

Introduction

Tibetans had extraordinarily rich views on logic, on their own Tibetan language, and on Buddhist philosophy. It is hard to overemphasize how wide-ranging those views from Tibet were and how important they are to all who seek informed understanding of a culture that was, and in many respects still is, a premier intellectual force in the world. The studies in this book seek to capture some aspects. Most have been published previously in various journals, anthologies, proceedings, and *Festschriften*, not always of easy access. Some are quite recent publications and seek to represent the state of the art. Others date from now bygone times. I reprint them all here with the necessary revisions and updates, sometimes quite substantial. The last chapter is entirely new.

The word “view”—as well as its Tibetan and Sanskrit equivalents, *lta ba* and *dr̥ṣṭi/darśana*—can denote, on the one hand, an intellectual activity of examination, which is a process focused on some matter, and, on the other hand, the ideas and interpretations that result from that process. Much of Tibetan intellectual activity, no doubt, was focused strongly on matters Indian. Such was the case in their views on Buddhist logic and the Philosophy of the Middle (*dbu ma = madhyamaka*). There was also, however, a no less important focus on themes that were predominantly indigenous. We take up the long tradition of *Sum rtags* in which Tibetan language was viewed by Tibetans in indigenous grammatico-linguistic analyses that, in some very key aspects, had little to do with India at all. All those complex, evolving processes and the ideas that resulted at various stages need to be understood historically and in detail, and this is the primary aim of the present work. That said, I am also firmly convinced that resultant ideas are *not* to be reserved exclusively to purely historical disciplines. Tibetans’ ideas on Buddhist logic, Madhyamaka Buddhism, and their own language, when largely abstracted from the processes of their genesis, are of significance for comparative logic, philosophy, religion, and linguistics. One of the papers in the section on the Philosophy of the Middle is such an excursus into comparative philosophy. Below, in this introduction, I will also provide an example where Tibetan views may work surprisingly well in linguistics.

Some will bridle at the fact that a book such as this has more than one vantage point. To this I can only plead in favour of information, open-mindedness, and a generous dose of cosmopolitanism. The pursuit of well-informed, multiple perspectives and their intersections has often led, and continues to lead, to better thinking. That holds for cultural perspectives as well as those of different academic disciplines. The book is, thus, also a sincere attempt to counter currents in academia going in the direction of over-specialization, insularity, and rigid separation between disciplines such as Tibetology, Indology, Philosophy, and Linguistics. Understanding Tibetan views presupposes a relatively sophisticated indological understanding, and these papers therefore make frequent zigzags to Indian canonical texts, where possible in Sanskrit. Tibetologists often need to be indologists to do Tibet justice, and when they approach Tibet with indological skills, Tibet shows itself relevant to better understanding India. Finally, when Tibet takes its rightful place in properly informed discussions on logic, philosophy, and linguistics, we all benefit.

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We turn to the studies themselves. The section on logic begins with an examination of the Tibetans' assimilation of Indian Buddhist logical thought, especially their understanding of, and innovations upon, Dharmakīrti's and Dignāga's ideas of a "good reason" (*saddhetu*), i.e., one that possesses the triple characterization (*trairūpya*). We then proceed to indigenous developments of a logic that, in important respects, shows significant originality. In the Tibetan *Collected Topics* (*bsdus grwa*) literature we find a quite new logical orientation, stripped of much of the Indian epistemology and metaphysics that had been considered crucially intertwined with logic. Much of the Dharmakīrtian stance, in effect, drops away, even if this new thinking on logic is often still couched in the terminology of the old.

At the end of the chapter on indigenous developments in logic, we take up a recurring theme that Tibetans dubbed "the difficult point of the [Indo-Tibetan Buddhist] *apoha* [philosophy of language]" (*gzhan sel gyi dka' gnad*), one that they insisted to be pervasive in Buddhist discussions of logic, language, and metaphysics. This difficult point, turning as it does on deep-seated semantic features of the Tibetan language, presents serious problems of translatability. I recognize, perhaps all too well, that

the general propriety of crossing borders—whether between conceptual and cultural schemes, epochs, languages or disciplines—is a live issue with varying stances.¹ And although I am a convinced advocate of free movement and intersecting perspectives, the devil can be in the details. Translatability is an important test. The difficult point may be one of those surprising, specific cases where border-crossings to the West are much more difficult than we might have previously imagined.

Turning now to the section on the Philosophy of the Middle (*madhyamaka*), chapter III consists in a translation of Se ra rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan's lesson (*rnam bzhag*) on the “neither one nor many” argument (*gcig du bral gyi gtan tshigs = ekānekaviyogahetu*) as found in Svātantrika texts by eighth century C.E. Indian authors such as Śāntarakṣita, Kamalaśīla, and Haribhadra. The key Tibetan step is to nuance that Indian argumentation as an attack on properties of oneness or manyness that would be “truly established” (*bden grub*), thus introducing a qualifier (*khyad par*) in the form of a “property to be refuted” (*dgag bya'i chos*) that one must understand for the Indian arguments to make sense. This is the usual dGe lugs pa way, stemming from Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419), to introduce qualifying parameters in order to distinguish the notions under attack as those of metaphysical realist philosophers (*dnegos smra ba*) and not just simply the ordinary ideas of oneness and manyness *tout court*. A similar and related move is to see the argument as being a “reasoning which forces the limits [of what the opponent accepts]” (*phul mtshams kyi rigs pa*), namely, as Se ra Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469-1546) puts it, that anything accepted *per impossible*

¹ Some sinologists and indologists alike argue, for example, that one should *not* attempt significant rapprochements but instead respect the fundamental *altérité* of major Asian cultures. Such is, for example, the position of the French sinologist François Jullien. For a critique of Jullien's idea of *altérité de la Chine*, see Billeter 2007. Anthony Flew (arguably rightly) saw philosophy as concerned with argument but then, in a disturbing mistake, said that most of what is termed *Eastern Philosophy* is unconcerned with argumentation, and thus justified that his book “draws no materials from any source east of Suez.” See Flew 1971, 36. Cf. Tillemans 1999, 188-189. Such parochial claims are now less frequent, or at the very least they are less forthright. Garfield 2015 makes the case in detail for engaging Buddhist philosophy in Western debates; see also Garfield and Van Norden 2016 on some ingenious and timely remedies for the continuing slants in Philosophy departments.

as truly existent would have to be what it is without any dependence whatsoever on anything else.²

If the first article introduces the position of Tsong kha pa and his dGe lugs pa followers, the second (chapter IV), written in French with Tōru Tomabechi, balances the dossier with a translation of a portion of “The History of Madhyamaka” (*dbu ma'i byung tshul*) composed by the famous (indeed notorious) rival of Tsong kha pa, gSer mdog Paṅ chen Śākya mchog ldan (1428-1507). This Sa skya pa thinker had a complex Philosophy of the Middle, shifting over the years from advocacy of Rang stong (all things being empty of themselves) to gZhan stong philosophy (the ultimate being empty of what is other than it). In general, the debate between Rang stong and gZhan stong is largely a Tibetan hermeneutical problem of how to integrate, into Madhyamaka, the Yogācāra philosophy's emphasis on the mind and Buddha-nature, as well as Tantric ideas. It also figures significantly in Sa skya pa and bKa' brgyud pa attempts to synthesize Madhyamaka with Indo-Tibetan Mahāmudrā views on the absolute nature of mind.³ Tsong kha pa and the dGe lugs pa, on the other hand, will have nothing to do with gZhan stong and will make no special or radically separate place for Tantra, Buddha-nature, etc. in their philosophical account of the ultimate truth (*don dam bden pa; paramārthasatya*). They are hardly usual Rang stong pas either, as they do not accept that things, like a vase, are literally empty of themselves. The point of Madhyamaka for them is not that a vase is without any type of vaseness but instead that it is empty of any *truly established* vase nature.

² See Tillemans 2016, 29 on the terms *'phul mtshams, rigs pas 'phul ba*, etc.

³ A partial bibliographical update. First, as a starting point on gZhan stong Madhyamaka in the Jo nang pa school, see Seyfort Ruegg 1963; see also Seyfort Ruegg 1988 on the bKa' brgyud Madhyamaka. We now have a fuller picture of the intra-Tibetan debates on Madhyamaka philosophies in the Sa skya and bKa' brgyud traditions, and their connection with Tibetan positions on Rang stong-gZhan stong and Mahāmudrā, thanks to Higgins and Draszczuk 2016 as well as R. Jackson 2019. Mathes 2015 documents late Indian antecedents for Madhyamaka-Mahāmudrā syntheses in the works of Maitrīpa. Mathes 2004 is a study of the differences in gZhan stong philosophy between Śākya mchog ldan and Dol po pa and is based on Jo nang Tāranātha's text comparing these two thinkers. Śākya mchog ldan's Yogācāra and Madhyamaka synthesis is investigated extensively in Komarovski 2011.

Tsong kha pa and his school are often characterized by Śākya mchog ldan, Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429-1489) and others as emphasizing a purely negative notion of the ultimate—i.e., the emptiness, or simple lack of anything truly established. The criticism is, quite arguably, not an unfair one. The dGe lugs pa did indeed draw upon such a Madhyamaka, with its version of ultimate truth as a simple, non-implicative negation (*med par dgag pa; prasajyapratīṣedha*), to interpret Tantra, Buddhānature, and Mahāmudrā, and for the rest to relegate Yogācāra to the status of an inferior view, a type of metaphysical realism about the nature of mind. Śākya mchog ldan, by contrast, clearly saw Yogācāra, the Buddhānature, and Tantra as indispensable parts of a positive account of the ultimate. Much of the argumentation in the translated extract is directed against key dGe lugs pa ideas concerning Madhyamaka use of logic and argumentation. I have reprinted the annotated translation here, with Dr. Tomabechi's kind permission, as a way to better understand the intra-Tibetan debates.

