and the hands in the past that produced the manuscript. First, there is obviously a rupture between frames 12 and 13, thus leaving it undecided how much text is skipped, although, judging from the content, the missing part is not voluminous. Also, although the persons who archived the manuscript numbered the scroll papers with Arabic numerals, they did it incorrectly. For instance, the paper numbered 10 should in fact be the 12th paper, and the final paper, which is numbered 16, should be the 17th paper. Hence, I will number the papers in their natural order. Based on this, what we further realise is that the one who made the manuscript from the Tangut period wrongly joined certain papers, although this was not uncommon for people to do at that time.⁷ For example, paper 6 cannot be read either after paper 5 or before paper 7. Upon reorganising the papers based on the content, I suggest that the correct order of reading them is as follows: 1–5, 7–14, 6, 16, 15, 17.

Manuscript #5032 (hereafter M2) consists of 18 frames in the facsimile. It is also a scroll manuscript, but the manuscript is highly fragmentary. In the facsimile, each frame contains one fragment, thus making it a total of 18 fragments. The majority of the manuscript is written in the cursive script, except for a small portion in frame 12 written in the regular script. Following the title at the end, it also says 𐽀𐽂𐽄, the ‘upper volume’. After that, with a smaller sized script, it reads 𐽀𐽂𐽄, ‘proofread’. Similar to M1, it also contains corrections and annotations, but the amount is

⁵ It is not a strict rule that prefixes such as *rnam par* must be translated independently in Tangut, since they are without substantial meaning. In this case, the Tanguts might simply have used 𐽀𐽂𐽄 to translate *rnam par dpyod pa*.

⁶ The work is most likely in two volumes, though, based on the observations of where M1 and M2 end in relation to the Tibetan text in this section.

⁷ This happened, for example, in one manuscript (#4363) of the Tangut translation of the *Nyāyabindu*, see Ma 2021b: 784.



limited. The challenge using the facsimile of M2 is evident: the manuscript is fragmentary; the cursive script is hard to read; and frames 16 and 17 were photographed carelessly, from the reverse sides of the fragments instead of from their fronts.

As with most of the Tangut manuscripts, neither M1 nor M2 records any information regarding the author, translator, or date at the end of the text.

3.2 Identification of M1

Now, let us start linking M1 with Rgya dmar ba's *Analysis*. The last section of the text corresponds to the Tibetan passage found at the beginning of Chapter VI, where Rgya dmar ba rejects some disputes regarding his position on the means of knowledge that determines the conventional truth:

(1)

慨，義：“緣藏敢疑惜藏，
慨緣藏，緣藏藏疑疑緣藏藏，
疑緣藏藏，慨緣藏藏，
緣藏藏疑疑疑疑疑” 疑疑疑，
緣藏藏疑疑疑疑疑疑疑，
^[1]慨疑藏藏。^[2] 疑藏，
疑藏藏疑疑疑疑疑疑疑；
疑藏藏疑疑疑疑疑疑疑； 疑藏藏疑藏
疑藏藏； 緣藏藏疑疑疑疑疑； 疑藏藏疑藏。⁸

des na snang ba dgag bya ma yin pas rigs pas mi gnod
la / snang ba de nyid 'jal ba'i rigs pas grub pa'i phyir
/ rigs pas grub cing rigs pas mi gnod pa don dam
nyid du 'gyur ro zhes pa yang spangs ste / snang ba
'jal ba'i blo skabs 'dir rigs pas ma grub ste / ^[1]yul bden
pa bkag pas 'khrul par grub pa'i phyir ro // ^[2]yang na
dpyad bzod la gnod pas na 'khrul pas na tha snyad
byas so zhes slob dpon gzhan dag 'chad do // de ltar
na brtsad pa spang pa nyid mi dgos so // kun rdzob
kyi mtshan nyid nges byed kyi tshad ma dngos dang
/ sgyu ma la bkod pa'i skyon mtshungs pa'i brtsad pa
spang pa dang / blo 'khrul par mi 'grub¹⁰ ba'i brtsad
pa spang pa dang / snang ba don dam du 'gyur ba'i
brtsad pa spang ba dang bzhis bstan to //¹¹

Further, some say, 'Since the appearance is not what is to be negated, it is not undermined; and the appearance is established by means of reasoning⁹ that comprehends it. For that reason, if it were to be established by means of the reasoning and not undermined, then

Therefore, the following statement is also rejected: 'Since the appearance is not what is to be negated, it is not undermined; and the appearance is established by means of reasoning that comprehends it. For that reason, that which is established by means of the reasoning and is not undermined would be the ultimate.' The reason [for the rejection] is that, in this

⁸ M1: fr. 17, lns. 23–27.
⁹ 疑藏 can translate both Tibetan *rigs pa* ('reasoning') and *tshad ma* ('means of knowledge'). There is no way of telling which one it translates here. I follow the Tibetan text, translating it as 'reasoning'.
¹⁰ While Hugon and Vose (2022a: 91) has *mi 'khrul* here, Dr. Hugon has informed me that the manuscript in fact reads *mi 'grub*, which will be updated in later versions of the edition.
¹¹ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 90–91; *Rnam dpyod*: 15b5–6.



context of mind comprehending the appearance, it is not established by means of reasoning; ^[1]instead, it is established as erroneous on the basis of the true cognitive object being negated. ^[2]Further, other masters explain, 'since "withstanding analysis" is undermined, it is erroneous. Hence, the convention ["erroneous"] is used. So, it is not necessary to reject the dispute.' [The section] is taught with four topics: the actual means of knowledge that determines of definiens of the conventional; the rejection of the dispute that it is equal to the very mistake also pertinent to illusion; the rejection of the dispute that it is not established by the erroneous mind; the rejection of the dispute that the appearance would become the ultimate.

Next, let us examine the beginning of the Tangut text. Although the first line is damaged, the next few lines form a coherent passage, which corresponds to the Tibetan text found at the beginning of Chapter II. In it, a response is given to an opponent who claims that there would be four fallacies if one were to consider the Two Truths as different entities:

[1] nyes pa 'di yang spang bar bya ba'o zhe na //

[-2] - [3] *dir kun rdzob ni kun nas nyon mongs pa'i dmigs*
pa la 'dod la / de don dam las rdzas tha dad na don
dam mngon du¹³ mthong yang de logs su dmigs par
mi 'gal bas kun nas nyon mongs pa 'jug pa mi khegs
pas thal ba dang po dang tha ma srid par thal bar
*byed la / de yang 'dod par mi nus pa'i phyir ro //*¹⁴

^[1]Shouldn't this fallacy also be rejected?

¹⁴ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 28; Rnam dpyod: 3a1–2.



What is stated as unsymbolic is the definitive meaning;
other than that, it is the provisional meaning.

Even so, what is stated as unsymbolic is the definitive meaning;
other than that, it is the provisional meaning.

