

Tracing the Sources of the *Book of Zambasta*: the Case of the *Yakṣa* Painter Simile and the *Kāśyapaparivarta*

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this paper I will deal with the identification of a verse in the Khotanese *Book of Zambasta* [= *Z*] containing the simile of the *yakṣa* painter, discussing the verse from a literary perspective by examining a number of occurrences of the simile in other Buddhist texts, so as to highlight how the Khotanese evidence exists within a broader textual and religio-historical context. The treatment of the full doctrinal implications of this simile in the philosophical context of the two chapters where it appears has, however, to be left to another occasion.

The *Book of Zambasta*, the longest surviving original doctrinal compendium in Old Khotanese, is a long poem devoted to the exposition of the tenets of so-called Mahāyāna Buddhism. Although its precise date of composition is unknown, it probably dates back to no later than the second half of the fifth century CE,¹ possibly marking the very *debut* of a Buddhist literature in Khotanese, intimately related to the religious and cultural thrust of Mahāyāna written literacy in Buddhist Central Asia.

To date, the code of monastic discipline in use or prevalent in Khotan at the time of the composition of the *Book of Zambasta* is unknown. However, an adherence to Mahāyāna views within the institutional context of one or perhaps more than one of the traditional Buddhist ordination lineages (*nikāyas*) would seem a probable scenario. The scholastic affiliation of the compiler of the *Book of Zambasta* is still obscure, and is as blurred as the beginning of the transmission and reception of Mahāyāna in Khotan. A unified buddhological paradigm, in the sense of a consistent soteriological and eschatological notion of the Buddha(s), cannot be expected either, the *Book of Zambasta* being not one simple text but a body of different textual traditions.²

Despite being the earliest original Mahāyāna scripture written in Khotanese, the *Book of Zambasta* has never been systematically investigated as such, i.e. from the point of view of the role played by Khotan in the establishment and transmission of Mahāyāna doctrines and texts. This paper attempts a first step in this direction.

II. THE YAKṢA SIMILE IN THE BOOK OF ZAMBASTA

The *yakṣa* as a character employed in a simile features twice in the *Book of Zambasta*: in chapter 7, a rather complex, dense and doctrinally compact exposition of the doctrine of emptiness (*śūnyatā*),³ coloured with a provocative anti-Śrāvakayānist zest, and in chapter 9, where emptiness is discussed in continuation of chapter 8, with particular reference to a selection of core doctrinal terms of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It is the *yakṣa* simile in chapter 9 that can be more precisely identified as a quote of the simile present in other Mahāyāna works. In order to understand what the author is intending to convey, it is necessary to read it at least together with the subsequent verse, which elaborates on the idea of the emptiness of the conditioned world:

- 9.19 *samu kbo pīrākā pvai'ttā tte yakṣā cu tvera pīde*
trāmu uysnora avāyā cu nā hāvīne samñe jsa škaunda .
9.20 *ttāna samñā-mātraī lovā ttāna samñā-mātre škoigye .*
ttāna samñā-mātrā dharma hamatā hārṣṭāyi ne indā

“[9.19] Just as a painter fears that *yakṣa* whom he has painted on a scroll, so beings fear the Hells (*apāya*), things which have been crafted for them by virtue of their own imagination (*saṃjñā*). [9.20] Therefore, the world is mere imagination (*saṃjñā-mātra*). Therefore, formations (*saṃskāra*) are mere imagination. Therefore, the *dharma*s are mere imagination. They themselves do not really exist.”⁴

The mention of the *yakṣa* in chapter 7 also requires to be read with its immediately preceding and following verses. The passage, with its dream simile that is definitely a *leitmotiv* running through the *Book of Zambasta*, displays a striking Prajñāpāramitā-Vijñānavāda flavour:⁵

- 7.28 *hīvya vākalpa škaumjūgya haḥḥḥa samu*
tta vā banāsā ne ju varatā bhāvā karā
7.29 *kho pīdā yakṣā pī---rākā pvai'ttā hamatā*
kho hvā'ndā saindā hūna gyastūna suba.
7.30 *ku na-ro biysendā harbiššī saindā biššā*
cīyā biysendā ne ju varata byaude hārā

“[7.28] His own mental fabrications (*vikalpa*) are merely a reality based on formations (*saṃskāra*). Thus, there is an erroneous

assumption (*viparyāsa*), [but] there is no existence (*bhāva*) there at all, [7.29] as when a painter is himself afraid of a painted *yakṣa*,⁶ as when to a man in a dream divine pleasures appear: [7.30] as long as he does not wake up, they all appear to him, all, [yet,] when he does wake up, no thing is to be found there.”⁷

The use of similes or examples (*upamāna*, *dr̥ṣṭānta*) is a well-known characteristic of Buddhist texts, a literary device employed to evoke and clarify a theory, though not necessarily intended to cover all the doctrinal implications nor to convey the full meaning of the theory itself. In the case of the *yakṣa* painter simile,⁸ the character of the *yakṣa* appears to be just one out of the many possible objects painted by the painter’s delusion, while the simile seems to be mainly pointing to the process of representing a certain object, and to the belief due to a cognitive mistake that this should be truly existent. At the same time, the presence of the fearful (*bhayaṃkara*) *yakṣa* as the represented object makes the simile particularly poignant, as it is closely associated with fear (*bhaya*) over the coming into being and passing away of the aggregates, as opposed to the fearlessness (*abhaya*) of the Buddha’s awakening (*bodhi*).