The third article (chapter V), “Tsong kha pa *et al.* on the Bhāviveka-Candrakīrti Debate,” looks in more detail at some of those same technical problems of Madhyamaka logic and argumentation, trying to unravel better Tsong kha pa's interpretation of the *Prasannapadā*'s famous sixth century debate between the Indian Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika subschools of Madhyamaka.⁴ The key Indian texts are naturally read to

⁴ The two terms are Sanskritizations of the important Tibetan terms *rang rgyud pa* and *thal 'gyur ba*. See Mimaki 1982, 53: “Tous les termes utiles pour classer les sous-écoles des Mādhyamika, tels que Sautrāntrika-mādhyamika, Yogācāra-mādhyamika, ‘Jig rten grags sde spyod pa’i dbu ma pa, Svātantrika et Prāsaṅgika, sont une invention des auteurs tibétains.” While *rang rgyud pa* (= *svātantrika*) does appear in a text originally written in Sanskrit, viz., the *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā* of the late eleventh century Kashmirian *paṇḍita* Jayānanda, the term *thal 'gyur ba* (= **prāsaṅgika*) has not been found in Indian sources up until now and may well be the invention of the *Madhyamakāvatāra*'s translator Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (1055-1145), who collaborated on a translation with Jayānanda in Tibet. See Seyfort Ruegg 2000, 20, n. 38; 2006, 320-322; Yoshimizu 2020. The terms “Svātantrika” and “Prāsaṅgika” are so commonly used in discussions nowadays that it would be pedantic to insist upon asterisks. The fact remains that the explicit thematisation of these two distinct currents within Madhyamaka (apart from a few uses of the term *rang rgyud pa* by a Kashmirian émigré who had connections with 12th century Tibetans) and the labelling of several other subschools are indeed the achievements of Tibetans, who

say that Mādhyamikas themselves have no theses of their own, endorse no truth claims, and therefore *never* accept *any* of the contrapositions (*viparyaya*) of the absurd consequences (*prasaṅga*) that they derive from others' positions. Tsong kha pa, however, in what would later become known in the dGe lugs pa curriculum as the “lesson on consequences and contrapositions” (*thal bzlog gi rnam bzhag*), argues that it is only the specific consequence at stake in this particular debate that cannot be contraposed—most others can and should be. The no-thesis stance is thus not dependent upon blanket rejection of a familiar logical move.

The fourth article (chapter VI), “Mādhyamikas Playing Bad Hands,” looks at the Indian canonical sources for Buddhist refusals to make truth claims, even about customary matters, sources which suggest that for a Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika, like Candrakīrti, customary truth (*samvṛtisatya*) is only widespread error, the alethic equivalent of fool's gold. The Mādhyamikas, having no thesis, should only read customary truth off the surface and duplicate what the common man (or “the world”) recognizes (*lokaprasiddha*) about it. The combination of those Indian canonical themes probably contributed to frequent Tibetan positions—e.g., amongst the Jo nang pa or amongst the followers of sTag tshang lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen (1405-?)—that customary things only “exist for mistaken minds” (*blo 'khrul ba'i ngor yod pa*), i.e., that they just wrongly seem to exist, and that there are no right answers or truth claims that one can endorse about them, as there are no sources of knowledge (*tshad ma = pramāṇa*) that have them as objects. Tsong kha pa and the dGe lugs pa, by contrast, adopted what I consider to be a philosophically more promising stance, one that recognized the need for strong normativity concerning truth: customary things are not just reduced to commonly accepted errors; there are *pramāṇas* and hence robustly right answers about them.⁵ Not surprisingly, such a position needs a quite different, and even strained, exegesis of the Candrakīrtian textual legacy, a type of creative misreading.

perspicaciously viewed major developments within the Indian Philosophy of the Middle. On the history and philosophical interest of the various Tibetan ways of distinguishing between these subschools, see Dreyfus and McClintock 2003; Vose 2009.

⁵ On the debate between the dGe lugs pa and the followers of sTag tshang lo tsā ba as to whether Mādhyamikas do, don't, should, or shouldn't accept *pramāṇas*, see the two volumes by The Yakherds 2021.

Systematic qualifications of the Madhyamaka arguments, technical points rehabilitating contraposition, and alternative exegeses of Indian *sūtra* sources go a long way towards what will become a full-fledged dGe lugs pa Philosophy of the Middle. Instead of a *generalized* abjuration of truth claims, the Madhyamaka now focuses predominantly on a distinction between a harmless, ordinary realism—more exactly, the acceptable part (*cha*) of an ordinary conception of truth and reality—and metaphysical realism, embracing the former and rejecting the latter. Harmless realism recognizes the normativity of truth claims and the need for justificatory arguments to support them. Metaphysical realism, by contrast, with its demands for intrinsic natures (*svabhāva*), turns out to be an incoherent and unnecessary attempt to ground the harmless.

As I have argued at length elsewhere (Tillemans 2016, chapters I and XII), such a nuanced Madhyamaka rejection of realism would be an important, subtle, and defensible no-thesis stance in contemporary thinking on metaphysics, even if it may well be considerably different from the philosophy of its major Indian ancestors. It is not the typical Prāsaṅgika error theory and refusal to endorse *any and all* truth claims. In short, this philosophy, which I have called “atypical Prāsaṅgika,” runs counter to a frequent and even very natural exegesis of Candrakīrti’s writings (see Tillemans 2016, 51f.). Independence from India may have been institutionally unavowable—and still is largely unavowable in Tibetan milieux—but it should not be seen as vitiating important thinking. Indeed, leaving aside its problematic connection with India, atypical Prāsaṅgika is in many respects a view that is easier to take seriously and build upon. Chapter VII, the final article in the section on Madhyamaka, argues, in effect, for the philosophical merits and exceptionalness of some of those features of the dGe lugs pa position in the larger context of appearance-reality dichotomies and two-truth theories in East-West philosophies. The comparison is with Wilfrid Sellars.

The various studies (chapters VIII-XII) in the section on the indigenous Tibetan grammatico-linguistic tradition of *Sum rtags* are a continuation of themes initially treated in a book by Derek Herforth and me, *Agents and Actions in Classical Tibetan* (AACT), i.e., Tillemans and Herforth 1989. In this section, I look at views that traditional Tibetan thinkers of various traditions had on their own language and use these views to take up issues that regularly arise in linguists’ discussions of ergative languages—

and Tibetan is such a language—viz., transitivity and use of active and passive voices.⁶

An aside to provide background is indispensable before we can continue with our résumé of the chapters. AACT took up the themes of transitivity and voice diathesis in the context of traditional *Sum rtags* discussions centered upon *śloka* (verse) twelve from the *rTags kyi 'jug pa*, a text traditionally attributed, along with the *Sum cu pa*, to the seventh century(?) grammarian Thon mi Sambhoṭa. I have long maintained, however, that an in-depth discussion of this verse, to be profitable, must invariably shift to the interpretations and debates on the *rTags kyi 'jug pa* by indigenous commentators, from the earliest writers in the fourteenth century to the numerous later grammarians writing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of these interpretations, as we shall see, have considerable independent interest. In any case, one cannot bypass them and go straight to the root text. Nor do we know in any detail what the antecedent Indian influences upon Thon mi might have been, traditional hagiographical accounts just mentioning his studying different Indic scripts, as well as *Kātantra* and “many treatises,” with a South Indian Brahmin named “Li byin” (or sometimes *Lipikara) and a Paṇḍita Lha rig(s) pa'i seng ge.⁷ In sum, Thon mi himself was an obscure figure whose thought was conveyed in verses, the most important of which were probably as sibylline to his Tibetan commentators as they are to us.

⁶ See, e.g., Comrie 1978, 329: “Ergativity is a term used in traditional descriptive typological linguistics to refer to a system of nominal case-marking where the subject of an intransitive verb has the same morphological marker as a direct object, and a different morphological marker from the subject of a transitive verb.” Written Tibetan satisfies that description, as it generally marks the agent of a transitive verb with the *byed sgra* (agentive, ergative case ending) and does not mark the subject of an intransitive verb, nor the direct objects/patients of transitive verbs. In written Tibetan, subjects of intransitive verbs and direct objects generally take the absolutive case. Spoken Tibetan, on the other hand, has a much more complex use of the ergative: “the ‘ergative’ marker just isn’t always there when a good ergative marker ought to be ..., and sometimes is there when it shouldn’t be (DeLancey 2011, 12).” Spoken Tibetan relies, *inter alia*, on various pragmatic factors, with the ergative often being absent or optional where one would expect it in the written language. See, e.g., DeLancey 2011, Nagano 1987, Tournadre 1995, 1996, Zeisler 1994.

⁷ See Verhagen 2001, 323-326.

Here is the key verse that launched a host of different interpretations. Thon mi starts with an introductory question in *rTags kyi 'jug pa* verse eleven:

ci phyir 'jug par byed ce na //

“Why are [the five Tibetan prefixes, *b-*, *g-*, *d-*, *'a-*, *m-*] applied [to verbal and nominal forms]?”