Furthermore, in the fragment of M2 immediately following, we find the text that matches the second verse, together with an outline of the six chapters:

(4)

梟隴毳毼多嬌，毼毼繆毼繆繆繆，
毼毼毼毼毼毼，毼毼毼毼毼毼毼。

繆，毼毼毼毼毼毼，繆毼，繆繆
毼，毼毼毼，毼毼毼，
毼毼毼毼毼毼毼毼毼。 ¹⁸

The explanation of the differentiation between the Two Truths:
the basis, the meaning, the terminology, the specification of the number, the definitions, and the means of knowledge – these six should be understood.

Here, [the topics] are the basis of compartmentalization, the meaning, the meaning of the terminology, the specification of the number, the definitions, and the means of knowledge, which determines that.

bden gnyis rnaM dbye bshad pa 'dir //
dbye gzhi don dang ming gi don //
grangs nges mtshan nyid tshad mar bcas //
rnaM pa drug du shes par bya //

dbye ba'i gzhi dang | don dang | ming gi don dang
| grangs nges pa dang | mtshan nyid dang | tshad
mao // ¹⁹

The explanation of the differentiation between the Two Truths, here:
the basis of compartmentalization, the meaning [of compartmentalization], the terminology, the specification of the number, the definitions, and the means of knowledge – these six should be understood.

The basis of compartmentalization, the meaning [of compartmentalization], the terminology, the specification of the number, the definitions, and the means of knowledge.

Undoubtedly, (3)(4) are both cases that contain only established philological connections. Yet, since the end of M2 is a variant of the end of M1, we are aware that other scenarios between M2 and the Tibetan text remain.

¹⁸ M2: fr. 2, lns. 24–26.

¹⁹ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 21; *Rnam dpyod*: 2a8.



3.4 Differences between M1 and M2

Let us now compare the end of M2 with the text of M1 in (1):

M1	M2
慨，叢：“緇叢敢憚憚，慨叢敢， 緇叢叢訖訖訖訖訖，訖訖訖訖， 慨叢叢訖，緇叢訖訖訖訖訖”訖訖訖訖， 緇叢叢訖訖訖訖訖訖訖，慨訖訖訖訖。 訖訖訖，訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖； 訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖； 緇叢訖訖訖訖訖訖訖；訖訖訖訖訖訖訖。	慨，叢 ^[a] 楊叢：“緇叢敢憚 ^[b] 訖， ^[c] 訖訖訖訖訖訖 ^[d] ，緇叢叢訖訖訖訖訖， 訖訖訖訖 ^[e] 訖訖，慨 ^[f] 訖， 訖訖訖訖訖訖 ^[g] ”訖訖 ^[h] 訖訖，緇叢叢訖 ^[i] 訖訖， 訖訖訖訖訖訖 ^[j] 訖 ^[k] 訖。訖訖訖， 訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖； 訖訖訖訖訖 ^[l] 訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖訖； ^[m] 訖訖訖訖 ^[n] 訖訖訖訖 ^[o] 訖訖；緇叢訖訖訖訖訖訖 ^[p] 訖。 ²⁰

The variants follow; if not merely a particle, the meaning is given in round brackets:

- In M2 but absent from M1: [a] 楊叢 (‘a sort of’); [c] 訖訖訖訖 (‘by means of reasoning’); [e] 訖; [o] 訖。
- In M1 but absent from M2: [d] 訖；[g] 訖；[j] 訖；[k] 訖訖訖。
- Text in M2 in place of the text in M1: [b] 訖 in place of 訖；[f] 訖 of 訖訖；[h] 訖訖 (‘erroneous’) of 訖訖 (‘unacceptable’); [i] 訖訖，訖訖 (‘cognition, the very...itself’) of 訖訖 (‘mind, ...alone’); [l] 訖訖訖訖 (‘to posit the position’) of 訖 (‘also’); [m] 訖 (‘cognition’) of 訖 (‘mind’); [n] 訖 (‘to become’) of 訖 (‘to be established’). [p] 訖 (‘to be’) of 訖訖訖訖 (‘explained with four topics’).

Although at first glance the variants seem to be many, they cannot be said to reflect substantial differences between both texts. Most of these variants seem only to have resulted from differing editorial choices the Tanguts made for different Documents of the same Work²¹ on different occasions.²² In addition, although [c][i] are places that would make M2 closer to the Tibetan text, [p] clearly indicates M1’s closeness. In particular, the [2] in (1) is missing from both M1 and M2. Hence, we cannot decide if either one of them is closer to the Tibetan text. Based on my preliminary examination, the relationship demonstrated above between the ends of M1 and M2 is what we see throughout both Tangut texts.

²⁰ M2: fr. 18, lns. 22–25.
²¹ Here, I follow the definitions of the terms in Milikowsky 1999: 138, n.3, which have been recently applied by Silk (2021) to the philological analysis of Buddhist texts. Milikowsky indicates, ‘The term work is being used to denote the author’s or editor’s product (one which may theoretically never have existed in any concrete mode of expression such as a manuscript or book). A document is a concrete mode of expressing a work: thus the manuscripts of Pesiqtā Rabbātī are the documents of the work conceptualized as Pesiqtā Rabbātī.’ Hence, here, I regard M1 and M2 as two Documents of a textual product of an author or a translator, regardless of whether that original product ever existed in the physical form.
²² This, for example, is fairly common in the Tangut translations of sutras (Shi 1988: 79–84). A sutra translated during the reign of one Tangut emperor would often be proofread/edited/revised during the reign of another emperor. Also, while the manuscripts of the Tangut translation of the *Nyāyabindu* show many variants, they do not bespeak several translations, but one translation edited over times (Ma 2021b: 785).



In light of the foregoing, we may now conclude that M1 and M2 are parts of the same Work (viz., the Tangut Work of the *Analysis*), and that the Work is further connected philologically to Rgya dmar ba's treatise under the same title. This leads us to the question, is the Tangut Work a translation of the Tibetan Work?

4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TANGUT AND TIBETAN WORKS

When comparing the Tangut Work with the Tibetan, what we realise is that the cases such as (1)(2)(3)(4), which represent relatively high consistency with the Tibetan text, account for only about 50% in the whole text. The other 50% contains some major differences on the sectional level, and some minor differences on the sentential level. These will be demonstrated individually in detail below. In order to focus more effectively on the comparison of the Tangut and Tibetan Works, I will base the rest of the present paper exclusively upon M1. In this section, apart from pointing out these differences, I do not attempt to analyse their implications. Those will be reserved for the discussion in section 6.

