

Introduction

Although many Buddhologists spend a great deal of their time involved in acts of translation, there has not been, to date, much research published that explores the key questions, problems, and difficulties faced by translators of Buddhist texts and epigraphs on an (often) daily basis. This volume focuses on South Asian Buddhism, and on translations of Old and Middle Indo-Aryan languages into English. The essays in this volume, which all began as papers for the UK Translating Buddhism Conference, York St. John University, in the summer of 2016, address some of the many questions that can arise for anyone engaged in translation processes in relation to historical sources. In my Welcome Address at the conference, I cited a rare article by K. R. Norman, published in the 1980s, that tackles translation issues in Buddhist studies, particularly, in this case, of Pāli texts. Paraphrasing Norman, I listed a set of questions he formulated in his short article, questions that remain relevant today, and that formed both the backdrop for the conference and this volume: How important is historical context in helping us determine meaning? What aids are available to a translator? How does the translator give the translation meaning in a readable way? Can we understand words/passages from understanding their religious context? How important is a literal translation? How interpretive can we be? How do we find direct parallels between languages? Do commentaries and subcommentaries help or hinder? These and related questions are addressed by the essays presented here, as initial attempts to assess our translation practices.

Translation studies has been a subdiscipline in “Western” academia since the 1980s, but translation theory and practice itself is, to quote a biblical idiom, as old as the hills. Initially, translation studies, as it emerged as a discipline, was Eurocentric/Western in its purview, but

by the beginning of the twenty-first century scholarship had begun to broaden out. Leo Tak-hung Chen's excellent work on translation theory in relation to China was published in 2004, then other works began to appear that expand scholarship on translation studies and include discussion of India and other parts of Asia. Works that stand out in this regard are *In Translation: Reflections, Refraction, Transformations*, edited by Paul St. Pierre and Prafulla C. Kar (2007), and *Decentering Translation Studies: India and Beyond*, edited by Judy Wakabayashi and Rita Kothari (2009). In their introduction, Wakabayashi and Kothari observe: "The recent signs of interest in non-Western translation are driven by a desire to push back the largely Eurocentric boundaries of the discipline and to remap the field . . ." (2009, 4). Wakabayashi and Kothari's praiseworthy volume "foregrounds some local moments of translation" that present challenges to overarching theories, in the hope that "they will contribute to a more stratified and nuanced analysis, to new questions and perhaps new answers" (2009, 5). In recent years, a few Buddhologists have begun to ask similar questions, and a few publications have begun to appear that treat these issues. The first book devoted to the topic, which focused on Tibetan Buddhism, appeared in 1995, and the second was published just last year, after a twenty-year gap, in 2016.¹ This volume—*Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Theories and Practices of Translation*, edited by Dorji Wangchuk—is a collection of essays from a Hamburg conference of the same name that took place in 2012. The essays are presented clinically, that is, as a collection arranged alphabetically, by author, with no introduction included in the volume. This presentation betrays the state-of-play of the subdiscipline of translation studies within the field of Buddhist studies. It is, as yet, undefined. This is perhaps not surprising, given that the vital work of scholars in the field to produce translations is not always given due credit. In 1996 Haberman and Nattier published a short piece in *Religious Studies News* on the way in which translations of important Asian texts were not recognized by "Western" academia for the achievements they are. The creation of an edition in the source language and the task of translation require commitment, time, energy, hard-earned skill and dedication, and remains invaluable for an understanding of social and religious history. However, its value has not always been appreciated

1. The first book was Doboomb Tulku's edited collection, *Buddhist Translations: Problems and Perspectives* (1995).

within academia, as Haberman and Nattier argue. Publications that are wholly translations, and not discursive volumes, have not always carried favor in some academic circles, the worst instance of which they recount: “One anecdote even tells of a search committee meeting in which a senior professor waved a candidate’s book—a sophisticated translation and explication of a medieval Asian text—in the air and shouted, ‘This isn’t a book! It’s a translation!’” (1996, 1).

