



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

**A brief introduction to recent Chinese studies on
Sanskrit and Khotanese (Chiefly Buddhist) literature**
Silk, J.A.

Citation

Silk, J. A. (2021). A brief introduction to recent Chinese studies on Sanskrit and Khotanese (Chiefly Buddhist) literature. *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 64, 51-64. doi:10.1163/15728536-06401002

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3454694>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Review Article



A Brief Introduction to Recent Chinese Studies on Sanskrit and Khotanese (Chiefly Buddhist) Literature

Jonathan A. Silk

Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands

J.A.Silk@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract

The past decade has seen the appearance of a number of Chinese publications relevant to the readership of the *Indo-Iranian Journal*. This article briefly introduces some of those publications, dealing mostly with Buddhist sources, primarily in Sanskrit, Khotanese and Middle Indic.

Keywords

Chinese scholarship – Sanskrit – Khotanese – Niya Prakrit – Buddhism

In decades past, both through its “Publications received” and through occasional book reviews from the pen of J.W. de Jong, the *Indo-Iranian Journal* irregularly provided to its largely European and American readers information about relevant Indological publications from Japan. These, by virtue not only of their places of publication but also due to their being written in a language foreign to most non-Japanese Indologists, would otherwise almost certainly have remained basically unknown. Even if readers, thus informed, were not actually

able to make direct use of these materials, however, at least they became aware of the existence of this scholarship and, perhaps, their worlds were thereby slightly enlarged.¹ More recently, thanks primarily to the advent of the internet and alternative sources of information, to the efforts of Japanese colleagues to better communicate their work, and to the reluctance or inability of scholars to share (physical) copies of their publications (not the least cause of which has been the near complete disappearance of off-prints), the IJ ceased to function as a viable avenue for information about up-to-date Japanese studies. Today, while some Japanese work is discoverable to a certain (though still quite limited) extent, and some scans do circulate (though as yet few Japanese scholars post their publications online), the products of our Chinese colleagues have remained even less well-known.²

Until recently, to be frank, there was rather little to notice, and that remains basically true as far as general Indology is concerned. But it is no longer true for works on Indian Buddhism, particularly with regard to materials discovered in Central Asia, in Sanskrit, in Middle Indic, and in Khotanese.³ For that reason, the present short presentation is a first attempt to bring to broader attention some recent publications of potential interest to IJ readers.⁴ With

1 Before the age of ubiquitous access to scans, moreover, even physical access to publications was very difficult, and only the rare library outside Japan had more than a very small selection of Japanese scholarship, all the more so when it dealt with Sanskrit. Libraries very understandably bought books about Japan with their Japan budgets, and the (always smaller) India budgets were rarely spent on Japanese books, a nearly perfect Catch 22. Note that while the Publications Received offered little information beyond author, title and source, de Jong's reviews were often detailed introductions and critiques, and as such were frequently cited and made use of.

I should perhaps note here at the outset that by 'recent' in the title of this contribution I have arbitrarily picked the period of the last 10 years, and thus the earliest publications noted here appeared in 2011. I must, further, confess that alongside a close to non-existent knowledge of modern Chinese, my ignorance of the Khotanese language makes it inevitably that I am not able to do justice to publications in that field.

I am grateful for advice and help offered by Rafal Felbur, Chen Ruixuan and Jiang Yixiu.

- 2 Were Japanese colleagues to share work with me, I would be equally happy to introduce it as well. For instance, I will soon publish in the IJ a review of Hokazono Kōichi's edition of the remaining parts of the *Lalitavistara* not covered in his 1994 edition, this made possible by Prof. Hokazono's great kindness in sending his publications to me.
- 3 So far what little work has emerged from the almost inconceivable treasure house of Sanskrit materials held in Tibet has often appeared in collaboration with European or Japanese scholars, and thus has been more visible than some of the materials I introduce here. See n. 6, below.
- 4 Of course, I do not mean to imply that no attempts have been made to introduce such studies before, or that our Chinese colleagues themselves are unaware of a potential wider audience. Many of the books mentioned here have English Tables of Contents and/or summaries, and

this goal in mind, works aimed primarily at a Chinese internal audience, such as translations of works already available in editions and translations in European languages, are not considered here.⁵ Likewise, work of Chinese scholars published in English, German or other languages, and chiefly abroad, is also not considered, although it is often substantial and important.⁶ Furthermore, of course, what is presented here is only, perforce, what is known to me, and for this reason I express the hope that Chinese colleagues will continue to share their work with me; it would be useful to be able to continue this sort of presentation in the future. I should, finally, stress that what follows is presented without any pretension of offering critical appraisals. This is, therefore, not a review but rather an introduction to some materials that might, I fear, have otherwise escaped the attention of potentially interested scholars.⁷

relevant survey articles have appeared, for instance: Saerji, "Indic Buddhist Manuscripts in the People's Republic of China: The Peking University Project." In Paul Harrison and Jens-Uwe Hartmann, eds., *From Birch Bark to Digital Data: Recent Advances in Buddhist Manuscript Research Papers Presented at the Conference Indic Buddhist Manuscripts: The State of the Field Stanford, June 15–19 2009*. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-historische Klasse Denkschriften 460 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014): 291–300. Furthermore, of course, Chinese scholars do also publish in Western languages, chiefly English, some relevant examples of which are noted below.