4.1. Sectional Differences

4.1.1. Verses Absent from the Tangut Work

Were the Tangut Work indeed a translation of the Tibetan, then we should expect all the verses of Rgya dmar ba to be in place. We have already seen vv. 1–2 in the fragments of M2. M1, given its span, is supposed to cover vv. 3–32. However, what we see is only vv. 3, 7, 11, 14, 32:²³ the other 25 verses are all absent!²⁴ Interestingly, what is there and what is not there does not seem to be completely random. The existent verses are all ones that introduce major sections. For example, vv. 2, 3, 7, 11, and 32 are located at the beginnings of chaps. II, III, IV, V, and VI, respectively. Those which are missing are, contrarily, the verses that conclude the chapters or their major subsections by summarising their meanings. They include a 'summary' (*don bsdus ba*, vv. 4–6) at the end of Chapter III, a 'statement of summary' (*bsdus ste brjod pa*, vv. 8–10) at the end of Chapter IV, some 'intermediate verses' (*bar skabs kyi tshigs su bcad pa*, vv. 12–13), some 'brief presentation of the meaning' (*don mdor gzhas pa*, vv. 15–16), some 'summarising verses' (*bsdu' ba'i tshigs su bcad pa*, vv. 17–23), and, again, some 'intermediate verses' (vv. 29–31) at the end of Chapter V.

4.1.2. Entire Sections Absent from the Tangut Work

Some missing verses, such as vv. 17–23, are no doubt already a large section. Apart from that, however, it is not uncommon to notice that an entire prose section in the Tibetan text is absent from the Tangut Work. The Tangut passage below is found at the end of the explanation of the meaning of compartmentalisation. The established philological connection is determined upon examining the Tangut's corresponding Tibetan passage, approaching the end of Chapter II. There, Rgya dmar ba expresses his own idea of how the Two Truths are related:

²³ These verses are found in the following positions in M1: fr. 4, ln. 13 (v. 3); fr. 8, lns. 28–29 (v. 7); fr. 10, ln. 10 (v. 11); fr. 12, lns. 29–30 (v. 14); and fr. 15, ln. 25 (v. 32).

²⁴ All verse numbers are based on Hugon and Vose 2022a. The numbering in their edition may change in the future.



-[2]- [3] 經 疏。 乃 謂 經 疏 經 疏 此
 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏
 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏
 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏
 [4a] 經 疏 經 疏。 [5]- [4b] 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏
 經 疏 經 疏。 經 疏
 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏
 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏
 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏

[6] 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏 經 疏。 27

[1] Hence, I uphold the intentions of Candrakīrti and Atiśa, who explain the water-moon as the mistaken conventional, and that of Jñānagarbha, who explains the mirage as the mistaken conventional.²⁸

-[2]- [3] Hence, the explanation of Master Khyung²⁹ that the water-moon, which is equal to the drawings of elephant and horse, is the correct conventional is then unacceptable. How could [the water-moon] be equal to the drawings of elephant and horse,

[2] gzhan yang chu zla ni skyes bu g.yo ba lasogs pas
 rnam pa gzhan du 'gyur la / skyes bu gzhan la mi snang
 bas don du mi rung ste / skyes bu so so la ltos ste don
 rnams bdag nyid tha dad pa ni ma yin no // {PVin 1 ad
 v. 12} zhes bya ba dang / gang gi phyir rang bzhin gcig
 nyid la cig gi don ni yid du 'ong la gzhan gyi ni mi 'ong
 ngo {PVin 1 ad 41ab} zhes gsungs pa yin no //

[3] de ltar tha snyad pa'i tshad ma nyid kyi dgag pa 'jug
 pa'i chu zla ni ri mo'i rta lasogs pa tha snyad du don
 byed par grub cing tshad mas mi gnod pa'i don dang
 mtshungs pa ma yin no // [4a] de bzhin du [5] me long
 srab mo gting dang mi ldan par rgyab stong pa can du
 'dzin pa'i tshad ma gzhan gyis / gting na bzhin snang ba
 lasogs pa 'thug por 'dzin yul bkag pa nyid do //

[4b]³⁰ ja tshon³⁰ lasogs pa yang gzugs brnyan nyid yin pa
 'di dag thams cad rtog med 'khrul par 'dod pas / rnam
 med kyi don 'dzin pa la rtog med 'khrul pa mi 'dod pa
 rnams ni bye brag du smra ba'i 'dod pa yang ma rig pa
 ste / slob dpon dbyang gnyen gyis mdzod du bshad pa
 dang ma mthun pa'i phyir ro //

(Intermediate verses 29–31)

[6] mtshan nyid dpyad zin to //³¹

[1] Hence, I uphold the intentions of masters Candrakīrti and [Atiśa] Dipamkara[śrījñāna], who explain the water-moon as the mistaken conventional, and that of Master Jñānagarbha, who explains the mirage as the mistaken conventional.

[2] Furthermore, the water-moon would turn into another representation due to a moving person, etc., and it would not appear to another person. Hence, it is not appropriate for it to be an object, as it is stated [in *Pramānaviniścaya*]: 'It is not the case that objects would have different natures depending on individual persons,' and, 'Because, with regard to the very single

²⁷ M1: fr.15, lns. 18–20.

²⁸ Names cited here in Tangut are 經疏 (Moonlight-Renowned'), 經疏 (pronounced as 'ja tji šja'), 經疏 (Wisdom-True-Essence'). They are, apparently, Candrakīrti, Atiśa, and Jñānagarbha.

²⁹ I.e. 經疏. For Khyung, see the discussions below and in section 5.

³⁰ Read: 'ja' tshon. See Hugon and Vose 2022a: 88, n. 221.

³¹ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 87–88; *Rnam dpyod*: 15a3–6.



zhes sems can tshig du rab brjod pa // nam mkha ji
ltar mthong zhes don 'di brtag par gyis zhes [ci yang
ma mthong la mthong zhes gsungs la / sgyu ma lta'u
yin na dpe gzhan gyis brtag par ci ste mi nus] dpe'i
sgo nas gsungs pa lasogs pa dpag tu myed pa dang
/ ^[15]don dam pa la sems rgyu ba yang myed na yi ge
rnaMs lta ci smos zhes bya ba dang / ^[16]'jam dpal gyis
rgyal ba'i sras la don daM gyi gnas lugs zhus pas] rgy-
al ba'i sras po dri myed par grags pas cang ma gsungs
pa nyid lasogs pa ^[17]ji ltar drang bar bya // ^[35]

^[1]Well, isn't it the case that the Two Truths are different in that they are distinct properties in the same entity, just like the produced and the impermanent? ^{[-2]- [3]}In the *Madhyamakālamkāra*, it explains that, having seen the conventional, even if one sees the ultimate truth, it is not determined. And, in the *Madhyamakāloka*, it explains that the meaning of 'the nonexistence of anything at all to be seen', [a statement in] the scripture, is affirming negative.³⁴ Hence, it is clear that the illusion is explained as the ultimate. ^{[-4]- [5]}Why [do you] say that, on the part of those such as form arising as the afflictive obstructions, it is the conventional; on the part of what abides as the illusion having become what is perceived by the pure mind, it itself is the ultimate truth?