He then answers via the four lines of verse twelve:

pho ni 'das dang gzhan bsgrub phyir //

ma ning gnyis ka da ltar ched //

mo ni bdag dang ma 'ongs phyir //

shin tu mo ni mnyam phyir ro //.

“The masculine [prefix *b-*] is for establishing the past and other; The neutral [prefixes *g-* and *d-*] are for both [self and other] [and] the present;⁸

The feminine [prefix *'a-*] is for self and the future;

The extremely feminine [prefix *m-*] is for [self, other, and the three tenses] all alike.”⁹

⁸ A frequent, rival interpretation, since Laufer 1898, is to read *gnyis ka* (both) as qualifying *ma ning* (neutral). Thus, we regularly get some version of the following translation: “The *two* neutral [prefixes *g-* and *d-*] are for the present”. See, e.g., Stoddard and Tournadre 1992, 191. This, however, does not accord with commentators like Si tu and his successors. Indeed, it renders the major commentators’ explanations incomprehensible. Vollmann 2008 is aware of the differences in translation, but still prefers to read *gnyis ka* as qualifying *ma ning*. Note that Bacot 1928, 81, on the other hand, was in accord with major commentators’ gloss of this verse. Those commentators regularly give examples of uses of *g-* and *d-* for both self and other, and for the present. See *gSer tog sum rtags*, translated in chapter XII, §32f. See also AACT p. 47, §15: *sngon 'jug gi ma ning ga dang da ni dngos po bdag gzhan gnyis dang dus da lta ba la 'jug pa gtso che ste /*. “As for the neuter prefixes *g-* and *d-*, they refer principally to *both*, i.e., to the entities, self and other, as well as to the present.”

⁹ The verse is numbered as 12 in AACT and numbered as 12-15 in Bacot 1928. I have outlined my reasons for my numbering in Tillemans 1994, 122. Note that the question in verse 11 and the four-line answer in verse 12 are parallel to what we find in the previous two verses. There, Bacot rightly took the question *ji ltar 'jug par byed ce na* as

From the fourteenth century on, this verse was taken up in detail by *rTags 'jug* commentators like dBus pa blo gsal Byang chub ye shes (first half of fourteenth century), Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429-1489), Zha lu lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po (1441-1527), Bra ti dge bshes Rin chen don grub (seventeenth century), rNam gling Paṅ chen dKon mchog chos grags (1648-1718), and many others. A turning point came with a great Tibetan proto-philologist Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699-1774), who polemicized against the accounts of his predecessors on the grammar of Tibetan verbs, finding them hopelessly confused on all that mattered. Later grammarians—such as Si tu Paṅ chen himself, as well as his successors, dNgul chu Dharmabhadra (1772-1851), A lag sha Ngag dbang bstan dar (1759-1840), A kya Yongs 'dzin dByangs can dga' ba'i blo gros (1740-1827), dByangs can Grub pa'i rdo rje (1809-1887), dKar

9 and the four-line answer as 10. Unfortunately, however, he did not preserve the clear parallel in the subsequent verse when he rightly numbered the question *ci phyir 'jug par byed ce na* as 11, but, for seemingly no reason, numbered the four-line answer as 12-15. There is indeed no reason to continue with Bacot's numbering here. See also the discussion of the numbering in Graf 2019, 442-446, who rejects Bacot, but proposes that we number everywhere (in both the *Sum cu pa* and *rTags kyi 'jug pa*) according to four-line verses, in keeping with the simplification proposed in Zeisler 2006, n. 2. This has the consequence that the initial question (*ci phyir 'jug par byed...*) and the first line (*pho ni 'das...*) end up as verse 11cd, while the other three lines become verse 12abc. The unity of the four-line verse is thus lost. Not only that, but the parallel structure with the previous verse is also lost: the question (*ji ltar 'jug par byed ...*) now is 10b and the four-line answer is split over 10cd and 11ab. I think that Alexander Graf's main argument for adopting four lines everywhere is that Si tu, in commenting upon fourteen lines that occur later, speaks of “three ślokas and two pādas (*rkang pa*)” (Graf 2019, 444). Graf, in effect, generalizes upon this passage and Si tu's statement that the *Sum cu pa* contains thirty-three ślokas. He argues that if we stick with four-line verses and subtract the homages, as Si tu himself suggests, then the thirty-three reduce to thirty. Graf thus arrives at the view that both the *Sum cu pa* and *rTags kyi 'jug pa* proceed in four-line verses everywhere and without exception. The consequence in the case of the *rTags kyi 'jug pa*, however, is that Graf's proposed numbering will have little or no connection with the sense. This is a major drawback. I prefer to continue to read *ji ltar 'jug par byed ce na* as 9, the four-line answer as 10, *ci phyir 'jug par byed ce na* as 11, and the four-line answer as 12. Müller-Witte 2009, Kapitel 5 (Der Vers 12 des *rTags 'jug*) does likewise. This solution is in keeping with commentators, keeps parallel structures intact, and preserves meaning.

lebs drung yig Pad ma rdo rje (born 1858), gSer tog Blo bzang tshul khriims rgya mtsho (1845-1915) and others¹⁰—thus once again took up Thon mi’s infamous verse and revisited three key sets of terms. They are as follows:

- (1) *bdag* (“self”) and *gzhan* (“other”). The former term designates the agent (*byed pa po*), the instrument, as well as the agent’s doing (*byed pa’i las* = “act-qua-doing”). The latter term designates that which fulfills the semantic role of patient (or is, syntactically, the direct object), as well as the action done to that patient (*bya ba’i las* = “act-qua-thing-done”). Significantly, thus, the two acts are also grouped under self and other, respectively, by grammarians. They can be understood semantically in terms of active and passive voices, respectively.
- (2) *tha dad pa* (“differentiated”; “transitive”) and *tha mi dad pa* (“undifferentiated”; “intransitive”), the former being verbs like “cut” and “kill” that have an agent that is differentiated, i.e., substantially different, from the object/patient, and the latter being verbs like “fall” and “go” that do not have such a distinct agent. A common terminological alternative to *tha dad pa/tha mi dad pa* is thus “verbs that are directly connected with a distinct agent” (*byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su ‘brel ba’i las tshig*) and those that are not directly connected with a distinct agent (*byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su ma ‘brel ba’i las tshig*). The usual shorthand in dictionaries becomes *byed ‘brel las tshig* and *byed med las tshig*, verbs that do or do not have an agent.¹¹ The distinction, as will be argued in this book, is to be seen as a version of the transitive-intransitive contrast.

¹⁰ On the lives, works, and dates of these grammarians and many others, including major pre-Si tu grammarians as well as twentieth century figures, see Müller-Witte 2009, Kapitel 4, “Leben und Werk der Grammatiker.”

¹¹ These terms do not figure in Thon mi’s *rTags kyi ‘jug pa*. They are due to Si tu’s gloss (AACT 62, §1): *las gang zhig byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su ‘brel ba’i dbang du byas nas / byed pa po’i dngos po de nyid dang de’i byed pa dang bcas pa la ni bdag ces bya zhing / des bsgrub par bya ba’i yul gyi dngos po bya ba dang bcas pa la ni gzhan zhes bya’o //*. “Given some act directly related with a distinct agent (*byed pa po gzhan*) then that very entity (*dngos po*) which is the agent and its ‘doing’ (*de’i byed pa*) are termed ‘self.’ The entity which is the focus (*yul*) to be established by that [agent] as well as that thing which is to be done (*bya ba*) are termed ‘other.’” They figure regularly, in one form or another, in post-eighteenth century discussions of the verse. Note that this passage was hopelessly

(3) the “three times” (*dus gsum*), or the three tenses (“past,” “present,” “future”). The usual way to interpret these temporal specifications in Thon mi’s verse—e.g., that of Si tu, gSer tog, Ngag dbang bstan dar, A kya Yongs ‘dzin and others—is that they were added to capture past, present, or future verb forms unclassifiable as either self or other, including intransitive verbs and forms that involve auxiliaries (*tshig grogs*) like *kyin*, *gyin*, *gin*, *yin*, ‘*gyur*, or *bzhin pa*. That exegesis, adopted in one way or another by virtually all post-Si tu grammarians, is presented as follows by gSer tog Blo bzang tshul khirms rgya mtsho:

“In this treatise [i.e., in śloka twelve of the *rTags kyi ‘jug pa*], [Thon mi] put forth a division into self and other in order to include words for agents (*byed pa po*) and focuses of action (*bya ba’i yul*). In that [self-other division] are present doing (*byed bzhin da lta ba*), future thing-done and doing (*bya ‘gyur dang byed ‘gyur ma ‘ongs pa*), and past accomplished thing-done (*bya ba byas zin ‘das pa*). To include what is not pervaded (*ma khyab pa*) by the divisions of self and other, he put forth the division in terms of the three times (*dus gsum gyi dbye ba mdzad pa*) [in śloka twelve of the *rTags kyi ‘jug pa*].”¹²

The passage echoes Si tu.¹³ As gSer tog’s commentary shows (See chapter XII, below, for a full translation), however, things become complex in

misunderstood by early tibetologists like Jacques Bacot and Jacques Durr. See Tillemans 1988 for a detailed critique of the ideas on *bdag*, *gzhan*, and Tibetan verbs in Bacot 1946 and Durr 1950. Finally, Müller-Witte 2009 gives a fascinating study of two twentieth century grammarians, i.e., dPa’ ris sangs rgyas (born 1931) and rDo rje gdong drug (born 1935), who understand the ideas about *bdag*, *gzhan*, and *tha dad-tha mi dad* very differently from Si tu *et al.* Indeed, dPa’ ris complains that the great scholars (*mkhas chen*) mostly went astray because of overestimating the ease with which they could describe the verb morphology of their mother-language; they thus underestimated the complexity of the linguistic data. See Müller-Witte 2009, 239 *et seq.* dPa’ ris sangs rgyas may well have a point, but we should be clear that *his* use of *bdag*, *gzhan*, etc. (as Müller-Witte recognizes) is a new use of the traditional concepts, developing instead a causative-resultative distinction that seems to have real relevance to the data.