- 5 I would include under this rubric works such as recent translations from the Pāli Nikāyas, various philosophical texts, and so on. Likewise, despite their great value I do not record here studies of less direct interest to scholars of Indology, such as Chinese language works on the Chinese monks who traveled to India or who translated Indian texts into Chinese. I would include in this group as one example the many valuable works of Peking University professor Wang Bangwei 王邦维.
- 6 We might refer for instance to the papers published in *Sōka Daigaku Kokusai Bukkyōgaku Kōtō Kenkyūjo Nenpō* 創価大学国際仏教学高等研究所年報 / *Annual Report of The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University* (hereafter ARIRIAB), the journal of the institute at Soka University run by the late Karashima Seishi, who had close scholarly contacts in China, where he was trained by the great Ji Xianlin (季羨林, 1911–2009). Some such papers, when directly connected to publications introduced here, are however noted below. Similarly, important text editions and studies have appeared in China, in English, in the journal *China Tibetology*, for instance, and likewise we must think of the text editions jointly published by the China Tibetology Publishing House in Beijing and the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna under the series title "Sanskrit texts from the Tibetan Autonomous Region." These publications do not require introduction here.
- 7 That virtually everything here was published by Beijing-based scholars should not imply that work is not carried out elsewhere; it is simply that I am less aware of it, and if this should change in the future, I would be delighted to introduce the work of other scholars as well.

1 A Major Series from Peking University

We may begin with the publications appearing in the series “Fanwen beiyejing yu fojiao wenxian xilie congshu” 梵文贝叶经与佛教文献系列丛书, that is, Series of Sanskrit manuscripts and Buddhist literature, all published in Shanghai by the Zhongxi shuju 中西書局. To date 6 volumes have appeared. I list these volumes in order:

1. Ye Shaoyong 叶少勇. 2011. *Zhonglunsong yu Fohushi: Jiyu xinfaxian Fanwen xieben de wenxianxue yanjiu* 《中论颂》与《佛护释》: 基于新发现梵文写本的文献学研究, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā and Buddhapālita's commentary: A philological study on the basis of newly identified Sanskrit manuscripts*. ISBN: 978-7-5475-0296-9.
2. Fan Muyou 范慕尤. 2011. *Fanwen xieben Wuer pingdeng jing de duikan yu yanjiu* 梵文写本《无二平等经》的对勘与研究, *Advayasamatāvijaya: A study based upon the Sanskrit manuscript found in Tibet*. ISBN: 978-7-5475-0303-4.
3. Duan Qing 段晴 and Zhang Zhiqing 张志清, eds. 2013. *Zhongguo guojia tushuguan cang Xiyu wenshu. Fanwen, Quluwen juan* 中国国家图书馆藏西域文书. 梵文、佉卢文卷, *Xinjiang manuscripts preserved in the National Library of China. Sanskrit fragments and Kharoṣṭhī documents*. Contributors: Duan Qing, Saerji 萨尔吉, Ye Shaoyong 叶少勇, Zhang Xue-shan 张雪杉, Pi Jianjun 皮建军. ISBN: 978-7-5475-0508-3.
4. Duan Qing 段晴 and Zhang Zhiqing 张志清, eds. 2015. *Zhongguo guojia tushuguan cang Xiyu wenshu. Yutianyu juan (yi)* 中国国家图书馆藏西域文书. 于阗语卷 (一). *Xinjiang manuscripts preserved in the National Library of China. Khotanese remains*. Part 1. ISBN: 978-7-5475-0807-7.
5. Duan Qing 段晴 and Cailuotai 才洛太 (Tshe lo thar, ཙལ་ལྟཱ་). 2016. *Qinghai Zang Yiyao wenhua bowuguan cang Quluwen chidu* 青海藏医药文化博物馆藏佉卢文尺牘, *Kharoṣṭhī documents preserved in Qinghai Tibetan Medical Culture Museum*. ISBN: 978-7-5475-1195-4.
6. Duan Qing 段晴. 2019. *Yutianyu Wugou jingguang datuoluonijing* 于阗语无垢净光大陀罗尼经, *A scroll of Khotanese Rāsmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā nāma Dhāraṇī*. ISBN: 978-7-5475-1554-9.