The *yakṣa* of the simile embodies thus a fundamental perversion of perception. The levels of applicability of the notion of right and wrong cognition and the relation between the phenomenal world and different degrees of perceptual purification and validity are indeed manifold. Different philosophical threads in Buddhist thought emphasize different planes of disentanglement of the tangles of reality, with an extremely varied range of nuances. Unfortunately we are not yet in a position to assess precisely what the paradigm of the *Book of Zambasta* is in this regard, although a general, perhaps generic, early Yogācāra view seems to be consistently embraced in most parts of the work.

Although the *yakṣa* painter simile in the *Book of Zambasta* does not occur in the context of a strictly speaking meditative practice, mind-created images are widely used in Buddhist meditation, where, above and beyond the individual contents of a specific visualization practice, the main aspect remains the insight into the impermanent, unsatisfactory, and selfless nature of all fabricated phenomena, be they heavenly or dreadful. Believing the reality of a represented image is in itself a powerful analogy to the deception of mind-made *saṃsāra*. Meditative instructions based on visualization and visual imagery were very popular in Buddhist Central Asia, well documented by archaeological, iconographical and textual evidence.⁹

The reference to painting and the illusory nature of the conditioned representation of the world is echoed by verses 25-27 of the *Mañjuśrīnairātmyāvatārasūtra*, a Late Khotanese original composition in verse drawing on various Sanskrit and Khotanese sources including a considerable number of verses from the *Book of Zambasta*:¹⁰

25 *ca mene vara dahū straya utca *ysamaśadai dai bā :*
bainema ppracā bāsa ne ne byade āttama satva
 26 *khu ttauraña hamadā strīya pīrūna *harbaiśya *agyā*
suau’ sta
gūna cha sakṣā dyāena vara jadā aysmva khauysda
 27 *ttu mañada harbaśa rūva tvīra pīrūna hamaga*
ttasā drravyasta na ida cāya-narmyana hamaga

“[25] Whatever [there was] there [that was] man and woman, [was in reality merely] water, *earth, fire, wind. Divide up all the causal factors (*pratyaya*): there is found no self (*ātman*), [no] being (*sattva*). [26] Just as in the case of the painting on a wall of a woman furnished with all the members, due to the appearance of hair, complexion, stature, in that case [it is] the mind of the ignorant [that] moves. [27] Similarly, all forms (*rūpa*) are like paintings on a scroll. Empty (*śūnya*), they are not material substance (*dravya*) [but are] like what is projected by a magic spell.”¹¹

Earlier uses of similar similes are well attested in early Buddhist literature. A case in point can be found, e.g., in the *Atthirāga sutta* (SN 12:64 at SN II, 101), a discourse on the so-called four nutriments of existence (*āhāra*):

Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, rajako vā cittakārako vā sati rajanāya vā lākhāya vā haliddiyā vā nīliyā vā mañjīṭṭhāya vā suparimattṭhe vā phalake bhittiyā vā dussapaṭṭe vā itthirūpaṃ vā purisariūpaṃ vā abhinimminēyya sabbaṅgapaccāṅgaṃ; evam eva kho, bhikkhave, kabalikāre ce āhāre atthi rāgo atthi nandī atthi tanhā, patiṭṭhitam tattha viññānaṃ virūlhaṃ. Yattha patiṭṭhitam viññānaṃ virūlhaṃ, atthi tattha nāmarūpassa avakkanti. Yattha atthi nāmarūpassa avakkanti, atthi tattha saṅkhārānaṃ vuddhi. Yattha atthi saṅkhārānaṃ vuddhi, atthi tattha āyatim punabbhavābhiniḍḍanti. Yattha atthi āyatim punabbhavābhiniḍḍanti, atthi tattha āyatim jātijarāmarānaṃ. Yattha atthi āyatim jātijarāmarānaṃ, sasokaṃ tam, bhikkhave, sadaraṃ saupāyāsan ti vadāmi.

“Suppose, bhikkhus, an artist or a painter, using dye or lac or turmeric or indigo or crimson, would create the figure of a man or a woman complete in all its features on a well-polished plank or wall or canvas. So too, if there is lust for the nutriment edible food, or for the nutriment contact, or for the nutriment mental volition, or for the nutriment consciousness, if there is delight, if there is craving, consciousness becomes established there and comes to growth. Wherever consciousness becomes established and comes to growth... I say that is accompanied by sorrow, anguish and despair.”¹²

III. THE SIMILE IN THE MAHĀYĀNAVIMŚIKĀ AND THE KĀŚYAPAPARIVARTA

After this excursus, intended to contextualise, though minimally, the simile of the *yakṣa* painter, I now turn to the issue of the identification of the source of the simile as it appears in the *Book of Zambasta*, which is the main concern of the present article. Nāgārjuna is the only author mentioned by name in the *Book of Zambasta*, so it is only reasonable that works by or attributed to him are one of the first choices when one is searching for the sources of the *Book of Zambasta*. His name precedes a quotation from the *Bodhisambhāra* at Z 11.32 (*tta hvate nāggārjuni* “Thus said Nāgārjuna”).¹³ Accordingly, when I recognised Z 9.19 in the *Mahāyānavimśikā*, another work attributed to Nāgārjuna, although both attributions may in fact be spurious, the identification seemed to me to fit very well into this picture.¹⁴