¹² *gSer tog sum rtags*, translated in chapter XII, §18.

¹³ Cf. Si tu (AACT 62, §4): *des na ci phyir ‘jug gi gzchung ‘di ‘chad pa’i skabs su dus gsum gyi dbye bas bshad pa rnam ni / bdag gzhan gyi dbye bas ma khyab pa’i lhag ma rnam bsdu ba’i don du blta bar bya’o //*. “Therefore, when explaining the passage [i.e., in śloka

subsequent commentaries. Thon mi's specifications for the three tenses are interpreted as neither exhaustive nor exclusive. On the one hand, each line's tense specification ends up covering only the supposedly *important* forms. On the other, the self/other specifications often overlap with those for the tenses. The structure of the verse in terms of two sets of divisions becomes increasingly baroque.

Indeed, it needs to be recognized clearly that Thon mi's own choice of words in verse twelve posed persistent problems, both to traditional exegetes from the fifteenth to the twentieth century as well as to the first modern scholars, like Jacques Bacot 1928, 1946, who attempted to use Thon mi's grammar as a description of Tibetan verb morphology. Major Tibetan commentators over the centuries remained puzzled by the loose fit of the *rTags kyi 'jug pa*'s root verse with what they saw as actual Tibetan data. Thon mi's terms "past," "present," and "future" in the first three lines of the verse were therefore commented upon as capturing only the principal (*gtso bo*, *gtso che ba*) tenses conveyed by the respective prefixes *b-*, *g-/d-*, and *'a*, others having been somehow omitted as of lesser importance. Or it would be said that verb forms that weren't "explicitly taught" by Thon mi (*dngos su ma bstan*) in his specifications of tenses, were "obtained by the sense [of the verse]" (*don gyis thob pa*).¹⁴ Or sometimes, as in Si tu (see chapter XII, §42), grammarians proposed a significant textual variant, reading *da* ("present") rather than the conjunction *dang* ("and") in the third line so as to make Thon mi better accord with data—Bacot 1946, 66 did the same. In the end, however, it is the nineteenth century grammarian gSer tog who, after using the usual stratagems, has the merit of forthright realism. He, in effect, admits that the words of Thon mi's verse can not be taken as they stand and are not going to be explained away satisfactorily. He thus went so far as to propose a new, extensively rewritten verse twelve (see chapter XII, §48) that he thought would account for Si tu's and Ngag dbang bstan dar's counterexamples and thus better fit actual Tibetan

twelve of Thon mi's *rTags kyi 'jug pa*], 'Why are [the prefixes] applied?', we should understand that his specifications in terms of the three-fold temporal division are meant to include the remaining things (*lhag ma*) not pervaded by the self/other distinction."

¹⁴ Such commentarial tactics already occur occasionally in the *Sum rtags* of a prominent grammarian of the early period Zha lu lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po (1441-1527). They are frequent in gSer tog and A kya Yongs 'dzin.

data. It is progress in the linguistic description of Tibetan using traditional schemata. But it is a sobering conclusion to centuries of commentarial exegesis on a recalcitrant root text. Broad-ranging thought about self and other, thing-done, doing, and verb tenses, especially from Si tu on, produced important linguistic perspectives and insights. Quasi-religious hermeneutics seeking the exact authorial intent behind each word, and especially each omission, in a verse on something as secular as Tibetan verb morphology, unfortunately, did not.

Chapter VIII, “On *bdag*, *gzhan*, and the Supposed Active-passive Neutrality of Tibetan Verbs,” examines the arguments of some modern linguists and tibetologists who maintain that the Tibetan language is thoroughly voice-neutral and has no distinction between active and passive. I argue that what indigenous grammarians like Si tu Pañchen, A kya Yongs ‘dzin, A lag sha Ngag dbang bstan dar, and gSer tog say about *bdag* and *gzhan* tends to show the opposite to be true. Their contrast between act-qua-doing (*byed pa’i las*) and act-qua-thing-done (*bya ba’i las*) does have bearing on the question of voice diathesis in Tibetan.

Some linguists and tibetologists argue, too, that “transitivity” and “intransitivity” have little or no place in analyses of Tibetan. “Transitivity, Intransitivity, and *tha dad pa* Verbs in Traditional Tibetan Grammar”—chapter IX—argues, on the contrary, that the indigenous distinction between *tha dad pa* and *tha mi dad pa* does meaningfully capture a distinction between Tibetan transitive and intransitive verbs. I think that there is no good reason to continue abjuring terms like “transitivity” and “active-passive” in our description of Tibetan language.

Chapter X, “gSer tog Blo bzang tshul khriims rgya mtsho on Tibetan Verb Tenses,” looks at how an astute nineteenth century grammarian significantly disambiguates the terminology about Tibetan tenses that figures in indigenous grammatical discussions of *bdag*, *gzhan*, and the “three times” (*dus gsum*). Modern writers on Tibetan language have sometimes pointed out that future stems (*ma ’ongs pa*) do not convey tense, *stricto sensu*, so much as modes like obligation or necessity. Thus, for example, Michael Hahn rightly saw that Tibetan emphasizes obligation through forms in ... *par bya* (e.g., *gcad par bya* “... is to be cut”) or through the simple future stem (e.g., *gcad do* “... will/should be cut”), while actions happening in a future time, *stricto sensu*, are expressed by periphrastic forms using ‘gyur, like *gcod par ’gyur* (“... will cut”).

“Auch der sogenannte Futurstamm ist in Gegensatz zu seiner Bezeichnung kein Tempusstamm, sondern ein Modusstamm mit ne-
zessitativer Bedeutung. Er drückt aus, dass eine (noch nicht begonnene)
Verbalhandlung vollzogen werden muss. ...

[D]as reine Futur kann in Tibetischen nur periphrastisch ausgedrückt
werden.”¹⁵

It is noteworthy that at least one prominent, traditional Tibetan grammarian seems to have seen the need for a similar distinction and thus came up with notions of *dus kyi dus ma 'ongs pa* (the temporally future, i.e., the future shown by the periphrastic form with 'gyur) and *bya las ma 'ongs pa* (future act-qua-thing-[to be]-done, such as *gcad par bya* or *gcad do*). The grammarian is gSer tog Blo bzang tshul khriims rgya mtsho. He then extrapolated to a distinction between the temporal values (i.e., *spyir dus gsum gyi 'jog tshul* “the way to classify the three times generally”) and the modal values (i.e., *bya byed las kyi dus gsum* “three times in terms of [the triad] actions, agents and objects”) of all the various verb forms to which Thon mi and his commentators refer. The insight is important if we are to make sense of Tibetan verbs.

Chapter XI, “On the Assimilation of Indic Grammatical Literature into Indigenous Tibetan Scholarship,” looks at would-be Indic sources for terms like *bdag* and *gzhan*, arriving at a cautionary note. On difficult points such as later grammarians’ use of the term *dingos po* (“entity”) and grammatical treatments of *bdag* and *gzhan* generally, the Tibetan discussions should not be understood principally by plumbing the depths of Indian Vyākaraṇa literature for potentially equivalent Sanskrit original terms—as has been done since Laufer 1898—but need to be seen in their own right as essentially indigenous developments. It has been, alas, a tempting *non-sequitur* to think that the fact that Tibetan thinkers had incontestable, historical debts to India (on everything from logic and Madhyamaka to tantra and grammar) implies that the most important

¹⁵ Hahn 1985, 63 and 64. Müller-Witte 2009 shows that Tibetan indigenous grammarians, over the last three centuries, were, in effect, divided on the issue of whether the present and future stems were purely modal or temporally oriented. A kya Yongs 'dzin, for example, advances the former view in his commentary on Bra ti dge bshes, viz., that present and future stems are temporally neutral. See Müller-Witte 2009, 186 and n. 87. Si tu, however, maintains the temporal orientation.

and fruitful way to understand them is always, and first and foremost, to retrace their debt. In studying Tibetan works on case grammar, phonology, *mantras*, and etymologies, an indologically oriented methodology has produced results. When it comes to *Sum rtags* accounts of transitivity, voice, and tenses, however, it obscures much that is of interest and often leads us astray, away from diverse texts, originality, and complex Tibetan intellectual history to less than productive speculation.¹⁶

The last study, chapter XII, is an annotated translation of gSer tog's chapter on *bdag* and *gzhan*, providing source material for the previous chapters and further informed discussion. The chapter, like other commentaries on *bdag* and *gzhan*, is an exegesis of Thon mi's verse twelve and often tries to reconcile Thon mi's enigmatic omissions with linguistic empirical data. Nonetheless, in his sensitivity to that data and its implications, gSer tog is one of the most original and clear thinkers in the Si tu tradition. He gives us a reliable snapshot of controversies amongst his fellow grammarians, and his own ideas merit further study.¹⁷

* * *

There are several publications in the fields of Buddhist Studies, Logic, and Linguistics that are, in one way or another, particularly germane to themes treated in this book. I have mentioned those I consider important, or even indispensable, to understanding Tibetan Buddhist logic in notes to the first two studies. They present recent Asianist research, bibliographical information on Indian and Tibetan logic and epistemology, as well as, on a few occasions, information on promising research on modern logic that could be brought to bear more fully on Buddhist material. Let me mention here in this introduction some important developments that stand out concerning Madhyamaka and Tibetan grammatico-linguistic thought.