The first volume is the work of Ye Shaoyong 叶少勇, Associate professor in the Department of South Asian Studies, School of Foreign Languages, Peking University. He has published a number of articles in English, as well as several important books in recent years, centered around the texts of Indian Madhyamaka. The volume noted above, a revised version of his Peking University PhD thesis, “presents philological studies and critical Sanskrit editions of two incomplete Sanskrit manuscripts ... [of] the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*

[3 folios] ... and the *Buddhapālita-mūlamadhyamaka-vṛtti* [11 folios].” As the author notes, portions were also published earlier in English.⁸ Among the features of the book useful even to those who do not read Chinese are script tables (pp. 29–49), and an edition of portions of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (verses: 9.10–12; 10.1–16; 11.1–8; 12.1–7; 17.29–33; 18.1–12; 19.1–6; 20.1–24; 21.1–21; 22.1–5). There follows an edition, bilingually in Sanskrit and Tibetan, of the *Buddhapālita-mūlamadhyamaka-vṛtti* on *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 2.5–16; the end of Chpt. 6 through 7.1–33, with some folios missing; 8.13bc–9.3; 10.2–8; 13.7–14.2; 20.11cd–18. In all cases more or less of the manuscript is missing along the way, so we do not always have a coherent and complete text, but the comparison with the Tibetan translation is a tremendous help.⁹ A Sanskrit–Chinese–Tibetan word list is also given (pp. 157–168). After a short English text (pp. 199–202), the volume closes with black and white photos of the manuscripts edited therein. They are often somewhere between extremely difficult and impossible to read (no doubt since they are based on old microfilms), and Ye must be congratulated for the wonderful effort he has made to bring these to light.

This, moreover, is not the only relevant monographic publication of the author, and he is involved with both publications so far appearing in another series, “Fanzanghan fodian congshu” 梵藏汉佛典丛书, which presents Sanskrit-Tibetan-Chinese editions. These volumes too are published in Shanghai by Zhongxi shuju. The first volume contains a revision of the core text presented in the volume just mentioned, namely Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*:

1. Ye Shaoyong 叶少勇. 2011. Zhonglunsong: *Fanzanghan hejiao daodu yizhu* 《中论颂》—梵藏汉合校·导读·译注, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā: New Editions of the Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese Versions, with Commentary and a Modern Chinese Translation*. ISBN 978-7-5475-0239-6.¹⁰

8 See for instance Ye Shaoyong, “The *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and Buddhapālita’s Commentary (1): Romanized Texts Based on the Newly Identified Sanskrit Manuscripts from Tibet.” ARIRIAB 10 (2007): 117–147; “The *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and Buddhapālita’s Commentary (2): Romanized Texts Based on the Newly Identified Sanskrit Manuscripts from Tibet.” ARIRIAB 11 (2008): 105–151; “A Re-examination of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* on the Basis of the Newly Identified Sanskrit Manuscripts from Tibet.” ARIRIAB 10 (2007): 149–170; “A Paleographical Study of the Manuscripts of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and Buddhapālita’s Commentary.” ARIRIAB 11 (2008): 153–166.

9 Note that Saitō Akira’s PhD thesis on the text is freely available: <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/11234>. This contains, along with studies, a Tibetan edition and English translation. A reedition making use of the now available Sanskrit would be most welcome.

10 The book can be downloaded at the time of this writing from the author’s Academia.edu page: <https://pku.academia.edu/ShaoYongYe>.

This presents nothing less than the most authoritative edition of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* yet published. It contains on facing pages the text in Sanskrit, Tibetan (where there are significant differences, more than one Tibetan translation is cited), and Chinese (of Kumārajīva), and Ye's modern Chinese rendering. Aside from variant readings and a few conjectures, there are also occasional notes, some of a philological nature, but they are not necessary in order to make good use of the editions. It is hard to imagine serious scholars referring to older editions for the Sanskrit (or Tibetan) text, now that this superb work exists. Since the author has very generously made it freely available, accessibility is not an issue, and there is no reason it should not become the new standard.¹¹

The second work in this trilingual series is again a text of Nāgārjuna, the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā*.

2. Li Xuezhu 李学竹 and Ye Shaoyong 叶少勇. 2014. *Liushi ruli song: Fan-zanghan hejiao daodu yizhu* 《六十如理颂》—梵藏汉合校·导读·译注, *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā: Editions of the Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese Versions, with Commentary and a Modern Chinese Translation*. ISBN 978-7-5475-00697-4.

