Re-examining the Value of Dharmapāla's Commentary on the Third Verse of the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*

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1. The *Ālambanaparīkṣā* and its commentaries

The *Ālambanaparīkṣā* (ĀP) and its *vr̥tti*, the *Ālambanaparīkṣāvr̥tti* (ĀPV), are both composed by Dignāga (ca. 480–540) and extant only in Chinese and Tibetan translations. Two Indian commentaries on the ĀP/V have been preserved; one in Chinese, and the other in Tibetan: *Guan suoyuan lun shi* 觀所緣論釋 (ĀP_Y) by Dharmapāla (c. 530–561) and translated by Yijing 義淨 (635–713) in 710, and *dMigs pa brtag pa'i 'grel bśad* (*Ālambanaparīkṣāṭīkā*, ĀPT) by Vinītadeva (ca. 690–750).

2. Interpretations of v. 3 of the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*

Verse 3c–d of the ĀP says: *rdul phran rnam pa rnam rig gi // don min sra ñid la sogs bžin //* (The form of atoms is not the object of consciousness, just as solidity and so forth). Yamaguchi (1953, 452, n. 8) finds that Xuanzang 玄奘 (600/602–664) in *Guan suoyuanyuan lun* 觀所緣緣論 (ĀP_X, T31, 888b–889a) interprets this verse in the same way as Paramārtha (*zhendi* 真諦, 499–569) in *Wuxiang sichen lun* 無相思塵論 (ĀP_P, T31, 882c–883b), who attributes this to Dignāga's own statement in refuting the opponents. On the other hand, Dharmapāla in the ĀP_Y treats this verse as a statement by Dignāga's opponent, and this interpretation is followed by Vinītadeva in the ĀPT. Unfortunately, Yamaguchi did not translate the ĀP_Y nor show how he actually understood this passage. In fact, the ĀP_Y is a difficult text to comprehend. This present paper will re-examine the ĀP_Y closely. Conventions used in the following texts are: **Bold** = Words of Dignāga's ĀP; **Bold** = Words of Dignāga's ĀPV; Wavy line = Words shared by Dharmapāla in the ĀP_Y and Vinītadeva in the ĀPT; Dotted line = Parallel, if not entirely identical, phrases in the ĀP_Y and the ĀPT.

In the ĀP/V, the passage in question appears as follows:

The form of atoms (*rdul phran rnam pa, *aṇvākāra*) **is not the object of consciousness, just as solidity and so forth** (3c–d). **Just as solidity and so forth are, even though they exist, not the object of eye-consciousness, atoms are also the same** (See ĀP/V, 159.4–7).

Is v. 3c–d a statement by Dignāga, or by his opponent (i.e., the realist)? In the ĀP/V, while v. 3a–b is clearly the description of a position held by the realists, the position of the statement made in v. 3c–d is ambiguous and therefore results in different interpretations. Dharmapāla's commentary on v. 3c–d says:

[Question:] If so, how is it possible to say that atoms are not perceived by the sense faculty, furthermore, how is it possible [to say] that only correct cognition can perceive atoms? [Answer:] Because **the form of atoms is not the object of consciousness**. [Namely,] because it is not the object [cognized] by the sensory consciousness, it is said to be not [cognizable by] the sense faculty. Object which is not [cognizable by] the sense faculty is only perceived by the correct cognition. [Question:] By which reason [does a person] actually perceive the atoms and not perceive **the form of atoms**? [Answer:] **Just as solidity and so forth**. [Namely,] **just as solidity**, wetness **and so forth**. Where there are blue [color] and so on, **even though they exist, they are not the object of eye-consciousness** and so forth, **because the capacity of the sense faculties is each restricted**. **Atoms are also the same**. This is accepted by both parties (i.e., the proponent and the opponent) without any disagreement. [Question:] Is it not the case that [cognition can] manifest itself as the [form of] atoms because no solidity is formed as a different entity? [Answer:] This contradicts the probans of the thesis. [It is] allowed that **the ten sense-bases are only** [made of] **the great elements**. [Hence,] the statement contains no error. And this has been already stated before (See ĀP_Y, T31, 891a).

In the ĀP_Y, the above passage clearly indicates an argument between two parties. From reading the text alone it is difficult to determine which party is doing the questioning or the answering. On v. 3c–d Vinītadeva comments that:

If on the atoms there are forms of gross objects, then why are they called the atoms [the subtlest particle]? If someone asks: "Why are they (the atoms) not apprehended as having only subtle form?" **Therefore** [the verse answers that]: **"The form of atoms** (3c) and so on." In order to answer that, it is said that **"just as solidity and so forth"**. [Namely,] **just as solidity**, wetness, heat, **and so forth, even though they exist, because the capacity of the sense faculties is each restricted they are not the object of eye-consciousness** [but the object of body-consciousness]. **Similarly, atoms are also the same** that they are not [the object of consciousness] (See ĀPT, D 180b6–181a1, P 190a6–b1).