^[6]The rejection of this has two topics: the scripture and reasoning. ^[7]The first one: ^[8]in the *Vajracchedikā*, it says, 'Any phenomenon for a completely enlightened one is neither the real nor the unreal.' And, ^{[-9][10]- [11]}in the *Vikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*, it says, 'By

^[1]Well, isn't it the case that they [=the Two Truths] are distinct properties in the same entity, just like the produced and the impermanent? ^[2]This is clearly explained in the commentary of the *Astasāhasrikā*. ^[3]In the *Madhyamakālamkāra*, it also explains that, when seeing the conventional, even if the ultimate appears, it is not determined. And, in the *Madhyamakāloka*, it explains that the meaning of 'the nonexistence of anything at all to be seen', [a statement in] the scripture, is affirming negative. So, it is clear that even these [scriptural sources] explain illusion as the ultimate. ^[4]Isn't this [necessarily] accepted? ^[5]That is not the case [with regard to the proposition that illusion is the ultimate], ^[6]because it is undermined by the scripture and reasoning.

^[7][First, it is undermined by the scripture:] ^[8a]So, in the *Vajracchedikā*, it says, 'Any phenomenon for a completely enlightened one ^[9][who has realised that] ^[8b]is neither the real nor the unreal.' And, ^[10][illusion is stated as not involving the ultimate] ^[11a]in the *Vikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*, it says, 'By means of the non-conceptual gnosis ^[12][of meditative equipoise], ^[11b]one realises that all phenomena are like the scope of the sky; ^[13][If illusion were to exist as the ultimate, then it would be reasonable that one would know it by means of the gnosis of meditative equipoise. Yet it is not like that.] ^[11c]by means of the subsequently attained gnosis, one realises that all phenomena are like

³⁴ I.e. 顯影 (*ma yin dgag).

³⁵ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 30–31; Rnam dpyod: 3b1–4.



means of the non-conceptual gnosis, one realises that all phenomena are like the scope of the sky; by means of the subsequently attained gnosis, one realises that all phenomena are like illusion'. And ^{-[12][13][14]- [15]}⁴It is stated that the to-and-fro of the mind pertaining to the ultimate truth does not exist, and.³⁶ ^[16]When Mañjuśrī asked the great upāsaka, nothing was spoken.³⁷ ^[17]By means of these above, [the position that the Two Truths are different in that they are distinct properties in the same entity] is undermined.

illusion'. And, ^[14]in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*, there are innumerable statements such as the one on the basis of an example, 'The sentient beings use "seeing the sky" as an expression. Examine the meaning of this – how does one "see" the sky?' [While nothing is seen at all, "seeing" is spoken. If it were to be like illusion, then why couldn't it be examined on the basis of another example?] ^[15]⁴If there is not even the to-and-fro of the mind pertaining to the ultimate, how could it be talk about in phonemes?' ^[16][Since Mañjuśrī asked the Son of the Victorious One about the mode of existence of the ultimate] Vimalakīrti, the Son of the Victorious One, spoke nothing at all, etc. ^[17]One should cite [the sources] accordingly.

Manifestly, not every scriptural source cited in the Tibetan text is present in its Tangut counterpart; for instance, [3] (the commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in *Eight Thousand Lines*) and [14] (the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*) are missing. In this example, most of the Tibetan notes do not find equivalents in the Tangut text. However, [7], a sectional title, is represented, at least, by its number in the Tangut main text. This is, in fact, a common phenomenon: sectional titles written only in the notes in the Tibetan text appear in the Tangut main text. The Tibetan note in [16] is clearly indicated in the Tangut text, though they are only loosely connected. It is also worth noting that the texts are quite different in [5], and can thus be said to have no connection there, though they both express a disapproving attitude towards what is put forth.

4.2.2. Example 2: Presentation of Rgya dmar ba's Own Idea

This second example concerns Rgya dmar ba's presentation of his own idea about the definition of the ultimate truth in Chapter V:

(8)

^[1] 禪修證悟形變，
^[2] 禪修證悟形變，
 禪修證悟形變。
^[3] 禪修證悟形變。
^[4] “禪修證悟形變” 變。^[5] 禪修：
 “禪修證悟形變， 禪修證悟。禪修，
 禪修證悟形變。禪修證悟形變” 變。
^{[6]-[7]} 禪修證悟形變。禪修證悟形變。

^{-[1]- [2a]} dpyad na de ltar mi gnas pa'i shes bya las bzlog
 pa / ^{-[3]- [4]} [rtsa ba'i gzhan ni 1 shos kyi don ni 'di yin
 te] ^[2b] de kho na nyid du [rigs pa'i] sems pas dpyad
 na gnas pa ste / ^[5a] [de'i 'grel pa nas] don dam par
 bden pa ni don dam pa'i bden pa ste / de ni rigs
 pa'i rjes su 'gro ba can gyi bden pa nyid ces bya ba'i
 tha tshig go zhes ^[6] [bden 2 su] ^[5b] gsungs pa yin no
^{-[7]- /}³⁹

³⁶ There seems to be a strong temptation to regard the 變 ('to state') in the quotation as the equivalent of *smos* in the Tibetan text; however, the second clause (*yi ge rnaMs lta ci smos*) seems to be missing in the quote.

³⁷ The 'great upāsaka' (叢經經, **dge bsnien chen po*) here should refer to Vimalakīrti.

³⁸ M1: fr. 10, ln. 19.

³⁹ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 55; *Rnam dpyod*: 8b1–2.



^[1]The definition of the ultimate is ^[2]the opposite of that which, when analysed, does not abide, i.e., that which, when analysed by means of reasoning, abides. ^[3]It is the knowable established by means of reasoning. ^[4]It is said, ‘The other, which is the different’. ^[5]The commentary says, ‘What is ultimately true is the ultimate truth. That is the very truth subsequent to reasoning’. ^[6] ^[7]The fact that [I] follow the intention of Master Jñānagarbha involves just that.

^[-1] ^[2a]The opposite of the knowable, which, when analysed, does not abide as such. ^[-3] ^[4][the meaning of ‘the other, which is the different’ in the basic text is this] ^[2b]The reality, when analysed by means of the mind [of reasoning], abides. ^[5a][The commentary says,] as a conclusion, ‘What is ultimately true is the ultimate truth. That is the very truth subsequent to reasoning’. ^[5b]So it is stated ^[6][in the *Satyadvayavibhaṅgavṛtti*] ^[-7].

Most notably, the Tibetan notes in [2b], [4] and [5a] are all in the Tangut main text; [1], which should reasonably be put in either the main text or the notes, is missing from the Tibetan text.