Until recently, this work was known in Sanskrit through a mere 12 of its 60 verses (the entire text, and its commentary by Candrakīrti, the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti*, are extant in Tibetan).¹² It has now proved possible to collect 32 verses and 5 half verses of the Sanskrit, thus more than half the text. (The authors note that so far 46 verses have been found in quotations, but of course many of those are not in Sanskrit, and thus not of direct use here.) This has been due not to

11 At the same time, Saigusa Mitsuyoshi 三枝充惠. *Chūron geju sōran* 中論偈頌總覽 (Tokyo: Daisan Bummeisha 第三文明社, 1986), which offers additional sources in Tibetan and Chinese, may remain useful. It is slightly odd that Ye refers only to a review of this volume by Chr. Lindtner (*Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 4 [1988]: 244–247), but not to the volume itself. Probably this is due to the suggested Sanskrit readings offered by Lindtner.

12 The kārikas only are also found in a rather late Chinese translation, *Liushisong rulilun* 六十頌如理論, T. 1575, credited to *Dānapāla in the Song, that is, the 11th c. On the commentary (including the verses, but before this more recent recovery of a great many more in Sanskrit), despite the existence in English of Joseph Loizzo, *Nāgārjuna's Reason Sixty (Yuktiṣaṣṭikā) with Chandrakīrti's Commentary* (New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007), more reliable remains Cristina Anna Scherrer-Schaub, *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti: commentaire à la soixantaine sur le raisonnement, ou, Du vrai enseignement de la causalité. Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 25 (Brussels: Institut belge des hautes études chinoises, 1991). See also Ye Shaoyong, "A Sanskrit folio of the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti* from Tibet." *ARIRIAB* 16 (2013): 233–240. An appendix in this present volume, pp. 125–143, edits the extant Sanskrit of the *vṛtti* alongside the Tibetan.

the discovery of a single manuscript, but thanks to the collection of quotations, including from the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvr̥tti*, the *Munimatālaṃkāra*, the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* and a commentary of the *Madhyamakāloka*. For those verses not yet recovered, the edition cites reconstructions of earlier scholars, but rather unsurprisingly, comparisons of those earlier suggestions with the verses which have now been located demonstrate just how useful these “reconstructions” might be (namely, something approaching zero). This too sets the current standard for philological presentation of the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā*, and like its companion volume, it too has been made freely available.¹³ For this the editors are to be profoundly thanked.

The second volume in the series of 6, with which we began, is Fan Muyou’s work on the tantric *Advayasamatāvijaya*. This includes the *editio princeps* of the Sanskrit *Advayasamatāvijayamahākālparāja*, understood as an explanatory (*vyākhyā*)¹⁴ tantra of the *Guhyasamājatantra*. Some relevant papers by the author had earlier appeared in English.¹⁵ Here the 22 chapters of the text are presented in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese. The volume also contains (pp. 329–346) a Sanskrit–Tibetan word list (but it is not always very worthwhile; one wonders at the utility of citing *atra* = ‘*di ni*, for instance), a couple of pages in English (pp. 353–355), and black and white photographs of the manuscript which, while small, are on the whole quite legible. One very remarkable thing is that, as Fan pointed out earlier,¹⁶ the Tibetan translation was demonstrably made from the very manuscript which she edits here. This is an extremely rare (even so far unique?) case in which we know with certainty exactly what Vorlage stood behind a given Tibetan translation, and as such, it is of the highest interest.¹⁷

13 This can also be downloaded as of this writing at <https://pku.academia.edu/ShaoYongYe>.

14 Fan herself writes *ākhyāna*, but this seems to be an incorrect form.

15 See, “Some Remarks on the Relationship between a Sanskrit Manuscript of *Advayasamatāvijaya* from Tibet and its Tibetan Translation”, *ARIRIAB* 11 (2008): 375–380; “Some Grammatical Notes on the *Advayasamatāvijayamahākālparājā*.” In Ernst Steinkellner et al., eds., *Sanskrit manuscripts in China: proceedings of a panel at the 2008 Beijing seminar on Tibetan studies October 13 to 17* (Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House, 2009): 41–46; “Some notes on Editing the Sanskrit Manuscript of the *Advayasamatāvijaya* with Reference to the Chinese and Tibetan Translations.” *Tantric Studies* 1 (2008): 155–178. A slight disturbing note is struck by the comment on the book at <http://jinajik.net/2012/01/fan-advayasamatavijaya-a-study-2011/>. (For some reason, recently this works for me only in the Tor browser.)

16 In her “Some Remarks on the Relationship” (2008: 376).

17 That said, it is very likely that as more Sanskrit manuscripts from Tibet are published (with photos, and not only transcriptions), more cases will come to light. The swift publication of such photos is, it need hardly be stressed, a real desideratum.

The remaining 4 volumes of the series all belong, as either solo efforts or as co-edited volumes, to the professor of Sanskrit at Peking University, Duan Qing. Her main efforts have long focused on Khotanese, for which she is very well known to specialists since the time of her 1986 PhD thesis, published several years later, in Germany and in German.¹⁸ A further new publication of the same scholar is:

Duan Qing 段晴. 2013. *Yutian Fojiao gujuan* 于阗·佛教·古卷, *New Finds and Findings from Khotan* [lit. Khotan, Buddhism, Old scrolls] (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju 中西书局). ISBN 978-7-5475-0543-4.