In fact, stanza nine of the Sanskrit text of the *Mahāyānavimśikā* is a perfect match to the *Book of Zambasta*:¹⁵

*yathā citrakaro rūpaṃ yakṣasyātibhayaṃkaraṃ (MS karaḥ) |
bibhēti svayam ālikhya samsāre ’py abudhas tathā ||*¹⁶

“Just as a painter is afraid of the terrifying image of a Yakṣa which he himself has painted, so the fool [is] also [afraid] in *samsāra* [created by his ignorance].”¹⁷

However, the verse under consideration already occurs in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*.¹⁸ This is not surprising, on account of the doctrinal and chronological closeness of the works of Nāgārjuna, as well as those attributed to him, and the *Kāśyapaparivarta*.¹⁹

A suggestion as to where to look for possible quotes of this work is given by M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya in the introduction to the edition of the Sanskrit manuscript of the *Kāśyapaparivarta*: “The popularity of the sūtra in Eastern Turkestan and its importance for the Mahāyāna tradition resulted in frequent quoting of the text in various sūtras, śāstras and other Buddhist texts of the first millennium. The limitations of this introduction do not allow us to dwell on details of quotations from the KP [*Kāśyapaparivarta*] found in Buddhist works. A list alone would be bulky. ... We should be especially attentive to quotations of the sūtra found in works ascribed to Nāgārjuna by some scholars, namely the *Bodhisambhārasāstra*, the *Ratnāvalī*, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*, the *Daśabhūmivibhāṣāsāstra*, and the *Catuhstava*.”²⁰ The same can equally be said in the case of the *Book of Zambasta*, which contains several quotations from the *Kāśyapaparivarta*.

At *Kāśyapaparivarta* 99 it is the mind itself that is compared to a painter:

*cittaṃ hi kāśyapa citrakarasadṛṣa vicitrakarmābhisam-
karaṇatayā*

“The mind, o Kāśyapa, is like a painter, for it crafts different actions.”²¹

However, the *yakṣa* painter simile is included in the verse part of *Kāśyapaparivarta* 67, which is missing from the Sanskrit manuscript but is preserved in the five known Chinese versions as well as in Tibetan:²²

譬如工畫師 畫彼惡夜叉
於彼自驚怖 迷悶仆倒地
凡夫亦復然 自著於聲色
迷彼不覺知 墮落輪迴道²³

“For example, just as a painter who draws an evil *yakṣa* is himself bewildered and frightened, and confused faints and falls flat on the ground, so too do ordinary people, attaching themselves to sounds and forms. Confused, they do not understand it, and fall into *samsāra*.”

The Tibetan version reads:

*dper na ri mo mkhan zbig gis | gnod sbyin ’jigs pa’i gzugs byas nas
| de yis ’jigs te khas bub tu | gyel nas bregyal bar gyur pa ltar | byis
pa so so’i skye bo kun | bdag nyid kyis ni byas pa yi | gzugs sgra la
sogs rmongs gyur pas | ’gro ba drug tu ’khyam par gyur |*²⁴

“Just as a painter, terrified, overthrown, faints, and falls down senseless after having fashioned a terrifying image of a *yakṣa*, in the same way every foolish ordinary being, deluded as to sights, sounds, and so forth, goes wandering in the six realms of existence.”

Although this is not the place to deal with the textual variations in the verse as well as prose quotations of the simile in the occurrences we have considered, it is worth noting that in the various quotations different words are used for the name of the terrifying being which the painter painted, and at the sight of whose image he becomes terrified. As to the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, the Han and Jin translations have *guishen xiang* 鬼神像 “the image of a spirit (or a ghost).” The Qin translation renders *yakṣarūpa* with *yecha gui xiang* 夜叉鬼像 “image of a *yakṣa* spirit,” opting for a hybrid rendering consisting of a transcription followed by a translation, which is a frequently preferred combination. The Song translation presents a simple transcription of *yakṣa* as *yecha* 夜叉 (Skr. *rūpa*, evidently not considered vital to the understanding of the passage, has not been translated), determined by the adjective *chouè* 醜惡 “horrible, frightening, disgusting.”

The Tibetan text of the *Kāśyapaparivarta* has *gnod sbyin ’jigs pa’i gzugs* “the image of a frightening (*’jigs pa*) *yakṣa* (*gnod sbyin*),” whereas Ānanda and Grags-’byor shes-rab’s translation of the *Mahāyānavimśikā* has *gshin tu ’jigs byed gshin rje’i gzugs* “the image of a very fearful (*gshin tu ’jigs byed*) Lord of Death (*gshin rje*)”²⁵ where, strictly speaking, *gshin rje* would render a

Sanskrit *yamarūpa*,²⁶ and, in the other version, translated by Candrakumāra and Śākya-'od, *gnod sbyin 'jigs pa* "a fearful (*'jigs pa*) *yakṣa* (*gnod sbyin*)."