¹⁶ Some examples of less than useful speculation about Indian antecedents underlying Tibetan *bdag* and *gzhan* contexts are found in Miller 1991, 1992, and 1993, §10. See Tillemans 1994 for a reply. See also chapter XI below.

¹⁷ Cf. Müller-Witte 2009, 139: "Sein Kommentar zum *Sum rtags*, der „magische Schlüssel“ gilt als einer der Besten nach Si tu und weicht an einigen Stellen von ihm ab. Die Abhandlung ist innovativ, ausführlicher als die meisten anderen und hat den grossen Vorteil, dass gSer tog dort die Namen der Autoren nennt, deren Positionen er bespricht und tadelt."

It was not feasible to treat these adequately in notes to the chapters of the present book. We begin with Madhyamaka.

First of all, key Indian sources have become accessible in a way in which they hardly were before. We now have a very good translation and edition of the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannadā* by Anne MacDonald, i.e., MacDonald 2015. This publication makes it much easier to understand the major Indian text upon which Tsong kha pa and others rely in their exegesis of the Bhāviveka-Candrakīrti debate, and it is thus a major contribution towards clarity.

Secondly, with the work of David Seyfort Ruegg, there has been, in recent years, some controversy about what the absurd consequence (*prasaṅga*) and contraposition (*viparyaya*) were in this debate, or if there were really consequences and contrapositions at all. There are some new developments here that I should take up. The problems are philosophically substantial but couched in technical terms. This is not easy stuff, and we need to backtrack a bit.

Here's what one needs to know. Hopkins 1983, 491, and Tillemans 1992 and 2016, chapter V, gave the *reductio ad absurdum* reasoning, or absurd consequence (*prasaṅga*), that Bhāviveka discusses in his debate with Candrakīrti as follows:

“It would follow absurdly that things' production is pointless and without end because they are produced from themselves.”

This would yield the following contraposition (*viparyaya*):

“Things are not produced from themselves, because their production has a point and has an end.”

The Mādhyamika, according to Bhāviveka, would have to accept that contraposition as valid. The result would then be that he would have to accept that things are produced from something other than themselves; there would therefore be “a contradiction with [the Mādhyamika's own professed] philosophical tenets (*siddhāntavirodha*),” in that the negation of self-production would imply a positive thesis, i.e., production from other. A genuine Mādhyamika, on the other hand, right from the get-go in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, should supposedly accept no such positive implication when he says that things are not produced from themselves, from other things, from both or from neither. Thus, for

Bhāviveka, this consequence—originally given by Buddhapālita—is not an acceptable way for a genuine Mādhyamika to argue.

Going from a consequence to its contraposition is a generally accepted Buddhist logical move, known to Dignāga and extensively developed by Dharmakīrti and his logician successors.¹⁸ One can make the move from “it follows absurdly that *A* would be *B* because it is *C*” to “*A* is not *C*, because it is not *B*” when not-*B* is the case and *C* implies *B* (so that not-*B* implies not-*C*). (See chapter II, section 3 in this book for indigenous Tibetan developments.) This is close enough to the English sense of “contraposition” that we can use this word profitably. To be precise, however, *viparyaya* does mean more than what a modern logician usually means by “contraposition.” Whereas contraposition is just the conversion of a conditional sentence $P \rightarrow Q$ (if a proposition *P* is true then *Q* is true) into another conditional $\neg Q \rightarrow \neg P$ (if not-*Q* then not-*P*) (See, e.g., Copi 1982, 193f.), a *viparyaya* involves an additional feature, viz., that not-*Q* is indeed true. In short, *viparyaya* is, arguably, more like an inference by the rule of *modus tollens* rather than a mere contraposition of a conditional: one infers $\neg P$ from $(P \rightarrow Q)$ and $\neg Q$ (See Copi 1982, 324). Let us continue to allow ourselves the English term but with the appropriate dose of circumspection that it is only a partial fit.

As I try to bring out in Tillemans 1992 (included as chapter V in this book), Tsong kha pa recognized that there *is* an absurd consequence at stake in the debate but contested Bhāviveka’s formulation of that consequence and slipped in an all-important word “again” into his version. He thus chose to understand the consequence as:

“It would follow absurdly that things’ production *again* (*slar yang*) is pointless and without end because they are produced from themselves.”

In so doing, he thought that he guaranteed that there would *not* be a valid contraposition in the case of this *specific* consequence. A would-be contraposition would yield a reasoning that no Buddhist would ever accept as a proof (*sādhana*) of things not being produced from themselves, viz., “Things are not produced from themselves, because it is not so that their

¹⁸ On the account of *prasaṅgaviparyaya* in Dharmakīrti’s PV IV k.12 and in Manoranandin’s commentary, see Tillemans 2000, 21-24.

production *again* is pointless,” which, for him, would mean equivalently “Things are not produced from themselves, because their production *again* has a point.”

The move from the first formulation of the contraposition to the second might perhaps be contestable if one did not accept double negation elimination as universally applicable.¹⁹ In any case, Tsong kha pa wholeheartedly accepted such a logical law across the board, and therefore had no difficulties making precisely this move in his *rTsa she t̄ik chen* commentary on Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* (See chapter V, below). Moreover, he held that a *viparyaya* to be valid should be a proof of the truth of a proposition via a reason that possesses the triple characterization (*trairūpya*), one characteristic being that it is true that the reason qualifies the subject. The problem then is that, for a Buddhist, the qualification of the subject, or *pakṣadharmatva*, is not true: it is necessarily false that things’ production again has a point. In fact, for Buddhists who hold all entities to be momentary, it can never be so that the same things are produced again; the proposition that they can and must be is at most accepted by a Sāṃkhya opponent, who holds *satkāryavāda*, i.e., that effects exist latently at the time of their causes and are later made manifest, or *reproduced*. Tsong kha pa has, in effect, a usual Dharmakīrtian and Dignāgan notion of what a *prasaṅgaviparyaya* is. His point is only that no such *viparyaya* is possible *here* in the Mādhyamika’s debate with the Sāṃkhya opponent.

¹⁹ A Mādhyamika might conceivably argue that the reason “it is not the case that their production again is pointless” would not imply the affirmation that their production again does have a point. Oddly enough, however, Indian and Tibetan Mādhyamikas did not consider the applicability or non-applicability of *pratiṣedhadvayena prakṛtagamana* (*dgag pa gnyis kyis rnal ma go ba* “[the law that] one understands the main [proposition] by means of two negations”) to be a relevant issue here. Neither in the Indian version nor in Tibetan remakes of the *prasaṅga* and *prasaṅgaviparyaya* do we find Mādhyamikas rejecting the move from “it is not so that ... is pointless” to “it is so that ... has a point,” even though the applicability of double negation elimination is a hot-button issue elsewhere, i.e., in discussions on the tetralemma (*catuṣkoṭi*). Tsong kha pa accepted the law across the board; Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge did not—see chapter I, section §7 below and Tillemans 2016, chapter VII on double negation elimination in Madhyamaka.

So much for the Indo-Tibetan background. Now, David Seyfort Ruegg has argued in detail that there should be no question *at all* about Dignāgan or Dharmakīrtian contrapositions of consequences in this debate, because *viparyaya* for Candrakīrti and Bhāviveka is *not* to be understood in terms of the usual technical notion of Buddhist logic. Instead *viparyaya*, for these sixth century Indian Mādhyamikas, was a looser move along the lines of what he terms “implicative reversal.” As Seyfort Ruegg 2000, 253 put it:

“[Bhāviveka’s objection] apparently involves the idea not of contraposition but of implicative reversal, namely, that a negation of production from self would imply the affirmation of production from an other.”

In “Tsong kha pa *et al.* on the Bhāviveka-Candrakīrti Debate,” I argued that “implicative reversal” of a consequence does not follow any clear logical principle. It thus violates the principle of interpretative charity to introduce “implicative reversal” as a logical move, even if it might seem to accord with some explanations by Bhāviveka’s commentator Avalokitavrata. Philosophically, there is thus reason to think that “implicative reversal” is not part of the story here. However, it is not just bad logic alone that makes “implicative reversal” suspect: the text of the *Prasannapadā* does not bear it out. The clincher showing that Bhāviveka *is* thinking of a consequence and a contraposition in the normal, Buddhist, technical sense has been provided by Toshikazu Watanabe. Watanabe 2013 looked at consequences and contrapositions in Dignāga and then looked at the passages in *Prasannapadā* 36.11-37.2 dealing with Bhāviveka’s other criticisms of Buddhapālita’s arguments. He examined, in particular, the *prasaṅga* refuting any production from “other” (*paratra*), i.e., from causes that would be radically other than their effects. Here too, as Watanabe shows, Bhāviveka’s criticism of the *prasaṅgaviparyaya* as leading again to a contradiction with Madhyamaka philosophical tenets (*siddhāntavirodha*) presupposes a normal contraposition of the *prasaṅga*, one that Dignāga or a later logician would find fully familiar.