4.2.3. Example 3: Objection and Answer

A final example to consider in terms of sentential differences between the two texts demonstrates a case of objection and answer. In regards to the status of ‘that which possesses the definitions [of each of the Two Truths]’ (*mtshan nyid dang ldan pa*), because Rgya dmar ba holds the view that one cognises the external object directly, without representation (Skt. *ākāra*, Tib. *rnam pa*), he admits neither the view that there is no external object nor the view that one cognises the object with representation. In the following scenario that matches what is presented towards the end of Chapter V in the Tibetan text, Rgya dmar ba tries to lead his potential opponent to certain absurdities by means of parallel objections:

(9)

^[1] 彼 能 知 別 非 識 緣 識 故， 能 知 耶 否？
^[2] 若 非 識 緣 終， 識 緣 識 緣 識， 能 知 耶？
^[3] 若 非 識 緣 終， 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶？
^[4] 能 知 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶。
^[-5] ^[6] 識 緣 識 緣 識， 識 緣 識 緣 識。 ^[-7]

^[8] 彼 能 知 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶，
能 知 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶？
^[-9] ^[10] 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶。
^[11] 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶， 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶？
^[12] 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶 識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶。
識 緣 識 緣 識 終 耶。 ⁴⁰

^[1][phyi rol gyi] bum pa med kyang [’khrul nas buM par] der snang ba tsaM yin ba cis ’gog zhe na / ^[2]bde ba yang sim par med kyang [’khrul nas] der snang ba tsaM du zad pa cis ’gog // ^[3]sim pa’i don byed pa ci ltar med [par ’gal_lo] zhe na / ^[4][buM pa yang] chu bcu pa’i don byed pa ci ltar med / don byed par mthong ba nyid ’khrul par zad do <zhe> na / ^[5][don byed pa lta bur snang ba yin gyi don byed par mi bden no] ^[6]myong bar [sim par don byed par] ’khrul par zad do zhes mtshungs pas ^[7]bum pa med pa ma yin no //

⁴⁰ M1: fr. 16, lns. 21–25.



^[1][Objection:] If there is no external pot, yet it erroneously appears, then how does one negate it?

^[2][Answer:] Although happiness does not exist as pleasure, it appears erroneously as pleasure. How does one negate it?

^[3][Objection:] Isn't it a contradiction that the pleasure does not have causal efficiency?

^[4][Answer:] It is a contradiction that the pot does not have the causal efficiency to be filled with water. ^{[-5]-} ^[6]It is equal to saying, 'what is causally efficient is erroneous'. ^{[-7]-}

^[8][Objection:] If we suppose the pot is causally efficient by means of its representation, doesn't the cognition exist as representation? ^{[-9]-}

^[10][Answer:] I say, 'Let's suppose happiness is causally efficient, yet it exists as suffering'.

^[11][Objection:] Doesn't the existence of suffering contradict the experience of happiness?

^[12][Answer:] The fact that something other than the cognition is causally efficient contradicts the intrinsic nature of the cognition.

^[8a][bum pa lasogs chu skyor ba'i] don byed par yod kyang ^[9][phyi rol don med gyi] ^[8b]shes pa'i snang bar yod do zhe na / ^[10]don byed par yod kyang sdug sngal du [don byed par] yod ces bya'o // ^[11]sdug bsngal gyi myong bar yod na / ji ltar sim bar myong zhe na / ^[12]shes pa nyid du yod na ji ltar tha dad par rtogs / tha dad pa lta bu yin no [zhe na sim pa lta bur myong ba yin no] zhes bya ba lasogs pa thams cad mtshungs so // ^[41]

^[1][Objection:] Although there is no [external] pot, it merely appears as such [erroneously as a pot]. Then how does one negate it?

^[2][Answer:] Although happiness does not exist as pleasure, it merely appears as such [erroneously]. How does one negate it?

^[3][Objection:] Isn't it [a contradiction] in so far as the pleasure does not have causal efficiency?

^[4][Answer: It is a contradiction] in so far as [the pot, too,] does not have the causal efficiency to be filled with water. It is the mere erroneous view of the causal efficiency. ^[5]While it is the pseudo appearance of the causal efficiency, the causal efficiency is not true. ^[6]It is equal to saying, 'the experience [of the pleasure being causally efficient] is merely erroneous'. ^[7]Hence, the pot does not exist.

^[8a][Objection:] Although [pots, etc.,] exist as causally efficient [of holding up the water], ^[9]while an external object does not exist, ^[8b]they exist as the appearance in the cognition.

^[10][Answer:] I say, 'Although [happiness] exists as causally efficient, it exists [in terms of being causally efficient] as suffering'.

^[11][Objection:] If the experience of suffering exists, how could one experience pleasure?

^[12][Answer:] If they exist in the very cognition, how could they be differently realised? All the statements such as [the objection] 'They are seemingly different' are equal [since they can be countered by the statements such as] ['the pleasure is seemingly experienced'].

⁴¹ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 81; *Rnam dpyod*: 13b6–7.



It is surprising in this example that most of the Tibetan notes are incorporated into the Tangut main text. Another place worth noticing is [10] of the Tibetan text, where it seems the meaning would be clearer if we supply *bde ba* before *don byed par* at the beginning to make the sentence complete, although this may not be necessary for the Tibetan text. Here, in the Tangut text, the word ‘happiness’ (𐰇𐰏, **bde ba*) is present.

5. REFERENCES TO TIBETAN FIGURES IN THE TANGUT TEXT

5.1. General Observations

Tibetan names are seen in both Tangut manuscripts, as in case (6), where Khyung Rin chen grags is mentioned. The ways these names are written can be summarised further into two categories. The first is the citations in the main text; for examples of this category, see below (Table 1: a, c, g; and Table 2: a', c', f'). Some of these names are easily identifiable, based on their reconstructed Tangut pronunciations (Li 2012) and the contexts in which they appear, as in the case of Khyung (c, c'). 𐰇𐰏𐰇𐰏 (lu² tsja¹ wa¹, a) and 𐰇𐰏 (ɣwə¹, a') are undoubtedly Rngog Lo tsā ba. 𐰇𐰏 (šjiw², f'), on the other hand, should be none other than Gangs pa She'u Blo gros byang chub, who was also one of the main teachers of Rgya dmar ba.

The second way of writing these names is to represent them in interlinear notes that identify the people who hold certain opinions; for examples of this category, see below (Table 1: b, d, e, f, h; Table 2: d', h'). These are attached either to the opinion directly, or to unidentified persons such as ‘some’ (𐰇𐰏, **kha cig*) or ‘master’ (𐰇𐰏, **slob dpon*). This second phenomenon becomes quite extraordinary when considered in tandem with the many scholar-identifying notes in the Tibetan manuscript (see section 2). Many of the Tangut notes and their Tibetan equivalents appear in exactly the same place in the text. For example, at one point where the expression ‘masters and spiritual friends’ (*slob dpon dge bshes dag*)⁴² occurs in the Tibetan manuscript, the note says ‘Khyung and Lo tsā ba’ (*khyung lo tsa*).⁴³ At the corresponding position in M1, the main text has ‘the two wise ones’ (𐰇𐰏𐰇𐰏), and the note says ‘Rngog and Khyung’ (𐰇𐰏𐰇𐰏, see Table 1: e). As Hugon (2020: 141–144) has observed, the one who took the Tibetan notes likely had access to a lecture given by someone who was familiar with Rgya dmar ba's thoughts and works. It seems that, here, the Tangut students were not deprived of that privilege either.

⁴² Or, in fact, ‘both the master and the spiritual friend’, where *dag* is taken as the dual marker.

⁴³ Hugon and Vose 2021a: 50; *Rnam dpyod*: 8b7.