IV. OTHER OCCURRENCES OF THE YAKṢA PAINTER SIMILE

The *yakṣa* painter simile is a frequent image in Buddhist texts of the first millennium CE. The citations are varied, not always literal, and those who used them would not have always been aware of the source of their sources. I will now mention just a few examples that are directly significant to the occurrence of the verse in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* and the *Book of Zambasta*.²⁷

First of all, the *yakṣa* painter simile is present in the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭikā*, Sthiramati's sub-commentary on Vasubandhu's commentary to Maitreya[nātha]-Asaṅga's *Madhyāntavibhāgaśāstra*.²⁸ The passage in Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭikā* documents an authoritative interpretation of the *yakṣa* simile, even more so in the present context as Sthiramati was also the author of a *Kāśyapaparivartaṭikā* preserved in Tibetan and Chinese translations.²⁹ The passage offers an example of a Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda exegesis influenced by Mādhyamika thought:

Etasya vikalpadvayāntasya parivarjanārtham citrakaradyṣṭāntaḥ | tadyathā—Kāśyapa citrakarāḥ svayam eva bhīṣaṇam yakṣarūpaṃ³⁰ kṛtvā tasmād eva bhūtasasto'dhomukho nīpatya saṃmoham nigacchet | evam eva Kāśyapa sarvabālaprthagjanāḥ svayam eva rūpaśabdagandharasasparśān kṛtvā tebhyaḥ saṃsāre bhrāmyanti na ca tān dharmān yathābhūtaṃ prajānantīti || yathā ca citrakarāḥ svayamkṛte bhīṣaṇake yakṣarūpe mithyāvikalpena bhūtayakṣabhāvam adhyāropya tasmād bhūtaḥ saṃmoham āpadayate | evaṃ sarva eva bālā mithyāvikalpaprasāntāḥ svayam kṛtair iti vikalpitaiḥ saṃsāre bhrāmyante ||³¹

"The example of the painter [is given] in order to free oneself from the twofold extreme of this conceptual fabrication (*vikalpa*).³² So there, Kāśyapa, as the painter, after he himself has created the image of a dreadful *yakṣa* and has fallen flat on his face frightened by that [image], falls into confusion, thus, Kāśyapa, all ordinary beings who are ignorant, after they themselves have created form, sound, smell, taste and touch, because of these, wander in *saṃsāra*, and as a result do not recognise these dharmas as they are according to their nature. And as the painter, in creating the image of the dreadful *yakṣa*, having erroneously attributed existence to the *yakṣa*, [considering the latter] as existing due to conceptual fabrication, frightened by him, falls into confusion, likewise, all the ignorant, who give themselves over to conceptual fabrications, wander in *saṃsāra* due to the conceptual fabrications created by themselves...."

Another variation of the simile occurs in Bhāveka's sixth-century *Dasheng zhangzhen lun* 大乘掌珍論 T 1578, a text preserved only in Chinese translation.³³ This occurrence is relevant in the present context as the date of the composition of Bhāveka's Mādhyamika work in the sixth century is very close to that of the earliest attested circulation of the *Book of Zambasta*, as well as on account of the latter's special sensitivity to Mādhyamika patterns and motives:³⁴

如世有一無智畫師畫作可畏藥叉鬼像或女人像眩目亂意謂為實有執實有故自起驚怖或生貪染於彼境界眾多計度增長分別諸見羅網

"In the same way, in the world an ignorant painter draws the terrifying image of a *yakṣa*, or the image of a woman. His eyes upset, his mind muddled, he thinks that those things are true; he assumes them to be true, he is afraid, he is desirous. [In the same way,] as to the objects, [the ignorant] copiously imagine concepts and develop the net of false views."³⁵

V. CONCLUSIONS

It is impossible to prove whether the direct provenance of the quotation of the *yakṣa* painter simile in Z 7.29 and Z 9.19 is the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, of which, incidentally, at least two Sanskrit versions circulated in Khotan in the first centuries CE, or the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā*, attributed to Nāgārjuna, who dates most probably to the second century CE. Both options are equally possible and both would not clash with the hypothesis of a date of composition of the *Book of Zambasta* not later than the second half of the fifth century CE.³⁶ Even if the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* were not written by Nāgārjuna but was a compilation contemporary with or later than him, its source (the *Kāśyapaparivarta* itself?) could still have been the direct source of the *yakṣa* painter simile available to the author of the *Book of Zambasta*. It is known that an early recension of the *Kāśyapaparivarta* was translated into Chinese probably during or around Nāgārjuna's own lifetime.³⁷ It has also been pointed out that Nāgārjuna's doctrine based on the analysis of dichotomously opposed pairs of concepts is characteristic of the *Kāśyapaparivarta*.³⁸ In view of the close relationship between other parts of the *Book of Zambasta* and the *Kāśyapaparivarta* which seems to be now fairly well established,³⁹ it is very likely that the *Kāśyapaparivarta* was the actual source of the simile in the *Book of Zambasta*. However, considering the doctrinal and chronological closeness between the *Kāśyapaparivarta* and Nāgārjuna's works (or those of his early successors) and the copious *Kāśyapaparivarta* quotations in works attributed to Nāgārjuna, one could expect that the author of the *Book of Zambasta*, who must have had access to both the *Kāśyapaparivarta* and the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā*, could have easily taken the *yakṣa* painter simile from either scripture. This particularly holds

true if, in the study of the sources of the *Book of Zambasta*, one is aware that one is dealing with a miscellaneous and somehow multi-threaded doctrinal work, very open by nature to the inclusion of a wide-ranging assortment of materials, though naturally the specific nuances of the philosophical implications of the same sources of the simile featured in different texts do vary. In considering the *Kāśyapaparivarta* as the source of the source(s) of the *yakṣa* painter simile, I have only taken into account earlier evidence which has a direct religio-historical bearing on the *Book of Zambasta*, but nevertheless, the simile could have been current in earlier texts, serving more or less comparable, or dissimilar, doctrinal purposes.