When we work within a discipline or subdiscipline, we know the parameters that govern how we work: these are the sources to engage with, this is how to evaluate the evidence, these are the types of theories to engage with. And indeed, if a scholar ventures too far outside of the expected parameters, it often has negative consequences for the reception of his or her work.² But when such parameters are yet to be defined, the nature of academic work pertaining to that area is naturally heterogeneous. In this volume, scholars raise and address similar questions; however, we each arrive at the questions via analogous but inimitable routes. For example, Collett Cox has spent many years working on early Buddhist manuscripts, so a translation question that engages her, in this context, is the question of how a text comes into being, how it comes to be constituted. Natalie Gummer, on the other hand, has been working with Mahāyāna *sūtras* since the time of her PhD studies at Harvard. Her fresh framework for how we interpret Mahāyāna *sūtras* has far-reaching implications, including implications for translation theory and practice. How, she asks in her chapter, do we take aspects of the medium into account in translation? If the text has a performative function, how does that affect our translation? Thus, both scholars raise questions about the nature of the Indian / South Asian Buddhist textual tradition—questions that pertain to translation—but arrive at their questions via consonant experiences as researchers that are nuanced at the intersection with translation issues. Hence, they situate their discussions differently, and the prism of their unique experiences as translators impacts the contours of their investigations. Similarly, Ligeia Lugli has been part of the Mangalam Research Center’s Buddhist Translators Workbench project for some years, and as part of her work needed to conduct interviews. In so doing, she became aware of how interviewees possessed notions of a technical terminology

2. The other side of the coin is, of course, that new innovations can come from transcending such boundaries.

in Buddhist texts that were different from her own and those of others engaged in the project. This engendered interest to consider the extent to which words in Buddhist texts are indeed functioning as technical terms. In my own contribution to the volume, I also challenge overarching assumptions that certain words can invariably be understood as technical terminology, but the route via which I arrive at my conclusions could hardly be more different; I situate my own considerations within what are for me comfortable parameters—as part of my decades-long scholarship on the social history of women in ancient India.

Each scholar in the volume brings something different to the table, and although each scholar has a background in Buddhist studies, the volume comprises contributions from linguists, religious studies specialists, and historians. Bringing these contributions together into one volume that may, at times, appear piecemeal, all I present here to you are questions. The beating heart of the volume is, I hope, question after question about what the subdiscipline is, about how we define it, how we shape it, and how we want it to be constituted. As such, the volume is more similar to heterogeneous edited collections of past decades than the more intensely thematic ones of recent years. The similarity comes in this, the very nature of the volume; edited collections in the past have been volumes that do what this volume is attempting to do, make tentative steps into an unexplored field. Defining a field or subfield is an exciting but onerous task, and formation takes time. I present this volume as one step in what will be, I am sure, a long process.

The volume is grouped into three sections. Part 1 focuses on the nature of the text that is to undergo translation, and on theory. The three contributors in this part address such questions as: How does a text become constituted? How do we translate more than literal meaning? How does our perception of genre affect translation practices? Part 2 is concerned with translators. The authors in this section assess the motives of early Buddhist translators, examine colonial agendas that impact translation, and theorize about modern translators' perceptions of technical terminology in Buddhist texts. Part 3 consists of four chapters of applied examples, each tackling one key word or phrase and examining issues relating to translation of the item. In this section, some of the broader theoretical concerns raised in parts 1 and 2 are applied to these specific examples. First, the word *antevāsini* is examined, contrasting its appearance in texts and epigraphs and considering the extent to which it can be understood

as a technical term. Next, translations of *tīrthika* are surveyed, and the Christian basis for its translation as “heretic” dissected. In the penultimate chapter of the volume, the foundational doctrine of *paṭicca-samuppāda* is discussed, translation of it surveyed, and its function as a conceptual metaphor examined. Finally, chapter 10 looks at an exegetical word often employed by Buddhist commentators in the Pāli tradition—*desanāsīsa*—and its own multivalent explanatory function is explored, as part of a broader remit to investigate the problems with a literal translation of the term itself.