This volume is written nearly entirely in Chinese, and may therefore be significantly less accessible to most foreign readers, but in any event contains very fragmentary materials from the Sanskrit *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* (pp. 1–5), and in Khotanese; a small Khotanese fragment of the *Jñānolkā-dhāraṇī*;¹⁹ an English translation of the Chinese *Buddhāvataṃsaka*’s **Maitrībhāvanāprakarana*, followed by chapter three of the Khotanese *Book of Zambasta* translated into modern Chinese (a glossary is also provided, pp. 285–333);²⁰ a Chinese translation of chapter 23 of the *Book of Zambasta* corresponding to the ‘Sūtra of the Merits of Image Production’ (造像功德經),²¹ and a study of ‘Buddhist

18 *Das khotanische Aparimitāyuhśūtra*. Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik Dissertationen 3 (Reinbek: Dr. Inge Wezler Verlag für Orientalische Fachpublikationen, 1992). Her subsequent publications have been either in English or Chinese.

19 Spelled however *Jñānolka*, as it is in other volumes mentioned below. While one finds this in other modern publications, as long as the word is meant to agree with *dhāraṇī*, the form in -ā is the only correct one. An English translation of the Tibetan translation is found at <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh848.html>.

20 This had already been treated in English. See Duan Qing, “The *Maitrī-bhāvanā-prakarana*: a Chinese parallel to the third chapter of the *Book of Zambasta*.” In Maria Macuch, Mauro Maggi & Werner Sundermann, eds., *Iranian languages and texts from Iran and Turan: Ronald E. Emmerick memorial volume* (Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007): 39–58; Giuliana Martini, “*Mahāmaitrī* in a Mahāyāna sūtra in Khotanese—continuity and innovation in Buddhist meditation.” *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* (中華佛學學報) 24 (2011): 121–194.

21 As Chen Ruixuan pointed out to me, the Sanskrit title of this sūtra was reconstructed as **Tathāgatapratibimbapratīṣṭhānuśaṃsā* by Inokuchi Taijun 井ノ口泰淳, “Tokarago oyobi Utengo no batten” トカラ語及びウテン語の佛典. In Seiki bunka kenkyūkai 西域文化研究會 ed., *Seiki bunka kenkyū. Daiyon: Chūō Ajia kodaigo bunken* 西域文化研究 第四: 中央アジア古代語文獻 (= Monumenta Serindica 4) (Kyōto: Hōzōkan, 1961): 357–388, to whom the identification with *Zambasta* 23 is also to be credited. However, I owe to Péter-Dániel Szántó the further indication that a fragment of a sūtra with this name is found in the catalogue of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, there

mythology' in the text; fragments of the Khotanese *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, with photographs of the folios and a further comparison with Sanskrit and Tibetan; apotropaic amulets; Khotanese contracts, and several other small pieces.

Returning to the main publication series, its volume 3, the work of several contributors, contains editions of a number of (mostly extremely) fragmentary materials (all illustrated with lovely color photos), including those belonging to the *Avadānaśataka* (1.2.7–3.4; 1.3.4–13), *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (just a few words), *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (a number of fragments), an otherwise unidentified *Prajñāpāramitā* (similar to the Sadāprarudita portion of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*), and *Saddharmapuṇḍarika* (a number of small fragments, all the preceding due to Ye Shaoyong), *Ratnaketuparivarta* (quite a number of fragments, some rather substantial, edited by Saerji), *Bhadrakalpika* (one smallish fragment, edited by Duan Qing),²² followed by the *Buddhanāmasūtra* (a small portion of what was evidently a physically quite small manuscript), *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, *Jñānolkā-dhāraṇī*, and some unidentified fragments (all by Ye Shaoyong). The volume also contains several documents in Kharoṣṭhī script and Khotanese language, including legal documents. Three are studied in English. The volume also contains a glossary, and a useful table of the Kharoṣṭhī script. It finishes with a concordance of the materials presented, including information about previous publications of the relevant materials.