Table 1: Examples of Tibetan names that appear in M1

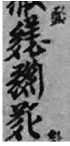
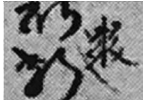
Example	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Image								
Tran- scription	𑄧𑄢𑄣𑄣	𑄧	𑄢	𑄢	𑄧𑄢	𑄢	𑄢	𑄢
Phono- logical recon- struction	lu ² tsja ¹ wa ¹	ɳwə ¹	khjow ²	khjow ²	ɳwə ¹ khjow ²	ʃjiw ²	ˈjaɾ ¹	ˈjaɾ ¹
Position	Fr. 13, ln. 13.	Fr. 13, ln. 19.	Fr. 11, ln. 16.	Fr. 13, ln. 13.	Fr. 10, ln. 30.	Fr. 10, ln. 24.	Fr. 10, ln. 25.	Fr. 10, ln. 19.

Table 2: Examples of Tibetan names that appear in M2

Example	a'	c'	d'	f'	h'
Image					
Transcription	𑄧	𑄢	𑄢	𑄢	𑄢
Phonological reconstruction	ɳwə ¹	khjow ²	khjow ²	ʃjiw ²	ˈjaɾ ¹
Position	Fr. 12, ln. 7.	Fr. 10, ln. 17.	Fr. 7, ln. 22.	Fr. 10, ln. 17.	Fr. 10, ln. 13.

5.2. 𑄢 (𑄢) as Rgya [dmar ba]

One name, however, cannot be immediately identified based on its phonological reconstruction, and thereby needs more elaboration. The name 𑄢 (ˈjaɾ¹), exemplified by g, h, h', consists of four phonemes: a glottal ʔ, a glide j, a main vowel a, and a retroflex r.⁴⁴ If we ignore the glottal and glide, which are less perceptible in pronunciation, the sound would be similar to ar. Among the

⁴⁴ Li 2012: 685. For Tangut phonology, see Gong 2003: 602–606.



many Gsang phu masters from this period, there is only one person that corresponds to the name Ar: Ar Byang chub ye shes.

There are, however, two problems with this identification. First, although Ar is renowned for commenting on *Prajñāpāramitāsūtras*, he is not known as a specialist in Madhyamaka. Granted, *Prajñāpāramitāsūtras* and Madhyamaka are linked, but they are nevertheless treated quite differently in the Gsang phu tradition. Since the name 'Jar appears very often in the Tangut text, it is unlikely that it refers to Ar. The second problem with this identification is that, in almost every place 'Jar appears as a note,⁴⁵ it identifies an opinion held by Rgya dmar ba, which is attested by the notes in the corresponding places in the Tibetan text. From this, it may be inferred that either Rgya dmar ba or Ar 're-used' the other's ideas completely, or that 'Jar is simply Rgya [dmar ba].

The assumption that 'jar¹ represents Tibetan *rgya* can, in fact, be supported from a phonological perspective as well. Although Tangut does have a separate velar consonant *g*, the glottal ' could be pronounced similarly. Also, the glide *j* may simply represent the *y* sound in the Tibetan syllable. The only tricky part is the retroflex *r*, which is clearly not present at the end of *rgya*. Cases remain, however, in which 'jar¹ is used to transcribe a syllable phonetically without a retroflex. For example, when transcribing *ārya*, the first word in the Sanskrit title of the *Ārya-prajñāpāramitā-ratnaguṇasañcayagāthā*, the Tanguts used 𐞗𐞐𐞑𐞒 (Duan 2014: 101). Here, 𐞗𐞐𐞑 (prolonged *a*) transcribes *ā*; and 𐞒 transcribes *rya*. For some reason, it seems that, in this case, 'jar¹ can even showcase the initial *r* in *rya*, thus leading us to wonder if it can also represent the initial *r* in *rgya*. In any event, all things considered, it is reasonable to take 'Jar as referring to Rgya dmar ba.

5.3. The Identity of Jo btsun

A somewhat mysterious figure cited in some Gsang phu treatises is Jo btsun. He appears, for example, in the *Summary of the Essence of Epistemology* (*Tshad ma de kho na nyid bsdus pa*), the author of which has now been identified by Stoltz (2020) as Gsang phu master 'Jad pa Gzhon nu byang chub (fl. late 12th century). In the notes in the manuscript of Rgya dmar ba's *Analysis*, Jo btsun also appears repeatedly. Hugon (2020b: 3.2.1), by means of ample evidence, concludes that it is extremely unlikely that Jo btsun is anyone other than Khyung Rin chen grags; despite this, however, it is necessary that the equating of Jo btsun with Khyung remain in a condition to which the principle of 'Occam's Razor' (Hugon 2020b: 137) applies. In the present paper, by utilising the Tangut text, we can bring such an equation closer to a conclusion without having to apply the principle.

In brief, the direct evidence is that for every opinion ascribed to Jo btsun in the Tibetan manuscript of Rgya dmar ba's work, as long as the person who holds the opinion is also identified in the Tangut text, it is always Khyung (𐞗𐞐𐞑, *khjow*²). Provided that there is no other name in the Tangut text that can reflect Jo btsun (in terms of either sound or meaning), we can now argue, based on solid grounds, that Jo btsun is simply Khyung.

Let us examine one example. In Chapter V, when Rgya dmar ba discusses 'that which possesses the definitions [of each of the Two Truths]', he devotes a long section to showcasing how Jo btsun thinks about this matter by first presenting Rngog Lo tsā ba's ideas, and then showing the ways Jo

⁴⁵ For instance, the example h in Table 1 is found at the beginning of case (8).



btsun rejects them.⁴⁶ This long section is also found in the Tangut text, albeit with many varied presentations.⁴⁷ At the very beginning of this Tangut section in M1, the note says ‘Khyung’ (see Table 1: d); then, it starts to present the thoughts of ‘Lo tsā ba’ in the main text with the note ‘Rngog’ written alongside it (see Table 1: a). Having finished describing Rngog Lo tsā ba’s thoughts, the Tangut text next says what is presented in the left column below. And the statement matches, in the loose philological connection, two notes in the Tibetan text in the right column:

(10)

隨此經說此經說此經說此經說此經說此經說此經說此經說此經說此經說。 ⁴⁸

With regard to this, it is explained as unacceptable due to two fallacies: the posit of the proposition is untenable; what is not proposed would be established.

[lo tsa'i dgag pa (di la) sun 'byin 2 ste /] ['dod pa'i rnam bzhas 'jig pa dang / (ii) mi 'dod pa'i don grub par tha' ba'o /]³¹

[(This) rejection of Lo tsā ba involves two refutations:] [It would follow that the posit of the proposition is untenable, and what is not proposed would be established]

At the beginning of this Tangut statement, the note has ‘Khyung’. Although the Tibetan note has ‘the rejection of Lo tsā ba’ (*lo tsa'i dgag pa*), the two indeed match, because the one who rejects Rngog Lo tsā ba is precisely Khyung and, in the context of the Tibetan text, Jo btsun.