Detailed Chapter Summaries

CHAPTER 1

To begin the volume—as she began the conference with her keynote—Collett Cox raises several questions that underscore many of the topics discussed by the other contributors to the volume. After a brief biographical preface, she sets out her initial questions: What exactly is translation? How do source and target languages influence our translation? What roles should prevailing views about translation play in our translation choices? Is the translator always herself a “visible” part of the process? Is our goal linguistic equivalence? How does our theoretical stance shape our translation practice? Cox acknowledges these are not new questions, looking back to early and medieval Chinese translators of Indian Buddhist texts, some of whom commented on translation practice. Here we find a familiar problem being debated: how closely should the translation mirror the source language?

Next, Cox assesses what exactly it is we understand a “text” to be. Do we consider there to be an original or ideal version of the text, which all other versions aspire to emulate, or do we see the text as process, as “multiple forms as historical instances fashioned by all of its authors, transmitters, commentators, translators, and audiences”? Cox notes that different responses to these questions have led to tensions in scholastic communities, including our own, the vicissitudes of which she details.

Looking, finally, at concrete factors that might influence the exact ways we understand a text to be constituted, Cox discusses the context and medium of composition and transmission, and the nature of extra-textual evidence. Here, as elsewhere, she has recourse to the Gāndhārī

material she is familiar with, which she uses to demonstrate that factors affecting composition and transmission may not be consistent, noting that different Gāndhārī manuscripts can suggest either a ritualistic or archival purpose underlying internment. She also makes use of the manuscripts to demonstrate that there can be multiple or single textual witnesses. Cox concludes that, in Buddhist studies, given that text-as-process seems the most realistic perspective to adopt, therefore, the best approach to translation is the “historically sensitive” approach, that “takes into account the historical context of a particular text or textual genre” including “the material context within which the text functions and the interpretive perspective of its stakeholders, whether they be traditional or contemporary, religious or political.”

CHAPTER 2

Natalie Gummer’s contribution is concerned with Mahāyāna *sūtras*. In her forthcoming monograph—*The Language of the Sūtras*—set to be a seminal work, she rigorously and diligently argues for a new way to read Mahāyāna *sūtras*, as much more than a simple exposition of Buddhist doctrine. In her chapter in this volume, in which she concentrates on the *Suvarṇa(pra)bhāsottama*, she relates the themes of her broader project to the issue of translation. If the Mahāyāna *sūtras* are performative, and engaging with them “makes the Buddha present and transmits his essence to listeners,” how can this function of Mahāyāna *sūtras* become integral to a translator’s objectives and what are the implications for translation if it does? Gummer assesses how statements about the Buddha’s embodiment are embedded in the language of the Mahāyāna *sūtras* and provides us with some examples as to how an awareness of that might affect and shape translation. She focuses on three examples. First, a long series of parallel clauses in one passage of the *Suvarṇa(pra)bhāsottama*, all beginning with the word *sarva* (all), that mark out “the rhythm conveying the all-pervasive power of the *sūtra*.” Gummer argues that a translation that is sympathetic to and functions to support the performative arch of the texts would attempt to maintain the rhythm of the Sanskrit syntax, so that the English words of the translation act to communicate the performative function of the texts in the same way the Sanskrit does. The second example she uses is again a repetition, this time of *adya* “today” with a first-person pronoun, which combine to iterate the present moment of preaching and hearing

of the *sūtra* and the doctrine. Gummer translates this combination with the emphatic “This very day, I . . .,” asking us to bear in mind the power of such statements at the moment (i.e., the present day) on which the *sūtra* is preached and heard. Her third example is the repeated vocative phrase *tvam satpuruṣa* alongside a string of verbs in the future tense, which describe the impact of the preaching of the *sūtra* on the *dharmabhāṅga*, and again functions at an intersection “between form and content.” Ultimately, Gummer concludes that some aspects of the performative nature of the text are untranslatable in any attempt at verbatim English prose and verse that make up translation practice; however, efforts to attempt to capture elements of this do enable a more thoroughgoing communication of the nature of the texts that enables the modern (silent) reader to comprehend them more completely.