The 4th volume contains Khotanese materials including a protective amulet against 15 demons,²³ a really tiny fragment of an unnamed Sanskrit text (not more than 5 identifiable words), the *Jñānolkā-dhāraṇī*, a text on the birth of the bodhisattva, two complete folios of the *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, nine tiny frag-

called *Tathāgatapratibimbapratīṣṭhānuśaṃsavarṇana-dharmaparyāya*, the title assured by a colophon. See Hara Prasad Shāstri, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanscrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Vol. 1. Buddhist Manuscripts (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1917): 127–128 (§ 81.1). Szántó has transcribed the remaining fragments, and on this basis, Chen now identifies the contents of item 4758 in Shāstri's catalogue as at least three works: I. *Kūṭāgāra-sūtra*: fols. 1^v–(?); II. *Tathāgatapratibimbapratīṣṭhānuśaṃsavarṇana*: fols. (?)-6^r–7^v; III. *Dīvyabhojanāvadāna*: fols. 7^v–12. Item II corresponds to Tibetan Tōhoku 320, Ōtani 986.

22 As Chen Ruixuan informs me, this fragment belongs to the same folio as a Hoernle fragment (Or.8212/1695). The two fragments were joined and edited anew by Li Can, "A Preliminary Report on Some New Sources of the *Bhadrakalpika-sūtra* (1)." *ARIRIAB* 18 (2015): 237–245, pl. 21.

23 As Chen Ruixuan informs me, the 15 demons are also mentioned in Chinese-Khotanese captions on a series of paper drawings from Dunhuang, which are approximately contemporaneous with the Khotanese manuscript. See Mauro Maggi, "A Chinese-Khotanese Excerpt from the *Mahāsāhasrapramardanī*." In *La Persia e l'Asia Centrale: Da Alessandro al X Secolo* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1996): 123–137.

ments of an unnamed text, two partial folios of the *Adhyardhaśatikā Prajñā-pāramitā*, a fragment of the second chapter of the *Book of Zambasta*, two fragmentary folios of the *Anantamukhanirhāra-dhāraṇī*, two fragmentary folios of the *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā-dhāraṇī*, a number of unidentified fragments, some more substantial, others only a letter or two, and, on wood, a contract for selling a slave to a Buddhist monk, a failed case of collateral, and a further contract. The volume also contains several appendices, including in English a reprint of an early paper by the author on “Pledge, Collateral and Loan in Ancient Khotan” (pp. 125–143). Two Khotanese–Chinese glossaries follow (pp. 145–148; 149–162). Finally, there is appended a list of corrigenda to vol. III in the series (Duan and Zhang 2013).

The fifth volume contains Niya materials in Kharoṣṭhī script and Gāndhārī language. These manuscript fragments concern realia, and constitute several legal documents all concerning one Budhasena, accused of improper religious activities, an incident connected to alcohol trading, and finally a document referring to debt for misappropriated grain recompensed with horses. The volume includes several studies, including a discussion by the author of the power structure of the rulership in the Shanshan kingdom at the end of the 3rd c CE, alcohol and textiles.

The sixth and most recent volume, the work of Duan Qing alone, contains an edition and study of the *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā-dhāraṇī*, which in one of its Chinese translations—*Wugou jingguang datuoluoni jing* 無垢淨光大陀羅尼經—is a very important text in the history of printing, being if not the oldest one of the oldest texts in the world to be printed.²⁴ (This history is, of course, not relevant to its Khotanese version, which exists only in manuscript.) The volume contains clear black and white photos of the scroll in question, with lines numbered, a transcription of the text with a facing modern Chinese translation, a commentary (exclusively in Chinese), an edition of the Tibetan translation (based on the Derge and Peking Kanjurs), a modern Chinese trans-

24 Needless to say, not only is the claim itself contested, but since one of the major candidates is a work discovered in Korea, nationalism early on entered the debate, with some claiming that the text of the *dhāraṇī* was in fact printed in China. For a small glimpse at the literature see Pan Jixing, “On the Origin of Printing in the Light of New Archaeological Discoveries,” *Chinese Science Bulletin* 42.12 (1997): 976–981; Sung-Soo Kim and Eun G. Park, “Restoration of Mukujungkwang Dharani Sutra, the Oldest Extant Woodblock Printed Buddhist Sutra,” *Restaurator* 28.1 (2007): 1–10; Hye Ok Park, “The History of Pre-Gutenberg Woodblock and Movable Type Printing in Korea,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 4.9(1) (2014): 9–17; Sem Vermeersch, “Beyond Printing: Looking at the Use and East Asian Context of Dhāraṇī Sūtras in Medieval Korea,” *Chonggyohak yŏn'gu* 宗教學研究 34 (2016): 1–33.

lation of the Tibetan (the work of Saerji and Duan Qing), and an extensive glossary. The study of *dhāraṇī* texts is an area of growing attention in Buddhist studies, and it is to be hoped that this publication will be taken into consideration by future scholarship.²⁵