To conclude, the identification of the source of the *yakṣa* painter simile in the *Book of Zambasta* can be taken as a sample

of an integrated philological and religio-historical approach to the study of the sources of the *Book of Zambasta*, where a vertical approach to the sources becomes reoriented by the broader horizontal layer represented by the religio-historical connections of the text. Indeed, the discussion of the possible sources inevitably raises the question of the circulation in Central Asia of the earliest known text where the simile appears, namely, the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, and hence that of the importance of this scripture in the Buddhism of Khotan from its earliest days, as well as that of the group of scriptures that came to be collected in the Chinese canon under the collective title of *Da bao ji jing* 大寶積經 T 310 (*Mahāratnakūṭasūtra*), to which both the *Kāśyapaparivarta* and other texts that were known to the author of the *Book of Zambasta* belonged.⁴⁰

Notes

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¹ Cf. M. Maggi, "The Manuscript T III S 16: its Importance for the History of Khotanese Literature," in *Turfan Revisited: the First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, ed. D. Durkin-Meisterernst et al. (Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 2004), 184-90 and 547. Found at Shorchuk (Northern Tarim, near Karashahr), T III S 16 is the earliest extant copy of the *Book of Zambasta*.

² One could apply to early Khotanese Buddhism, and specifically to the case of the *Book of Zambasta*, Jonathan Silk's remark on a similar situation of religio-historical complexity found in the context of early Mahāyāna, regarded as "a sort of meta-level movement," "which has doctrinal but no institutional existence as such, which is neither a *nikāya*, an orthodox ordination lineage, nor a *vāda*, a school defined by doctrines" (J. Silk, "What, if anything, is Mahāyāna Buddhism? Problems of Definitions and Classifications," *Numen* 49 (2002): 355-405, esp. 383).

³ The Sanskrit equivalents of key words have been inserted within brackets in the translations from the Khotanese and throughout the paper.

⁴ After R. E. Emmerick, *The Book of Zambasta: a Khotanese Poem on Buddhism*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 143, with modifications.

⁵ In the same way as beings see various things in a dream, under the power of ignorance, they see the manifold objects of experience while awake, yet all formations are just like objects conjured up by magic. On dream, mirage, magic and related similes, see M. Hattori, "The Dream Simile in Vijñānavāda treatises," in *Indological and Buddhist Studies: Volume in Honour of Professor J. W. de Jong on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. L. A. Hercus et al. (Canberra: Australian National University, 1982 [repr. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1984]), 235-41.

⁶ My translation of *piḍā* follows E. Leumann, *Das nordarische (sakische) Lebrgedicht des Buddhismus: Text und Übersetzung*, aus dem Nachlaß hrsg. von M. Leumann (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1933-1936), 108.

⁷ After Emmerick, *The Book of Zambasta*, 131, with modifications.

⁸ Restrictions of space do not allow me to discuss in detail the position of the *yakṣa* in the imagery of ancient and living Buddhist cultures, let alone the origin and meaning of the *yakṣa* cult. The *yakṣa* can be endowed with quite a positive connotation at an earlier stage of its Buddhist usage and performs an ambivalent function altogether, from being a recipient of the Buddha's teaching to threatening his disciples, to being invoked as the cause of illness and madness (cf., e.g., M. M. J. Marasinghe, *Gods in Early Buddhism: a Study in their Social and Mythological Milieu as Depicted in the Nikāyas of the Pāli Canon* (Kelaniya: Vidyalankara Campus, University of Sri Lanka (Ceylon), 1974); G. Sutherland, *The Disguises of the Demon: the Development of the Yakṣa in Hinduism and Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

⁹ For a representation of terrifying *yakṣas* in the mural paintings of Toyuk (Turfan) which can be traced back to the visualization instructions of the *Kuan wuliangshou jing* 製無量壽佛經 T 365, see N. Yamabe, "Practice of Visualization and the *Visualization Sūtra*: an Examination of Mural Paintings at Toyuk, Turfan," *Pacific World Third Series* 4 (2002): 123-52, esp. 132-35 and 132, fig. 8. On the study of Chinese meditation texts in relationship to the so-called *Yogalehrbuch* see N. Yamabe, "The Significance of the 'Yogalehrbuch' for the Investigation into the Origin of Chinese Meditation Texts," *Bukkyō Bunka* 9 (1999): 1-74, and *The Sūtra on the Ocean-Like Samādhi of the Visualization of the Buddha: an Interfusion of the Chinese and Indian Cultures in Central Asia as Reflected in a Fifth Century Apocryphal Sūtra* (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1999).

¹⁰ The *Mañjuśrīnairātmyāvatārasūtra* contains a complex, very visual description of the three root defilements (*rāga*-, *dveṣa*- and *mohā-kleśā*) as three doctrinal monsters whose body parts are identified with aspects of Buddhist doctrine. Cf. R. E. Emmerick, "Three monsters in Khotan," *Studia Iranica* 6 (1977): 65-74.

¹¹ After R. E. Emmerick, "From the Mañjuśrīnairātmyāvatārasūtra," in *Bauddhavidyāsudhākarah: Studies in honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, eds. P. Kieffer-Pülz and J.-U. Hartmann (Swissal-Oden-dorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1997), 81-90, esp. 87, with modifications. For the emendation **ysamaśadai* instead of Emmerick's **ysamaśadā* for Ms. *ya*, see M. Maggi, *Abstracta Iranica* 20-21 (1997-1998): 32-33. Incidentally, this passage echoes *Das beng zhangzhen lun* 大乘掌珍論 T 1578, 268.3.1, where the *yakṣa* painter simile is also quoted (see page 94).