In effect, Bhāviveka’s absurd consequence in his arguments against production from “other” can be formulated as:

“It would follow absurdly that everything would arise from everything because things arise from things that are other than them.”

Given that no-one accepts it to be true that everything arises from everything, the contraposition he deduces is then:

“Things do not arise from things that are other than them, because it is not so that everything arises from everything.”

It is easy to see that the logical structure of this argument and its contraposition is the same as that of the earlier refutation of production from self. What one says about the one will hold for the other. While we may or may not accept Tsong kha pa’s reformulation of the first *prasaṅga*, we should not suppose with Seyfort Ruegg that *viparyaya* at this stage in the history of philosophy was something rather loose and informal, significantly different from contrapositions and *modus tollens* inferences. More likely is that neither for Dignāga, nor for Bhāviveka, nor for Candrakīrti, was there a dubious type of logical move along the lines of “implicative reversal.”

* * *

Turning to recent developments and ongoing controversies concerning indigenous Tibetan grammar, there are several people who have, in one way or another, argued that the notion of transitivity either cannot apply meaningfully to the Tibetan language at all, or (what is a more modest claim) that the grammarians’ own *tha dad pa-tha mi dad pa* (literally “differentiated-undifferentiated”) contrast is not to be seen as capturing a distinction between transitive and intransitive. We will take up the latter claim. Thus, Ralf Vollmann, relying on the late Roland Bielmeier’s views, says:

“[T]he Tibetan concept of <*tha dad pa*> ‘differentiative’ or <*byed ‘brel*> (AG-connected) does not simply translate the modern syntactic concept of transitivity. Instead, it seems to refer to the degree of control of the agent over the action. Therefore, Western scholars nowadays prefer the terminology ‘controllable verb’ (CTRL, c) and ‘not-controllable verb’ (NOCTRL, nc).”²⁰

²⁰ Vollmann 2008, 348.

The idea that the grammarians' distinction between *tha dad / tha mi dad* is a matter of control, intention, or volition, rather than transitivity may be, in part at least, due to a not infrequent and quite questionable Tibetan classification of verbs like *mthong ba* "see," *go ba* "hear," *shes pa* "know," and the like as *tha mi dad pa*. Verbs like *mthong ba*, *go ba*, and *shes pa* express a process with two participants. In other words, they are "biactantial"—i.e., have an agent with ergative marking and an object/patient—and thus would naturally seem good candidates for being transitive verbs. And yet *mthong ba*, *go ba*, and *shes pa* are classified in dictionaries like the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* of Zhang Yisun *et al.* as *tha mi dad pa*. It might thus be thought that *tha dad pa* and *tha mi dad pa* verbs are not, respectively, transitive and intransitive but just express voluntary and involuntary actions. Seeing, hearing, and knowing are involuntary, or unintentional, states that happen to a person as a result of previous efforts in looking, listening, and studying. And, indeed, some important textbooks on Tibetan do translate *tha dad pa* as "intentional" and *tha mi dad pa* as "unintentional," including *mthong ba* and the like in a list of verbs of that latter sort.²¹ I would reply that we need to look at that classification of *mthong ba*, etc., in some detail as it shows itself to be a rather frequent *idée reçue* with little to recommend it. Verbs like *mthong ba*, *go ba*, and *shes pa* are best *not* regarded as *tha mi dad pa*.

True, there were some sophisticated Tibetan thinkers who held that *mthong ba* and the like were *tha mi dad pa*. A famous twentieth century Tibetan grammarian rDo rje rgyal po (1913-1993) went to considerable length to explain how *shes pa* "know," etc. were verbs that constituted a special category (*nang gses*) of *tha mi dad pa*. The anomaly is that the example statement he gave, viz., *khos rgya yig shes kyi yod pa red* "He knows written Chinese," had an object (*rgya yig* "written Chinese"), as well as an agent (*khos* "he") in the ergative case (*byed sgra*), all the while having a supposedly *tha mi dad pa* verb. Indeed, rDo rje rgyal po granted explicitly that "what is to be established (*bsgrub bya*) and [the agent] that establishes (*sgrub byed*)" were genuinely different (*tha dad*) here. Nonetheless, he included *shes pa* in the *tha mi dad pa* category because "know" is "an undifferentiated [verb] where the result of a previous action is established (*bya ba sngon du song ba'i 'bras bu grub pa'i bya*

²¹ See, e.g., Thonden 1984, Vol. 1, 224f.

byed tha mi dad pa).²² In other words, “to know” captures the resultant undifferentiated state of a previously differentiated action, i.e., studying. (One can, *mutatis mutandis*, do a similar pairing between “looking”-“seeing,” and “listening”-“hearing.”) Once the learning process has been accomplished and someone has mastered written Chinese (*khong du chud zin pa'i gnas skabs su*), knower and known are supposedly no longer different (*bya byed tha mi dad pa'i cha nas*), and that is why, according to rDo rje rgyal po, one says “know” (*shes zer ba*) rather than “has studied” (*bslabs zhes mi zer*).

This is hard to follow, unnecessarily so. Does the central idea simply come down to the purely subjective phenomenon that mastery of something generally abolishes the felt sense of distance from it, so that a student who finally achieves mastery of Chinese characters is no longer struggling with something she *feels* foreign to her? Quite possibly.²³ In any case, such a subjective phenomenon of felt unity with the object does not seem to override the morphosyntactic factors in favor of treating knowing, etc. as *tha dad pa*, notably, the persistence of ergative marking in the sentences about knowing, seeing, and hearing just as in sentences about studying, looking, and listening. In the sentence *khos rgya yig shes kyi yod pa red*

²² rDo rje rgyal po 1992, 222: *bsgrub bya dang sgrub byed tha dad yin la / sgrub par byed pa'i bya ba sngon du song ba'i 'bras bu grub pa'i bya byed tha mi dad pa ni / dper na khos rgya yig shes kyi yod pa red ces pa lta bu brjod pa'i tshe na shes zhes pa de bya tshig yin zhing / shes bya dang shes byed yang tha dad yin pas thog mar bsblabs yod kyang / khong du chud zin pa'i gnas skabs su bya byed tha mi dad pa'i cha nas shes zer ba las bsblabs zhes mi zer / yang bskyar bshad na / shes zhes pa de bya tshig yin zhing / bsgrub bya (shes par bya rgyu) dang sgrub byed (shes par byed mkhan) tha dad yin la / sgrub par byed pa'i (shes par byed pa'i) bya ba sngon du song ba'i 'bras bu grub pa'i (shes pa'i) bya byed tha mi dad pa yin pa lta bu'o //.*

²³ Cf. Müller-Witte 2009, 226 on rDo rje rgyal po's view and its influence: “Das Studierte und der Student sind aber im Moment des Verstehens hier ‘eins geworden’; es gibt keinen Unterschied mehr zwischen ihnen und der Sachverhalt ist daher intransitiv (*tha mi dad pa*). Dies erklärt, warum solche Verben im *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* also intransitiv verzeichnet sind, zumal rDo rje rgyal po einer seiner Autoren ist.” As Müller-Witte mentioned, rDo rje rgyal po is indeed listed as an author—more precisely, the “junior chief editor” (*ritsom sgrig pa gtso bo gzhon pa*)—of the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*. This may be a relevant factor in the dictionary's promotion of *mthong ba*, *shes pa* and *go ba* as intransitive.

we have a manifestly biactantial verb with the agent (*khos*) marked in the ergative. These are typically the features of *tha dad pa* verbs.

Fortunately, however, there is no unanimity about the classification of these verbs within the indigenous tradition. Another reliable Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary, the *Dag yig gsar bsgrigs* of Blo mthun bSam gtan *et al.*, classifies *mthong ba*, *go ba*, and *shes pa* as *byed* ‘*brel las tshig* = *tha dad pa*. And a grammarian like sKal bzang ‘gyur med also takes these verbs as *tha dad pa*. I would propose the following: it makes much better sense to follow the *Dag yig gsar bsgrigs* and thus reject the classification in *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*. In that case, *mthong ba*, *go ba*, *shes pa*, etc. can be treated as the biactantial transitives they appear to be, albeit ones where the action is involuntary. And, to boot, we don’t have to go into any scholastic intricacies to explain how a verb with an ergative-marked agent would nonetheless fall under traditional grammar’s notion of a verb *without* a distinct agent (*byed med las tshig* = *tha mi dad pa*). The gain in simplicity is considerable.

Voluntary-involuntary does, however, play a significant role. Indeed, in AACT, 27f. it was suggested that while the voluntary-involuntary opposition does *not* match with the *tha dad pa-tha mi dad pa* schema of transitivity, it can and should complement it.²⁴ Such seems also to have been sKal bzang ‘gyur med’s idea in introducing the distinction *rang dbang can* (autonomous = voluntary) and *gzhan dbang can* (dependent = involuntary). As he puts it in defining *rang dbang can*:

“Whether [the verb] is one where the object and agent are different (*tha dad*) or not (*mi dad*), when the agent who effectuates the action can of his own accord direct that action, this type [of verb] is an ‘autonomous verb’ (*rang dbang can gyi bya tshig*).”²⁵

²⁴ Cf. Hill 2004, 85-86: “Beaucoup d’auteurs ont combiné l’actance et la volition sous la rubrique ‘transitivité’—le premier est essentiellement une question de syntaxe, et le second de sémantique. ... Ainsi, analyser le verbe dans ces seules catégories [transitif et intransitif] est une simplification brute.”