2 Other Publications Out of Series

As already noted, and as should be obvious, not all publications appear in series. The works below, like Duan Qing's *Yutian Fojiao gujuan*, are however almost entirely in Chinese, and thus significantly less accessible to a non-Chinese audience. But they are worth being aware of. An interesting book, which could very much profit from an English summary, is that published by Saerji 萨吉 (Tib. Gsar brje), Associate Professor in Sanskrit & Tibetan language at Peking University's Research Institute of Sanskrit Manuscripts and Buddhist Literature, Department of South Asian Studies, School of Foreign Languages. The volume is the developed result of work which began as his 2005 PhD thesis at Peking University.²⁶

25 The manuscript edited here is not the only source of the *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā*, but although she clearly is aware of the relevant work, Duan makes only oblique reference. See Yoshida Yutaka in his review of Skjærvø, 2002, *Kōbe gaidai ronsō* 神戸外大論叢 55/7 (2004): 21–33, in which 27–28, identifying fragments Or. 6402B/2.1, 2.4, and 10L Khot 172/4, 172/5 in Prods Oktor Skjærvø, *Khotanese Manuscripts from Chinese Turkestan in the British Library: A Complete Catalogue with Texts and Translations, with Contributions by U. Sims-Williams* (London: The British Library, 2002): 24–25, 383–384. Earlier another fragment of, according to Yoshida, the same manuscript was published in R.E., Emmerick and M.I. Vorob'eva-Desjatovskaja, *Saka Documents*. Text, vol. 111: *The St. Petersburg Collections*. Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum 11/v (London, 1995): 233 as si M 44.1. A good more recent summary of the available material is given on pp. 276–278 of Huaiyu Chen, “Newly Identified Khotanese Fragments in the British Library and Their Chinese Parallels.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, 22.2 (2012): 265–279.

26 *Dafangdeng dajijing* yanjiu: Yihoudai yinwen wei zhongxin 《大方等大集經》之研究—以後代引文為中心 [A Study on the *Mahāvaiṣṇava-mahāsammipāta-sūtra*, Focus on the Quotations from Later Buddhist Texts]. See also, in English, “A New Fragment of the *Ratnakūṭaparivarta*.” ARIRIAB 11 (2008): 95–103; “More Fragments of the *Ratnakūṭaparivarta* (1).” ARIRIAB 13 (2010): 111–120; “More Fragments of the *Ratnakūṭaparivarta* (2).” ARIRIAB 14 (2011): 35–57; “Sanskrit Texts Discovered from the Southern Silk Road: Taking the *Ratnakūṭaparivarta* as an Example.” In Shashibala, ed., *Sanskrit on the Silk Route* (India: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 2016): 89–98 [not seen].

Saerji 萨尔吉. 2019. *Dafangdeng dajijing yanjiu* 《大方等大集经》研究, *A Study of the Mahāvaiṣṭyama Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra* (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju 中西书局). ISBN 978-7-5475-1475-7.

This book has been noticed recently by Chen and Loukota 2020,²⁷ who remark that Saerji identifies an “older core” of the Mahāsaṃnipāta collection of sūtras, consisting of the *Tathāgatamahākaraṇānirdeśa*, the *Mahāyānopadeśa*, the *Sāgaramatipariṣcchā*, the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā*, and the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa*. According to Chen and Loukota (2020: 210), “The *Ratnakūṭapariṣvarta*, argues Saerji, marks a turning point in the history of this collection, insofar as it extends the denotation of the term *mahāsaṃnipāta* to cover not only rounds of teachings centering on the Bodhisattva practice but also a great assemblage of various *dhāraṇīs* perpetuated by all Buddhas (*sarvabuddhādhiṣṭhita*).” This text, which was edited in Sanskrit and Tibetan already long ago by Kurumiya Yenshū,²⁸ has recently been translated in full from Tibetan into English.²⁹

The final two books we will turn to here are again by a professor of Peking University, this time Chen Ming 陈明, relatively little of whose work has appeared in English,³⁰ and who, moreover, in contrast to those whose work we have noted above, concentrates not on manuscript studies but more on examinations of content, so to speak, with a focus on how Indian cultural artifacts have been naturalized in China. His main fields of interest include, but are not limited to, Indian medicine and its sinicization.³¹ The first book to be noted here is a collection of studies on Indian Buddhist mythology:

27 Ruixuan Chen and Diego Loukota, “Mahāyāna Sūtras in Khotan: Quotations in Chapter 6 of the *Book of Zambasta* (11).” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 63 (2020): 201–261.

28 *Ratnakūṭapariṣvarta: Sanskrit Text* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1978); *Dus pa chen po rin po che tog gi gzuñs: 'Dus pa chen po dkon mchog dbal zhes bya ba'i gzuñs: Being the Tibetan Translation of the Ratnakūṭapariṣvarta* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1979). I have not seen the PhD thesis submitted in 2009 to Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München by Chanwit Tudkeao, “Zentralasiatische Versionen des *Ratnakūṭapariṣvarta*. Eine Studie zur Überlieferung des *Ratnakūṭapariṣvarta* und kritische Ausgabe der Sanskrit-Fragmente.” The author is apparently continuing his studies of this text, and a new critical edition would be welcome if there proves to be enough material to merit it.