In the ĀPT, it is clear that Vinītadeva takes the ĀP v. 3c–d to be a statement by the realists,

as noted by Yamaguchi. This is because Vinītadeva begins by raising a question to criticize the realists and thereafter quotes the ĀP v. 3c–d as a counter argument from the realists.

3. Understanding the ĀP_Y through the ĀPT

As mentioned earlier, Yijing's translation of Dharmapāla's commentary on the ĀP v. 3c–d is abstruse. One possible way to better understand Yijing's translation is to look at the shared words between the ĀP_Y and the ĀPT:

1. The ĀP_Y says: 現見極微, 塵形不覩, 如堅性等, 如堅潤等, 於彼青等縱有其事, 非是眼等識之境界, 根之功能各決定故, 塵亦如是, 無違共許 (T31, 891a). In the ĀPT, Vinītadeva re-uses the phrase *dbañ po'i nus pa so sor nes pa'i phyir* (D 181a1, P 190b1) (because the capacity of the sense faculties is each restricted) which is equivalent verbatim to 根之功能各決定故 and gives an explanation similar to Dharmapāla's commentary.
2. The ĀP_Y says: 許共十處但是大種, 斯言無過. 然此已陳 (T31, 891a). Vinītadeva also uses the sentence *skye mched bcu ni 'byuñ ba tsam du zad do* in an earlier passage, which is equivalent to 十處但是大種 (the ten sense-bases are only [made of] the great elements) and explicitly explains that this is the position held by Buddhadeva, i.e. the opponent of Dignāga.

From the above-stated observations, it is clear that Vinītadeva reuses Dharmapāla's wording in this passage and has tried to explain Dharmapāla's idea in details. This process of comparison suggests that it is possible to consult the ĀPT in order to clarify some of the difficult translations encountered in the ĀP_Y. For example, in commenting upon v. 3a–b Yijing uses some technical terms such as *jixiang* 集相, *zongjuxiang* 總聚相, *zongjixiang* 總集相, and *juxiang* 聚相 which may have the same Sanskrit origin. This is verified by the corresponding passages in the ĀPT, in which a consistent term *'dus pa'i rnam pa* is used.

1. ĀP_Y: 於諸極微處各有集相 (T31, 890c). ĀPT: *rdul phra rab rnams la ni 'dus pa'i rnam pa yang yod do* // (D 180a3, P 189a8).
2. ĀP_Y: 在極微處有總聚相, 生自相識, 實有性故 (T31, 890c). ĀPT: *rdzas su yod pa'i phyir 'dus pa'i rnam pa de* [D: de om. P] *rnam par śes pa'i rgyu ñid du'gyur ro* // *rags pa'i phyir na rnam par śes pa la rañ gi ño bo yañ 'jog par 'gyur te* / (D 180a3–4, P 189a8–189b1).
3. ĀP_Y: 即此於其眾多相處, 極微之處, 有總集相 (T31, 890c). ĀPT: *yañ ji ltar rdul*

phra rab rnams la rnam pa du ma dañ ldan pa 'di yod ba de bžin du 'dus pa'i rnam pa 'di yañ de dag la yod par 'gyur ro // (D 180a7, P 189b5–6).

4. $\bar{A}P_Y$: 於諸微處識有聚相，何不言之 (T31, 890c). $\bar{A}PT$: *rdul phra rab rnams la 'dus pa'i rnam pa yod pa sgrub par byed pas rdul phra rab rnams la 'dus pa'i rnam pa yod do žes brjod par bya ba ma yin nam* / (D 180b3–4, P 190a2–3).

Hence, it is appropriate to assume that in spite of the different Chinese terms rendered by Yijing, their corresponding Tibetan is none other than *'dus pa'i rnam pa*.

4. Concluding remarks

Considering the observations above, it is clear that in some cases Vinītadeva re-uses Dharmapāla's wording and expands Dharmapāla's ideas in the $\bar{A}PT$. Therefore, by a close comparison between the $\bar{A}PT$ and the $\bar{A}P_Y$ some difficult passages found in the latter can be clarified. This method has been overlooked by scholars to date. I am at present engaged in a careful comparison between the $\bar{A}P_Y$ and the $\bar{A}PT$, with reference to the Chinese translations of the $\bar{A}P/V$, namely the $\bar{A}P_P$ and the $\bar{A}P_X$, in order to produce a more accurate reading of Yijing's translation.

Abbreviations

- $\bar{A}P$ Tibetan translation of Dignāga's *Ālambanaparīkṣā*. See Frauwallner (1959, 157–161).
 $\bar{A}P_Y$ Yijing 義淨's translation of Dharmapāla's Commentary of the *Ālambanaparīkṣāvr̥tti* (T31, 889a–892a).
 $\bar{A}PT$ Tibetan translation of Vinītadeva's *Ālambanaparīkṣāṭīkā* (D no. 4241, 175a3–187b5, P no. 5739, 183a7–197b7).
 $\bar{A}PV$ Tibetan translation of Dignāga's *Ālambanaparīkṣāvr̥tti*. See Frauwallner (1959, 157–161).

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Key words *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, Dharmapāla, Vinītadeva, Yijing 義淨, *'dus pa'i rnam pa*

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