²⁵ sKal bzang ‘gyur med 1981, 365: *bya byed tha dad dang mi dad gang yang rung / bya ba sgrub mkhan byed pa pos rang dbang gi sgo nas bya ba’i kha lo sgyur thub pa de rigs ni rang dbang can gyi bya tshig yin /*. My translation.

The first clause of the definition of a “dependent verb” remains the same, i.e., “whether the verb is one where the object and agent are different or not.” The rest of the definition specifies that the action is not directed by the agent’s own will but rather through some other causes and conditions. What is clear in both definitions is that there are cases of *tha dad* that are involuntary and cases of *tha mi dad* that are voluntary. In effect, we have the following dual-axis schema:

	Voluntary	Involuntary
tha dad	gsod pa “to kill”	mthong ba “to see”
tha mi dad	‘gro ba “to go”	na ba “to be sick”

Note that the voluntary-involuntary contrast is not a purely semantic matter in Tibetan but has morphosyntactic consequences, as does *tha dad-tha mi dad*. I refer the reader to the Appendix in AACT (p. 27f.) for a discussion of the further advantages to such a dual-axis approach in accounting for Tibetan morphosyntactic phenomena.

Of course, one can rightly say that the Tibetan transitivity is not along the lines of the usual model of an action being carried over to an object/patient marked in the accusative case. But rejecting transitive-intransitive outright as applicable to a language unless it is nominative-accusative would look like blatant overkill: indigenous Tibetan grammarians seem to me to present interesting and important ideas on features of transitivity in an ergative language, one that works quite differently from the nominative-accusative type.²⁶ I doubt that there would be data compelling

²⁶ Cf. Hill 2010, xii: “The terminology of ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’ is not appropriate to the description of Tibetan grammar... Transitivity is classically defined in reference to the accusative case, a category which has no meaning in Tibetan.” There are other such arguments against using the word “transitivity.” Stoddard and Tournadre 1992, 246 argue that Tibetans classify verbs whose object is not in the absolutive case (i.e., unmarked) as *tha mi dad pa*, while some should in fact be seen as transitive. Hence, so much the worse for seeing *tha dad-tha mi dad pa* in terms of transitivity. In short, Stoddard and Tournadre invoke verbs like ‘gro ba “go” that take a destination marked with the *la* particle and are traditionally termed *tha mi dad pa*, and then they generalize to say that Tibetan verbs that behave in this way are *tha mi dad pa*. In fact, this generalization

us to say that those grammarians are talking about something radically separate from transitivity unless we somehow based ourselves on dubious evidence, like the classifications of verbs such as *mthong ba* as *tha mi dad pa* in one prestigious dictionary or in *certain*—but not all—Tibetan grammarians’ accounts of these types of verbs. As we have seen, the value of that data should be contested.

For the purposes of this introduction, at least, enough has been said of the arguments *against* “Tibetan transitivity.” We’ll turn the tables and look briefly at some ways to *save* the idea and take it seriously. One way is what I proposed in chapter IX, i.e., adopt a transitive-intransitive continuum, following Hopper and Thompson 1980, so that voluntary, involuntary, and many other criteria serve to determine gradations of higher or lower transitivity. The Hopper-Thompson account fleshed out the usual conception of a transitive verb as having a valence greater than one and involving an action that extends, or passes over, from an agent to an object/patient affecting it in varying degrees.

I now think, however, that the Hopper-Thompson account of a process passing from agent to an object/patient, sophisticated as it may be, only represents part of the complex story about transitivity in different languages. There are, in effect, two perspectives, two ways of

is not right. See chapter IX below. A verb like *gzigs* “see” “look” does take objects marked with a *la don* but should be taken as *tha dad pa*, especially when understood as “look (at).” Note too that a grammarian like A lag sha Ngag dbang bstan dar uses the ubiquitous woodcutter example *shing gcod pa*, but on occasion formulates it with a *la don*, as when he describes the “act of cutting” as (p. 185) *shing la sta re(s) rgyag bzhin pa’i gcod pa’i las* “The act of cutting consisting in the [woodcutter] striking the wood with an axe.” The case of *’gro ba* is thus a special one where the verb is indeed *tha mi dad pa*, not simply because of the presence of the *la don* after the destination (e.g., *lha sa la ’gro ba*), but because the destination is not a genuine patient/object of the action—*’gro ba* has no object distinct from the agent, the goer. There are, no doubt, numerous examples where *la* is added to the object/patient of a clearly transitive verb. See Zeisler 2006 for uses of *shing la gcod pa*, *rkyag pa la zo* (“Eat shit!”), *sha la za zhing khrag la ’thung ba* (“to eat meat and drink blood”), etc., which Zeisler hypothesizes to involve a partitive sense. Sometimes (as in *g.yag la zhon pa*) the addition of *la* can be seen to perform a pragmatic function of highlighting – “it is a yak that he rode,” or “He rode a yak [not a horse.]” See Tournadre 1995, 272. Be that as it may, in these cases the presence of *la* does not seem to have any bearing on whether the verb is transitive or not. Cf., e.g., Spanish where the presence or absence of an *a* preposition in sentences need not,

interpreting the situation expressed by a clause. We can focus on: (1) whether or not the process extends, or carries over, from the agent to an object, or (2) whether or not the process is instigated by a distinct, external agent. The bold follow-up here is to say that the merit and interest of indigenous Tibetan grammarians' theories is that they develop precisely this second perspective, and that it is one that is genuinely important for a fuller conception of transitivity in linguistics. That is the view of Randy J. LaPolla, František Kratochvíl, and Alexander Coupe in their joint article "On Transitivity", i.e., LaPolla *et al.* 2011. Relying on the account of traditional Tibetan grammatical conceptions in AACT, they argue that there is a "Tibetan view of transitivity" that differs from the usual Western conception but is nonetheless a needed complement to it.

"We can see that the Tibetan view takes a different perspective from the Western view: in the traditional Western view a transitive differs from an intransitive in having a second argument that the action passes over to, while in the Tibetan view a transitive clause differs from an intransitive one in having a second argument representing an external agency" (LaPolla *et al.* 2011, 478-479).

To get an idea of what is at stake, take the following pairs of English sentences:

"The lion chased the tourist."

"The lion ran."

"The lion chased the tourist."

"The tourist ran."

The usual transitive/intransitive perspective is in terms of \pm *extension* of a process to a patient/object (e.g., "The lion chased the tourist" versus "The lion ran"). The ergative/non-ergative perspective, by contrast, is in terms of \pm *agency* of a process on something or someone (e.g., "The

in itself, have any significant consequences for transitivity, either, but may just vary for other reasons like the animacy of the object: *Veo árboles en la ciudad vieja de Montevideo* ("I see trees in the old town of Montevideo") versus *Veo a Maira* ("I see Maira").

lion chased the tourist” versus “The tourist ran [spontaneously]”).²⁷ Both models—perspectives, or interpretations of meaning—are features of a single system of transitivity in English. Taking the first perspective, where one focuses on a process and its extension from agent to an object/patient, a sentence like *The lion chased the tourist* is put in relation with *The lion ran*, in that the lion’s running either extends to the other actant (transitive *The lion chased the tourist*), or does not so extend (intransitive *The lion ran*). On the second perspective, where one focuses on the instigation of the process rather than its extension, *The lion chased the tourist* is related with *The tourist ran*. Either the tourist’s running was instigated by an external agent (*The lion chased the tourist*) or it was simply self-motivated (*The tourist ran*).

For LaPolla *et al.*, Tibetan grammarians develop the ergative/non-ergative perspective. I think that these linguists are right: the Tibetan grammarians’ version of a transitivity/intransitivity contrast in terms of *tha dad /tha mi dad pa*—or what is the same, *byed pa po gzhan dang ‘brel ba yin min* (“the action being related or not with a distinct agent”)—clearly focuses on the instigation of the process by an external agent and not on its extension from the agent to an object. The stock examples of transitivity and intransitivity are phrased in terms of \pm agency of the process, i.e., the same contrast that we see between “The lion chased the tourist” versus “The tourist ran [spontaneously].” In the favorite Tibetan example of transitivity, viz., “Woodcutters split/cut wood” (*shing mkhan gyis shing gcod do*), the grammarians’ point is indeed that the wood’s splitting is instigated by an external agent; it is not a splitting (*‘chad pa*) that simply happens to the wood by itself. The other example ubiquitous in the literature is alchemists transforming (*sgyur, bsgyur*) iron into gold versus the iron naturally (*rang gi ngang gis*) changing (*‘gyur*) into gold. Tibetan shows transitivity in the former case by marking the agents—i.e., the alchemist (*sgyur ba po*) and the alchemical elixir (*gser ‘gyur rtsi*)—in the ergative (*byed sgra*) and using the transitive verb *sgyur, bsgyur* (“change,” “transform”). In the latter case there is no marked agent and the

²⁷ This is clearly an intentional departure from the more limited and usual use of the term “ergative”—as in Comrie 1978 or Dixon 1994—to analyze and classify languages (i.e., ergative versus accusative languages) on the basis of their morphosyntactic coding of subjects, objects/patients, and agents.

verb is the intransitive ‘*gyur, gyur* (“change”). Those alchemical examples, and others, are taken up by major Tibetan grammarians. On the other hand, from what I have seen in this literature, Tibetan grammarians place no theoretical weight on whether or not an agent’s action simply *has* an object and carries over to it. (This is interestingly in contrast to traditional Sanskrit grammar, where transitive verbs *are* said to be *sakarmaka*, those that “have an object,” and intransitives are *akarmaka*, “without object.”) I think Tibetan grammarians may well have been onto something important: the ergative perspective turning on \pm *agency* is considerably more important in the Tibetan language than the perspective turning on \pm *extension*.