29 See <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh138.html>.

30 See “The Indian Buddhist Creation Myth and its Transmission: A Study Based on Buddhist Scriptures in Chinese Translation and Manuscripts from the Western Regions.” (tr. Alex Hu) In Yu Taishan & Li Jinxiu, eds., *Eurasian Studies 11* (Sydney: Asia Publishing Nexus, 2014): 143–165 [not seen]; “Vinaya works translated by Yijing and their circulation: Manuscripts excavated at Dunhuang and Central Asia.” (tr. Jeffrey Kotyk) *Studies in Chinese Religions* 1.3 (2015): 229–268.

31 For example, *Zhonggu yiliao yu wailai wenhua* 中古医疗与外来文化, *Foreign Medicine and Culture in Medieval China* (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshu 北京大学出版社,

Chen Ming 陈明. 2016. *Yindu Fojiao shenhua: shuxie yu liuchuan* 印度佛教神话: 书写与流传, *Indian Buddhist Mythology: Its Writing and Transmission* (Beijing: Zhongguo Dabaikequanshu chubanshe 中国大百科全书出版社). ISBN: 978-7-5000-9818-8.³²

This volume begins with cosmogony, starting with the *Samghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (and see the next book, discussed below). It then turns to the so-called Three thousand Great Thousand Worlds, the “lineage of the gods” in the *Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī*, the translation into Chinese of the names of gods, the myth of “Drying up the ocean” in Indian Buddhism, Bālagraha and Grahamātṛkā, and further sections concern specific myths. The studies, while primarily textual, pay attention to visual evidence as well. The final volume to consider is:

Chen Ming 陈明. 2018. *Fanhanben Genben shuoyiqieyoubu lüidian ciyu yanjiu* 梵汉本根本说一切有部律典词语研究, *The terms in the Sanskrit and Chinese texts of the Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya-vastus: a comparative study*. Series: Guojia zhexue shehui kexue chengguo wenku 国家哲学社会科学成果文库 (National achievements library of philosophy and social sciences) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe 北京大学出版社). ISBN: 978-7-3012-9173-3.

In this volume, the author focuses on the Chinese Vinaya translation of Yijing (義淨, 635–713). After exploring issues of translation equivalents, the author also briefly addresses issues of syntax. Although well informed especially about Chinese manuscript materials, which are extensively catalogued, it seems to me that there is a potential problem with the author’s overall approach. This comes from what appears to be a naive trust in the printed editions of the Sanskrit texts to which he refers, including for instance not only notoriously unreliable Indian editions but also Gnoli’s edition of the *Samghabhedavastu*. We know that Gnoli not infrequently regularized and smoothed the text; only careful reference to the manuscript evidence will reveal whether this has any impact on Prof. Chen’s arguments. A further potential pitfall, and perhaps a more serious one, is that the author does not seem to take into account the

2013). An English outline of the book may be found at <https://lists.h-net.org/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-buddhism&month=1303&week=e&msg=LwoHfLsvMglnRS47K2/GXQ&user=&pw=>.

32 A short introduction was offered in English by Chi Mingzhou 池明宙 at <https://harvard-yenching.org/features/indian-buddhist-mythology-its-writing-and-transmission>.

hypothesis that the Sanskrit Vorlage from which Yijing translated differed, perhaps in some significant ways, from the text available to us from Gilgit. Yao Fumi observes, “Although Yijing’s translation has been frequently assumed not to be exact, the newly found manuscript [studied in her paper] seems to make it increasingly clear that his translation faithfully conveys the contents of its original. To put it another way, the Sanskrit texts on which the Chinese and Tibetan translations were based seem to have differed from each other, and this suggests that there was much more variation (or much less standardization) in the textual traditions of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* than previously thought.”³³ This could potentially affect Chen’s discussions of the relation between the Sanskrit original and its Chinese translation, an issue certainly not at all limited to the Vinaya. It is not without interest to contrast this with the situation encountered by Fan Muyou noted above, in which we appear to be in possession of precisely the manuscript which served as the basis for the, in this case, Tibetan translation.

This brief introduction has had no intention beyond that of bringing the scholarly production of our Chinese colleagues to the attention of scholars who may not keep in touch with such developments. While the world these days can be a very strange place, there should be little argument that scholarly cooperation is a virtue unto itself, and we should all work together and share as much as possible. I hope that these few lines make a small contribution toward that ever-elusive goal.

33 Page 1134 of “A Brief Note on the Newly Found Sanskrit Fragments of the *Bhaiṣajyavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*.” *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū* 印度学仏教学研究 61.3 (2013): 1130–1135 (72–77).