¹² After *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: a Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*, tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi (Wisdom Publications: Somerville,

MA, 2000), 599-601, esp. 600 (translation). Particularly instructive is the commentary (as quoted in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 775, n. 173): “The painter represents kamma with its adjuncts [Sārathappakāsīnī-purāṇa-ṭīkā, Saṃyutta-ṭīkā: craving and ignorance, and time and destination, etc.]; the panel, wall, or canvas represents the round with its three realms. As the painter creates a figure on the panel, so kamma with its adjuncts creates a form in the realms of existence.”

¹³ The quotation was recently identified by M. Maggi, “Nāgārjuna’s quotation in the Khotanese *Book of Zambasta*,” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism at Soka University* 10 (2006 [2007]): 533-35. The *Bodhisambhāraśāstra* or *Bodhisambhāra[ka]*, Chinese *Puti ziliang lun* 菩提資糧論 T 1660, belongs to the group of texts Lindtner ascribed with certainty to Nāgārjuna (cf. Ch. Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana: Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982 [reprint Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987]), 11 and 225-27). Still, Nāgārjuna’s authorship seems far from being firmly established, and the attributions of modern scholars all differ (cf. D. Seyfort-Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), 8-29).

¹⁴ The *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* is extant in Sanskrit, Chinese (a late Song translation, *Dasbeng ershi song lun* 大乘二十頌論 T 1576), and two Tibetan translations. The text falls, according to Lindtner, into “the group of the texts of dubious attribution to Nāgārjuna that are only perhaps authentic.” Cf. Lindtner, “Nagarjuniana,” 12 with n. 16.

¹⁵ The stanza should be counted as 16 if one includes the introductory verses placed before the invocation stanza (stanza 8) opening the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā*, which, according to Tucci, are an addition due to a scribal mistake (cf. G. Tucci, “Mahāyāna Viṃśikā of Nāgārjuna,” in *Minor Buddhist Texts: Part I*, published on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1956), 194-207, 196). Stanza nine corresponds to stanza eight of Candrakumāra and Śākya ’od’s translation and to stanza ten of both Ānanda and Grags-’byor shes-rab’s translation and the Chinese version.

¹⁶ Cf. Tucci, “Mahāyāna Viṃśikā,” 202.

¹⁷ After Tucci, “Mahāyāna Viṃśikā,” 206, with modifications. For the edited text of the Tibetan versions see R. C. Jamieson, *A Study of Nāgārjuna’s Verses on the Great Vehicle and his Verses on the Heart of Dependent Origination* (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2001; originally published in 2000 as *A Study of Nāgārjuna’s Twenty Verses on the Great Vehicle (Mahāyānaviṃśikā) and His Verses on the Heart of Dependent Origination (Pratītyasamutpādhā rdayakārikā)*, with the Interpretation of the Heart of Dependent Origination (Pratītyasamutpādhā rdayavyākhyāna) (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2000), 32 (stanza eight) and 42 (stanza ten). The stanzas preceding and following the one containing the *yakṣa* painter simile present two other related similes: beings enjoy the objects of conditioned existence just as happens in a magic show (*Mahāyānaviṃśikā* 8); and drown in the mud of false representations, just as a fool falls in the mud which he himself prepared (*Mahāyānaviṃśikā* 9).

¹⁸ As immediately revealed by consultation of Tucci’s edition and translation of the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* (cf. Tucci, “Mahāyāna Viṃśikā,” 197 and 206, n. 1). The location in the *Kāśyapaparivarta* of the two quotations identified by the author of the *Book of Zambasta* as coming from the *Ratnakūṭa* and the fact that whereas other texts that came to be collected in the *Ratnakūṭa* collection are quoted in the *Book of Zambasta* by their individual titles, makes it logical to assume that in the *Book of Zambasta* the title *Ratnakūṭa* (Khot. *ratnakūla*) refers to quotations from the *Kāśyapaparivarta*. Cf. Maggi “The Manuscript T III S 16,” 189, n. 23. See Martini, “*Ratnakūṭa* scriptures in Khotan,” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism at Soka University* 13 (2009 [2010]), forthcoming. The Khotanese evidence is supported by and in turn confirms what holds true in the case of all the quotations from the *Kāśyapaparivarta* that have been so far identified in Indian sources, whether extant in Sanskrit or preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translation (cf. J. Nattier, *A Few Good Men: the Bodhisattva Path according to The Inquiry of Ugra (Ugrapariprocā)* [Honolulu: The University of Hawai’i Press, 2003], 31-36, and 32, n. 54).

¹⁹ Cf. L. Kawamura, “The Middle Path According to the *Kāśyapaparivarta-sūtra*,” in *Wisdom, Compassion, and the Searching for Understanding: the Buddhist Studies Legacy of Gadjin M. Nagao*, ed. J. A. Silk (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000), 221-232. See also Bhikkhu Pāsādika, “Two quotations from the *Kāśyapaparivarta* in Nāgārjuna’s *Sūtrasamuccaya*,” *Indologica Taurinensia* 23-24 (1998-99): 313-20.

²⁰ Cf. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, *The Kāśyapaparivarta: Romanized Text and Facsimiles*, in collaboration with S. Karashima and N. Kudo (Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism, Soka University, 2002), ix.