In my earlier paper on transitivity (included here as chapter IX), I had addressed an objection of Stoddard and Tournadre to the effect that the indigenous Tibetan classification of verbs does *not* have to do with transitivity—their point was that actions having or not having distinct agents (*byed pa po gzhan*), or, what is the same, actions with or without distinct agents and objects/patients (*tha dad pa/tha mi dad pa*), and other such contrasts are predominantly semantic in nature, rather than belonging to syntax and coding. It is true that even a cursory glance at Tibetan grammatical texts (see chapter XII below) reveals the emphasis they place on semantics. A follower of Michael Halliday’s *Functional Grammar* will, however, unabashedly see the semantic emphasis as a plus, rather than a minus. Indeed, the Hallidayan systemic view of grammar that LaPolla *et al.* invoke is that lexico-grammar is driven by semantic principles. Thus, the ergative/non-ergative perspective reflects a semantic concern: *Is the action caused/instigated by an outside actor or is it self-engendered?* If one generally embraces strongly semantic accounts of transitivity, as do Halliday and LaPolla *et al.*, then the relevance of Tibetan indigenous grammatical writing to contemporary linguistics increases remarkably. It then becomes possible to come up with a “Tibetan view of transitivity,” as do LaPolla *et al.*, that goes well beyond the matters of coding and morphosyntax in certain specific languages or typologies of languages, and works profitably as part of a more general approach to languages.²⁸

²⁸ Interestingly enough, however, LaPolla *et al.* argue, invoking Davidse, that the difference of models in one and the same language is not *just* a purely semantic matter but represents clause types that exhibit different syntactic features.

LaPolla *et al.*, in effect, are attempting in linguistics what cross-cultural thinkers like Arindam Chakrabarti, Jay Garfield, Mark Siderits, Graham Priest, Jonardon Ganeri, and others, including the late Asianist-philosopher Wilhelm Halbfass, have tried to do in philosophy, i.e., an East-West collaborative approach that expands horizons. This is also sometimes termed “fusion thinking,” although I would prefer “cosmopolitan thinking,” as fusion of differing histories, contexts, and views is arguably not a recommendable goal. In any case, the intersection of perspectives that we find in “On Transitivity” is quite stunning:

“Halliday’s conceptualisation, which incorporates both the traditional Western view of transitivity and something like the traditional Tibetan view of transitivity into one system, is an improvement over the other mono-construction approaches, as recognizing the distinct construction types within a single language helps to properly characterise and explain the ambitransitive uses of verbs and the differences between the two construction types pointed out by Davide” (LaPolla *et al.* 2011, 481).

We will have to leave the rest to the linguists themselves. My point in this introduction is essentially methodological: we will profit from wider conceptions here. It is much more promising and creative to embrace Tibetan transitivity, with its particularities, and thus expand the analysis, rather than to debate more narrowly about (mis)translations of Tibetan grammatical terms or whether “transitive” to be meaningful must be reserved to a traditional Indo-European conception. Good cross-border thinking relies on conceptual bridges. This is a case where a bridge looks eminently possible.

* * *

A few final remarks and acknowledgments. The section on Tibetan Buddhist logic, in its shorter, first incarnation composed in 2014, was destined for the logicians and historians of logic involved in an interdisciplinary project of Johan van Benthem and others on logical thinking in China. That first version is still to appear in Springer Verlag’s *Handbook of Logical Thought in China*, edited by Liu Fenrong, Jeremy Seligman, and Zhai Jincheng. At the time Shōryū Katsura read the piece carefully and pointed out quite a number of philological improvements. Jeremy Seligman and Koji Tanaka

gave some helpful remarks on logical issues. While the relatively simple, formal tools used should pose no problem for logicians and philosophers, navigating transcribed Tibetan is a notoriously off-putting task for the non-tibetanist.²⁹ Phonetic simplifications are inadequate if one wishes to anchor philosophical analyses to original languages, as I think we need to do if we are to avoid superficiality and low-level error. There is, then, no easy way out and no way around some investment of time to learn a foreign pronunciation acceptably. In the *Handbook* I tried to give the diligent, non-tibetanist philosopher a fighting chance by providing a practical guide to the pronunciation of Lhasa Tibetan. A referee rightly advised me to place that same *vade mecum* at the start of the present book. May it be of use!

In updating my previous articles on Tibetan grammatico-linguistic thought, I became better acquainted with the 2009 doctoral thesis of Frank Müller-Witte, *Handlungsrichtung im Tibetischen*, which argues in detail for both a transitivity/intransitivity distinction in Tibetan and a predominantly semantic distinction of active and passive voice. His survey of virtually all major Tibetan grammarians' views on *bdag* ("self") and *gzhan* ("other") from the fourteenth to the twentieth century shows just how relevant the indigenous writings are towards better understanding the actual Tibetan data concerning active-passive diathesis and verb morphology. The quality of some previous work on such issues in *Sum rtags* had been checkered. This work is significant.

As the studies in the present volume span some decades of work, the list of people that have been in one way or another involved along the road is, alas, much too great to give in detail. Many have helped me by hearing me out, pointing out unclarities, and offering information and advice at steps along the way. The footnotes and bibliography will have to suffice to show who you are. I thank you for years of stimulating exchange. The Fonds de Boer of the University of Lausanne graciously covered a significant portion of the publication expenses.

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²⁹ I'm told facetiously that it makes them go blind. I can only hope that this is not true. Non-tibetanists seeking only to get a very rough idea of the pronunciation of an isolated word or phrase can use the Tibetan-phonetics convertor on the internet site of the Tibetan and Himalayan Library: www.thlib.org/reference/transliteration/phconverter.php.

Details on previous and closely related publications are as follows:

A significantly smaller, unrevised version of chapters I and II has been in press for several years in *A Handbook of Logical Thought in China*, edited by Liu Fenrong, Jeremy Seligman, Zhai Jincheng. Berlin: Springer Verlag. It is to be published in English, as well as in Chinese translation.

Chapter III appeared as “Two Tibetan Texts on the ‘Neither One nor Many’ Argument for *śūnyatā*” in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 12, 1984: 357-388.

Chapter IV appeared as “Le *dBu ma'i byuñ tshul* de Śākya mchog ldan” in *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* (Bern, Switzerland), 49.4, 1995: 891-918 (co-authored with Tōru Tomabechi).

Chapter V appeared as “Tsong kha pa *et al.* on the Bhāvaviveka-Candrakīrti Debate” in *Tibetan Studies*, Proceedings of the 5th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, NARITA 1989. [Monograph Series, Occasional Papers 2]. Naritasan Shinshōji, Narita, 1992: 315-326.

Chapter VI appeared as “Mādhyamikas Playing Bad Hands: The Case of Customary Truth” in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 47.4, 2019: 635-644.

Chapter VII is a significantly expanded version of an article in *Wilfrid Sellars and Buddhist Philosophy: Freedom from Foundations*, edited by Jay L. Garfield. Routledge Studies in American Philosophy. New York: Routledge Press, 2019: 80-96. The initial article was published under the title “Deflating the Two Images and the Two Truths. Bons baisers du Tibet.”

Chapter VIII appeared as “On *bdag, gzhan*, and the Supposed Active-Passive Neutrality of Tibetan Verbs” in *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ. Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, edited by Birgit Kellner, Helmut Krasser, Horst Lasic, Michael Torsten Much, and Helmut Tauscher. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, 2007, part 2: 887-902.

Chapter IX appeared as “Transitivity, Intransitivity, and *tha dad pa* Verbs in Traditional Tibetan Grammar” in *Pacific World Journal* (Berkeley) series 3, no. 9, 2007: 49-62. [Special issue: Essays Celebrating the Twentieth Anniversary of the Numata Chair in Buddhist Studies at the University of Calgary, edited by Leslie Kawamura and Sarah Haynes].

Chapter X appeared as “gSer tog Blo bzang tshul khrims rgya mtsho on Tibetan Verbs” in E. Steinkellner (ed.), *Tibetan History and Language. Studies dedicated to Uray Géza on his seventieth birthday*. WSTB 26. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1991: 487-496. The original article has been substantially revised.

Chapter XI appeared as “On the Assimilation of Indic Grammatical Literature into Indigenous Tibetan Scholarship” in *Asiatische Studien/ Études Asiatiques* (Bern, Switzerland) 57.1, 2003: 213-235.

Chapter XII is new.

A note on the transliteration of the Tibetan ‘a: this letter is transliterated with an apostrophe that opens to the right when it occurs as a prefix (*sngon* ‘*jug*) and to the left when it is a suffix (*rjes* ‘*jug*).

Chapter X appeared as “gSer tog Blo bzang tshul khrims rgya mtsho on Tibetan Verbs” in E. Steinkellner (ed.), *Tibetan History and Language. Studies dedicated to Uray Géza on his seventieth birthday*. WSTB 26. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1991: 487-496. The original article has been substantially revised.

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