6. DISCUSSION

With all of the materials presented above in this paper, we are now able to discuss the relationship between the Tangut Work and the Tibetan Work. Of course, without a comprehensive examination of every word and phrase in the Tangut text in relation to the Tibetan text, our discussion here can only be preliminary; nevertheless, it is feasible to sort out, based on current evidence, several possibilities regarding how these two Works became what we see them as today.

First of all, it is reasonable in any event to exclude the possibility that the Tangut Work is completely a Tangut indigenous composition. If that were the case, then it would result in a series of unwanted consequences, such as the idea that Rgya dmar ba, or any other Tibetan author, would have ‘borrowed’ the ideas from this Tangut composition, which contains only ideas of Tibetan masters. I will thus not elaborate on this further. All things considered, the Tangut Work should be, or at least partially be, a translation of a certain Tibetan Work. Following this assumption, there are then three possibilities (P1–P3), which will be discussed below.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 53–66; *Rnam dpyod*: 10a6–11a2.

⁴⁷ M1: fr. 13, ln. 13–fr. 14, ln. 20.

⁴⁸ M1: fr. 13, ln. 25.

⁴⁹ Hugon and Vose 2022a: 65; *Rnam dpyod*: 10b2.

⁵⁰ We can, of course, come up with many other possibilities with different details. However, I assume these three possibilities set the tone for our discussion. They essentially represent the following three orientations: 1) different authors; 2) Tibetan Work antecedent; 3) Tangut Work antecedent.



- **P1: The Tangut Work is a translation of a Tibetan Work composed by someone other than Rgya dmar ba, regardless of whether it predates (P1a) or postdates (P1b) Rgya dmar ba's Work.**

The phenomenon of ‘text re-use’, as Hugon (2014) has discussed, is quite common among early Bka’ gdams pa masters. There exist, for example, a large amount of almost completely identical passages in the commentaries on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* composed by Rngog Lo tsā ba and Phya pa (Hugon 2014: 462). Hence, the many similarities and differences between the Tangut and Tibetan Works might be the result of text re-use.

In support of P1a, the colophon of Rgya dmar ba’s treatise says:

rje btsun bla ma dag gi gzhung lugs la brten nas // dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par spyod pa // rgya dmar bas <mdzad pa> rdzogs s.ho // ⁵¹

Having relied upon the textual traditions of the venerable masters, Rgya dmar ba composed the *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*. The End.

Therefore, it is not completely impossible that Rgya dmar ba might have (re-)used some earlier textual materials.

But P1a has some crucial problems. First, evidence in this case can be interpreted differently. The ‘textual traditions’ may not imply text re-use, but merely signify the citations of others’ ideas. In spite of the commonality of text re-use, copying even the title of the work is extremely peculiar if we believe the Tangut title is reconstructed as **Dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par dpyod pa*. Second, if the author is different from Rgya dmar ba and postdates him, we would see no originality of the author at all, because every point the author holds is identical to that of Rgya dmar ba. If the author predates Rgya dmar ba, then why would the notes that identify the author’s position say ‘Rgya’ instead of someone else?

In support of P1b, we see a sentence in M1 where the name ‘Rgya’ is cited in the main text (see Table 1: g):

慨，叢翹翹：“緇藏緇緇緇緇緇緇緇？” 翹翹，緇緇緇緇緇緇。 ⁵²

Furthermore, some ask, ‘How is the appearance, and how is the reasoning?’ [The answer] is also consistent with Master Rgya before.

Here, the appearance of ‘Master Rgya’ in the main text seems to indicate that the author of the Work cannot be Rgya dmar ba himself, but someone who postdates him.

Be that as it may, P1b is also problematic. The first reason is that ‘Rgya’ appears only once in the main text of M1 here. In addition, putting 翹翹 (‘Master Rgya’) in the sentence is somewhat

⁵¹ Hugon and Vose 2021a: 142; *Rnam dpyod*: 31a3.

⁵² M1: fr. 10, lns. 25–26. The ‘some’ here is identified by the Tangut note as Gangs pa She’u (see Table 1: f). For the corresponding passage in the Tibetan text, see Hugon and Vose 2021a: 50; *Rnam dpyod*: 8b4–7. Here, Gangs pa’s position is rejected by Rgya dmar ba.



cumbersome grammatically because 纒纒 ('what is [stated] before'), as an oblique object, could already work well with the verb 纒 ('to be consistent with'), thus making 纒纒 here slightly redundant. It is therefore not impossible that 'Master Rgya' should here be a note that, in fact, was accidentally merged into the main text.⁵³ Another clue to argue against both P1a and P1b lies in (6). There, the Tibetan text has the first-person pronoun *kho bo*, which is identified by the note as 'Rgya'. The Tangut text also has the first person, which is unequivocally attested by both a pronoun 纒 as well as an agreement particle 纒. Therefore, the 'I' in the Tangut text should also be Rgya dmar ba.

The next possibility may solve most of these problems:

- **P2: The Tangut Work is a translation of an adaption of Rgya dmar ba's Work, with the adaption done by either the Tibetans before the translation (P2a), or the Tanguts at the time of translation (P2b).**

This means that, for the purpose of effective learning, people trimmed the original Work of Rgya dmar ba as represented by the Tibetan manuscript in order to make it shorter and less detailed. This explains much of the phenomena previously demonstrated. For example, verses that summarise the meaning (see section 4.1.1) become unnecessary, as do detailed discussions of certain complex philosophical issues (see section 4.1.2). This hypothesis can also account for the fact that many notes in the Tibetan text are incorporated into the Tangut text, as in case (10). The editor might have wanted to make the text an easier read by merging together some notes and the main text, since the explanatory tradition had already become a part of the text.

The major problem with P2 is how common adaption was practised for these treatises in history. If P2a, then the Tibetan learners had already done it before passing it to the Tanguts; yet, to my knowledge, throughout Tibetan intellectual history, there is virtually no case of adaption as such. The differences between the Tangut Work and the Tibetan Work have gone far beyond the difference that would happen in a revision. P2b is more plausible, since we still know very little about how the Tanguts approached the Tibetan texts transmitted to Xixia; but we have not yet seen any established case that the Tanguts adapted a Tibetan text at the time of translation. Quite the opposite, as existent evidence shows that the Tanguts remained faithful, in general, to the texts they were translating. For example, the Tangut translation of Phya pa's *Epistemology—Dispeller of Mind's Darkness* (*Tshad ma yid kyi mun sel*) shows very little difference from the Tibetan original (Ma 2021a). This being the case, why would the Tanguts decide to adapt Rgya dmar ba's treatise, which is even, as I see, less philosophically sophisticated than Phya pa's work?⁵⁴

Hence, we will turn to one final possibility:

- **P3: The Tangut Work is a translation of Rgya dmar ba's original composition or a Tibetan Work close to it, whereas the Tibetan manuscript we see today is a Work resulting from significant editorial work on the original.**

⁵³ Unfortunately, the corresponding part in M2 is missing, thus leaving us no opportunity to compare both manuscripts for this place.