²¹ Cf. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, 35 (text); Weller, *Zum Kāśyapaparivarta*, 119-20, and Chang, “The Sūtra of Assembled Treasures,” 399.

²² *Yiyue monibao jing* 遺曰摩尼寶經 T 350, 191a16-17 (Eastern Han translation), translated by F. Weller, “Kāśyapaparivarta, nach der Han-Fassung verdeutscht,” in *Buddhist Yearly 1968/1969* (Halle: Buddhist Centre, 1970), 57-221, esp. 24-125 with notes at 179-80, section 52 (corresponding to section 67 of the Sanskrit text); cf. also “The Sūtra of Assembled Treasures,” in *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras: Selection from the Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra*, tr. The Buddhist Association of the United States, ed. Garma C. C. Chang (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1983), 387-414, esp. 396; *Moheyan baoyan jing* 摩訶衍寶嚴經 T 351, 196c12-13 (Jin translation); *Dabaoji jing* 大寶積經 T 310, 634a23-25 (Qin translation); *Dasbeng bao yun jing* 大乘寶雲經 T 659, 279a2-3 (a sixth century version of the *Ratnameghasūtra* containing the *Kāśyapaparivarta* as its seventh chapter); *Da jiashe wen dabaoji zhengfa jing* 大迦葉問大寶積正法經 T 352, 207c16-17 (Song translation), translated by F. Weller, “Die Sung-Fassung des Kāśyapaparivarta, Versuch einer Verdeutschung,” in *Monumenta Serica* 25 (1966): 207-361, esp. 276-77, section 67. The Tibetan version preserved in the Kanjur translated by Jinamitra, Śilendrabodhi and Ye-shes-sde at the beginning of the ninth century (*Phags pa ’od srung gi le’u shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo* [= *Aryakāśyapaparivartanāmamahāyānasūtra*]), is available in A. von Stäel-Holstein’s edition, *The Kāśyapaparivarta: a Mahāyānasūtra of the Ratnakūṭa class*, edited in the original Sanskrit, in Tibetan and in Chinese (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1926), translated by F. Weller, *Zum Kāśyapaparivarta. Heft 2: Verdeutschung des sanskrit-tibetischen Textes* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1965), esp. 102-03. For a Sanskrit restoration and a translation of section 67 on the basis of quotations in the *Madhyāntavibhāga* cf. Bhikkhu Pāsādika, “The Dharma-Discourse of the Great Collection of Jewels: the Kāśyapa-Section: Mahāratnakūṭadharmaparyāya - Kāśyapaparivarta: English Translation and Restoration of the Missing Sanskrit Portions (V),” *Linh-Son publication d’études bouddhologiques* 5 (1978): 28-39, esp. 38, n. 31.

²³ *Yiyue monibao jing* 遺曰摩尼寶經 T 350, 191a16-18. T 350 is the earliest extant Chinese translation, done during the Eastern Han epoch, aligned with Lokakṣema’s work in overall terms on the basis of its vocabulary and style, though not directly ascribed to him. Nattier, *A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations*, 83-84, places the text in the group of second-tier texts attributable to Lokakṣema. I refer to this particular translation for the sake of convenience, without thereby suggesting a chronological association with the *Book of Zambasta*.

²⁴ *Q bka’ gyur, dkon brtsegs* 3 (vol. 24), ’i, 101b3-138a5, at 133a4-5.

²⁵ For the text cf. Jamieson, *A Study*, 32 (Ānanda and Grags-’byor shes-rab’s translation), and 42 (Candrakumāra and Śākya ’od’s translation).

²⁶ Cf. Jamieson, *A Study*, 32, n. 1.

²⁷ The simile is also quoted in the commentary to the *Ācāryacaryācāya*. Bhattacharya stated that only one verse of the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* was known to have been quoted in other works. To date, we know of several other verses from the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* quoted with variants in other works (cf. quotations from the the *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* in later works given throughout in Jamieson, *A Study*), but it is still a happy coincidence that the verse singled out by Bhattacharya should be just the one containing the *yakṣa* painter simile quoted in the Sanskrit commentary to the *Ācāryacaryācāya*: *yathā citrakaro rūpaṃ yakṣasyāstibhāmkaṃ* [read *yakṣasyātibhāyāmkāṃ*, as in *Mahāyānaviṃśikā* 9] | *samālikhya svayam bhīṭhaḥ saṃsāre’py abudhaḥ tathā*

(as quoted in Bhatthacharya, “Mahāyānavimśaka,” 111) “Just as a painter is frightened by the terrifying image of a *yakṣa* which he himself has painted, so the fool [is] also [frightened] in *samsāra*.” The *Āścaryacaryācāya* quotes the verse as coming from an *āgama* (cf. Bhatthacharya, “Mahāyānavimśaka,” 111, and esp. 139). For details cf. also Bhatthacharya’s note “Is it Caryācaryavinīcāya or *Āścaryacaryācāya*?” in *The Indian Historical Quarterly* 6/1, ed. N. N. Law, quoted in Bhatthacharya, “Mahāyānavimśaka,” 139. For the verse see “Buddhist Mystic Songs: AscaryaCaryācāya,” ed. and tr. M. Shahidullah, *The Dacca University Studies* 4/2 (1940): 1-87. Tucci comments that even though “this does not necessarily mean that it is taken from a sūtra because āgama is used also in the sense of āptavacana (Candrakīrti, *Mādhyamikavṛtti*, 75). But in this case we are certainly confronted with a quotation from a sūtra, viz. *Kāśyapaparivarta*.” (cf. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist texts*, 197). Another occurrence of the simile is in Dharmendra’s *Tattvasārasaṅgraha*, where the verse is cited as coming from Nāgārjuna’s *Mahāyānavimśikā* (Cf. Jamieson, *A Study*, 32, n. 7, and 42, n. 5).