CHAPTER 3

In Amy Langenberg’s chapter, the third in part 1 of the volume, on texts, she addresses questions relating to genre and hermeneutics. Taking a step further on from Cox’s survey of how a text becomes constituted, and from Gummer’s argument for the nature and character of the text to be taken into consideration when translating, Langenberg challenges us to consider ways in which reading texts through various optics affects translation practice. She begins her chapter with a survey of past scholarship on *vinaya* that tends to “assume that *vinaya* texts can be mined for historical information.” She also notes critics of such an approach, such as Finnegan and Hallisey, who expose the limitations of such readings. She critiques ways in which *realia* have been read into *vinaya* literature. These include the strategy relating to “irrelevance,” whereby it is understood that material not relevant to the main thrust of the narrative must be revealing *realia*, and “counterargument,” a proposal that tenders that the rules were made in order to address behaviors that were actually happening, and she also mentions, in opposition, the perspective of “presentations,” an understanding that *vinaya* are more about the views of the compilers than social reality.

Next, Langenberg discusses how, despite their canonical status, *vinaya* texts have not always been “enduring blueprints for monastic life from the time of redaction forward.” She summarizes arguments that illustrate how *vinaya* texts have not always been fully known or utilized by Buddhist communities, with sometimes only a digest being on offer, and ways in

which they are used not as compendiums of religious rules governing behavior, but more ritualistically, or as part of civil or state law.

Langenberg's own suggestion for how to read *vinaya* is that they should be read alongside other contemporaneous sources—much as I do in my chapter in this volume (chapter 7)—and it is only through such endeavors that we are able to fully comprehend the import of the texts. She illuminates her point through comparison of a monastic rule for nuns relating to bowing with dharmaśāstric prescriptions on salutation rituals and expectations. Here she notes not only the complementarity of language used in both sources but also the complementarity of ideation. She concludes that the monastic rule in question that governs the behavior of nuns “seems to be participating in the social logic and gestural traditions also described in these various *dharmasāstra* contexts.” She concludes by returning to the question of translation, with an assessment of how interpretive practices relating to ascription of genre affect translation.

CHAPTER 4

In his chapter, the first in part 2 of the volume, on translators, Oskar von Hinüber addresses the question of why the Pāli commentaries were translated into Pāli in the first place, and considers who the intended audience might have been. With regard to the extant *aṭṭhakathās*, he raises the question in relation to their translation from—what has come to be understood as—their original Sinhala form, although von Hinüber questions that. Sources that provide some insight into possible motivations of these early translators are the well-known twelfth-century story of Buddhaghosa, in which it is requested that he translate the Sinhala commentaries into Pāli so they could be of great benefit to the world. This story, although late, concurs with the introductory and concluding verses of the *aṭṭhakathās* of the *vinaya*-, *sutta*-, and *abhidhammapīṭakas* that show that the commentaries are translations. The anonymous author of the *Vinaya* commentary specifically states it is their desire that the translation into Pāli will be of benefit internationally, that is, outside of Sri Lanka. Buddhaghosa and the anonymous author of the *abhidhamma* commentary do not state such grand ambitions, declaring, instead, their aim “to raise the commentaries to the same linguistic status as the canonical texts by the use of Pāli as an appropriate language.” Von Hinüber then details some subsidiary evidence that supports this notion that the commentaries were originally in

the Sinhala language. Taking one step further, he then questions whether there was in fact a stage prior to that—an original Indic form of the commentaries that was taken to Sri Lanka and translated into Sinhala. As is the case with many of the questions he discusses, the evidence for this is slim. Here, von Hinüber considers uses of a rare central Indian word for brick (*giñjaka*), etymologies, and the possible trace of an old eastern Middle Indic form of *kicchi* in the *Vinaya* commentary to make his case. This, he posits, is evidence enough for us to consider Indian originals behind the Sinhala versions as a possibility.