⁵⁴ A possible answer to this question, as kindly provided by one of my reviewers, is the conciseness of the Tibetan main text requires adaption to make it more accessible.



This is no doubt a bold hypothesis, and one that questions the credibility of the very Tibetan text we see; however, it is not put forward without certain reasons. First, it seems that the sections in the Tibetan manuscript which are absent from the Tangut Work show some commentarial features. In general, none of the missing verses provides critical new information that is present in the prose sections preceding them. These verses, functioning mostly as summaries, serve more as mnemonic devices to help the reader memorise the main points. The absent prose sections, as represented by the one in case (5), seem only to provide further explanations on certain matters, and do not diverge from the line of argument in their preceding sections. Could these missing sections, then, be perhaps commentaries that later accidentally entered the main text of Rgya dmar ba's work?

Second, building upon the point above, one can observe note-like sentences and passages in the main text of the Tibetan manuscript. Some of these are fairly visible when compared with the Tangut Work. For example, in case (6) [2], the quotes from the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, is somehow 'out of context' as has already been pointed out by Hugon and Vose (2022b: 108, n. 185). Contrarily, [2] is absent from the Tangut text. Could this be a later commentator's addition, based on an inaccurate understanding of Rgya dmar ba's intent? Again, in (6), [5] seems to be an interpolation because [4a] and [4b], which form [4] in the Tangut text, would connect very well to [3]. In fact, [5] would fit in with the context much better if it were attached to [2] instead of [3], because 'mirror' (*me long*), the example in [5], is an excellent analogy of the 'water' (*chu*) in [2]. Would other places, such as [2] in (1) and [14] in (7), also fall into this category?

Hence, we may derive the following scenario for P3. The Tanguts made a relatively faithful translation of Rgya dmar ba's original composition or a text close to it. The Tibetan manuscript we see, however, is distant from it. Certain commentaries, whether written or oral, whether composed by Rgya dmar ba himself or by others, were incorporated into the basic text by editors; and certain other comments made by later scholars and readers, originally intended as marginal notes, also inadvertently entered the text, thus resulting in the Tibetan manuscript.

What argues against P3, however, is that the Tibetan manuscript may in fact be produced quite close to Rgya dmar ba's own time (Hugon 2020b: 143). While the creation of the Tangut Work most likely predates 1222 (for the reason, see section 7), we do not know how early it was produced. There are still other pieces of evidence that we cannot decide whether they are in favour of P2 or P3. For example, one can see some main-text-like notes in the Tibetan manuscript. Many notes, such as the ones in (9), seem to be indispensable for the main text. But why are they not in the main text like their counterparts in the Tangut text? It is, of course, hard to say that they were later taken out of the main text and erroneously regarded as notes. But does this phenomenon support P2? Similarly, while it is not impossible that Rgya dmar ba did not originally write the topical outline (*sa bcad*), the lack of [1] in (8) in the Tibetan text, for instance, makes the subject of the sentence a bit unclear. A comparable case is (10), where the subtitle appears only in the note of the Tibetan text. But again, it is hard to say the topical outline was originally composed by Rgya dmar ba but later removed from the main in the Tibetan manuscript.

Based on the foregoing analyses, I am inclined to take P1 as the least plausible hypothesis. P2 and P3, on the other hand, have an equal possibility. And the decisive evidence that can support either one of them is non-existent, though future studies on both the Tangut and Tibetan texts may advance our understanding further. What we can conclude at present is that the Tangut Work is not a translation of the Tibetan *Analysis* as represented by the Tibetan manuscript; we could, however, say that both the Tibetan and Tangut texts are versions of the *Analysis*, regardless



[illegible]

Hence, all things considered, we can determine that the *Commentary* is a précis of the *Analysis*. The *Summary that Explains the Meaning of the Two Truths of the Conventional and Ultimate* seems simply to be the *Analysis*. Since #883 was written in 1222, the whole tradition of the *Analysis* must have already been established prior to that date. Similarly, the name of Rgya dmar ba, which appears in both the Tangut version of the treatise and the *Commentary*, must have been well known in Xixia at the beginning of the 13th century.

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be counted as an instance of the correct conventional is marked as held by Khyung, which is not informed by the Tibetan manuscript. Regardless of whether the Tangut text should be considered closer to Rgya dmar ba's original intention, it can no doubt assist us in better understanding the Tibetan manuscript we have today. As this paper has shown, by utilising the Tangut text, we can conclude that Jo btsun is Khyung, and find an explanation for places such as (6) [2], where the text appears to be incompatible with the context.

The Tangut text, of course, also delineates a significant intellectual connection between Tibet and Xixia. It shows yet another aspect of the presence of Gsang phu scholastic tradition in the Tangut State. A distinct feature of Rgya dmar ba's treatise is that it contains not only his own intellectual position, but also copious presentations of other Gsang phu masters' ideas. It follows that, through the lens of the treatise, the Tanguts were therefore able to view the spectacular panorama of Gsang phu Madhyamaka thought prior to Phya pa. Strikingly, the fact that both Tangut manuscripts bear ample notes that identify the Tibetan masters echoes the notes in the Tibetan manuscript strongly. It implies that the Tanguts received not only the mere text, but also a complete scholastic tradition centred around it. The *Commentary*, which is a précis on the *Analysis*, further bespeaks such a tradition.

Undeniably, the many treasures from the Tangut period, endowed with the potential for both substantiating the history of Xixia and advancing the study of Tibetan Buddhism, will unveil many more cases like the one examined in this paper.

Appendix: Personal Names in Tangut

Tangut Names	Pronunciations	Sanskrit/Tibetan Equivalents
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>lhji² bji¹ mji² dźjwōw¹</i>	Candrakīrti
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>ja² tji² śja¹</i>	Atiśa
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>sjij² njij¹ yiej¹</i>	Jñānagarbha
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>lu² tsja¹ wa¹</i>	[Rngog] Lo tsā ba
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>ŋwə¹</i>	Rngog [Lo tsā ba]
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>khjow²</i>	Khyung [Rin chen grags]
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>śjiw²</i>	[Gangs pa] She'u
𐰇𐰏𐰐𐰑	<i>jar¹</i>	Rgya [dmar ba]



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Abbreviations

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- ECMS Eluosi Kexueyuan Dongfang Yanjiusuo Sheng Bidebao fen suo 俄羅斯科學院東方研究所聖彼得堡分所, Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan Minzu Yanjiusuo 中國社會科學院民族研究所 and Shanghai Guji Chubanshe 上海古籍出版社 (eds.) *Eluosi Kexueyuan Dongfang Yanjiusuo Sheng Bidebao fen suo cang Heishuicheng wenxian* 俄羅斯科學院東方研究所聖彼得堡分所藏黑水城文獻 [Khara-Khoto manuscripts collected in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences]. Vols. 26, 28. Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2017, 2019.
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- M2 ‘*解藏經疏* [The Upper Volume of the Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka]’ (#5032). In: ECMS, vol. 28, 192–198 (18 frames).
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