²⁸ The occurrence of the simile in the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* had been already noticed by Yamaguchi (*Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, ed. Yamaguchi, 246, n. 3; *Madhyānta-Vibhāga-Śāstra containing the Kārikā-s of Maitreya, Bhāṣya of Vasubandhu and Tīkā by Sthiramati*, ed. Ramchandra Pandeya (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971 [repr. 1999]), 183, n. 14), and Bhikkhu Pāsādika (“The *Kāśyapaparivarta* (‘Od-srung-gi le’u) – Prolegomena,” in *The Tibet Journal* 5/4 (1980): 48-58, esp. 51, n. 30).

²⁹ For the Tibetan translation, *Dkon mchog brtsegs pa chen po chos kyī rnam grangs le’u stong phrag brygya pa las ‘od srung kyī le’u rgya cher ‘grel pa* [= *Āryamahāratnakūṭadharmaparyāyāśatasāhasrikaparivartakāśyapaparivartaṭīkā*], see Q 5510 and D 4009. The Chinese version (*Da bao ji jing lun* 大寶積經論 T 1523) was published by A. von Staël-Holstein, *A commentary to the Kāśyapaparivarta* (Peking: The National Library of Peking and the National Tsinghua University, 1933).

³⁰ Yamaguchi notes that the manuscript of the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* has *ksayarupam* instead of the expected *yakṣarupam*, which is just a scribal error (cf. Sthiramati, *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā: exposition systématique du Yogācāranavijñāptivāda: tome I - texte*, ed. S. Yamaguchi (Nagoya: Librairie Hajinkaku, 1934 [reprint Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1966]), 246, n. 4).

³¹ *Madhyānta-Vibhāga-Śāstra*, ed. Pandeya, 182-83.

³² *Vikalpa* is used here as a synonym of *dṛṣṭi*, for the double extreme of eternalism (*śāśvatavāda*) and nihilism (*ucchedavāda*), far removed from the Middle Way (*madhyamakavāda*), is the core of fundamental ignorance: false

discrimination (*vikalpa*) makes us blind as to the three characteristics of existence and the ultimate emptiness of all dharmas. On the two false *dṛṣṭis* in the *Book of Zambasta* see e.g. Z 6.40 and Z 7.31.

³³ L. de la Vallée Poussin, “L’auteur du joyau dans la main,” in *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 2 (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1932-1933), 60-146, conjectured the title of the work as **Tālaratnaśāstra*, whereas Sastri suggested *Karatalaratna*. For this reconstruction and a restoration of the text, see N. A. Sastri, “Chang-chen lun, Karatalaratna or the Jewel in Mind by Ācārya Bhāvaviveka, translated into Sanskrit from the Chinese version of Hsüan-tsang by N. Aiyaswami Sastri,” *Visva-Bharati Annals* 2 (1949): i-xv and 1-124, esp. 34. The *Hōbōgirin* tentatively gives *Hastamaṇi* (cf. Répertoire du canon bouddhique sino-japonais: Édition de Taishō (Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō): *Fascicule Annexe*, eds. P. Demiéville et al. (Paris: Librairie d’Amérique et d’Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1978), 134).

³⁴ See, e.g., chapter 7 of the *Book of Zambasta*. On the dating of the earliest surviving copy of the *Book of Zambasta* see above, note 1.

³⁵ *Dasheng zhangzhen lun* 大乘掌珍論 T 1578, 268b23. Translation after de la Vallée Poussin, “L’auteur du joyau dans la main,” 70. The occurrence was already indicated by Bhikkhu Pāsādika, “The Dharma-Discourse,” 38, n. 31. The passage is, in turn, reminiscent of the passage from the *Mañjuśrīnairātmyāvatārasūtra* I quoted above (see page 92).

³⁶ See above, n. 1.

³⁷ See above, n. 23.

³⁸ Cf. Kawamura, “The Middle Path According to the *Kāśyapaparivarta-sūtra*,” Seyfort-Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka*, 6, produced a piece of internal evidence by demonstrating that *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* X.11.8 appears clearly to presuppose a section of the *Kāśyapaparivarta*. I am indebted here to the line of reasoning followed by Bhikkhu Pāsādika in his article on two quotations from the *Kāśyapaparivarta* in Nāgārjuna’s *Sūtrasamuccaya* (“Two quotations,” 317), a line of reasoning which is possible to extrapolate and apply to the relationship between the *Mahāyānavimśikā* and the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, even setting aside the problem of the paternity of the *Sūtrasamuccaya* (on which see, e.g., P. J. Griffiths, *Religious Reading: the Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 129-33, and Bhikkhu Pāsādika, “Sūtrasamuccaya,” in *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 7, fasc. 1, ed. W. G. Weeraratne (Colombo: Government of Ceylon), 203-5).

³⁹ Cf. Martini, “*Ratnakūṭa* scriptures in Khotan.”

⁴⁰ Cf. Martini, “*Ratnakūṭa* scriptures in Khotan.”