Up to this point, von Hinüber has been looking back on the commentaries as they may have existed prior to the time of Buddhaghosa. Looking forward from that point, he then explores who might have been the intended audience of the newly restructured, modernized, and freshly translated Pāli *aṭṭhakathās*. He poses the question, how do we “find those monks, who were supposed to use the commentaries outside the Mahāvihāra, even outside Ceylon in India and perhaps beyond in *dīpantare* [other countries]?” Attempting to answer this, he surveys evidence for Theravāda, or Theriya, presence in South India, which is predominantly material and epigraphic. The most revealing of which are inscriptions from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, dating to the third century CE, that even suggest proselytizing activity on the part of the Theriyas.

Von Hinüber concludes by surmising that the commentaries were translated “to modernize the texts in old Sinhala Prakrit linguistically by giving them, at the same time, a new and better structure.” The ambitions of certain commentators were to internationalize the Mahāvihāra agenda, while other commentaries appear to have been translated into Pāli to reassure Mahāvihāra monks “of the orthodoxy of their views.”

CHAPTER 5

When considering issues in relation to translation of South Asian texts into Western languages, the questions of colonialism and orientalism often arise. These issues are addressed in Elizabeth Harris’s chapter. Here, Harris seeks to foreground nineteenth-century missionary translators working in Sri Lanka on Sinhala and Pāli language and Buddhist texts. Harris argues that the life and work of such missionaries have not been given due consideration in debates about orientalism and colonialism and this is an imbalance she seeks to address. Her argument for revalorizing their

importance is threefold. First, she highlights that they were chronologically prior to many other noted orientalists, such as T. W. Rhys Davids. Second, that the type of orientalism evinced by them enables a nuancing of the vicissitudes of orientalist discourses, in which she demonstrates that an uncritical Saidian perspective can flatten the narrative. Finally, Harris asserts that their work had significant impact on other orientalists who followed them and, indeed, on the complexion of Buddhist modernism.

These observations are made through a study of the translation practices of three Sri Lankan missionaries: Benjamin Clough (1791–1853), Daniel J. Gogerly (1792–1862), and Robert Spence Hardy (1803–1868). In each case, Harris chooses one noted work by the translator, or one dimension of their work, through which she elucidates each of their contributions—both progressive and delimiting aspects—and begins to explore some of their motivations behind their translation tasks. For Clough, Harris concentrates on volume 2 of his Sinhala-English dictionary; for Gogerly, his translation of the *Cūḷakammavibhaṅgasutta*; and with Spence Hardy, his work on Buddhist cosmology and the biography of the Buddha. Harris skillfully demonstrates how the views and preoccupations of a translator interpose in translation choices—a resounding lesson for any context. In this case, she highlights how the translators’ own adherence to a religiosity distinct from the one that underpins the texts (and languages) being translated is impactful. She notes how, with a proselytizing agenda in mind, translation choices are shaded in particular ways.

CHAPTER 6

Ligeia Lugli’s chapter engages with modern translators of Buddhist texts. As a result of a project she worked on for the Mangalam Research Center, Lugli became interested in the notion of terminology and the role it plays in translations of Buddhist literature. Her chapter explores the question of whether many common words used in Buddhist texts—especially those that espouse aspects of doctrine and practice—are in fact words or terms. She begins her chapter with a concise survey of classical and more recent theories of the use of terminology in language and concludes with a focus on the Sanskrit word *saṃjñā*, by way of example.

According to the classical model of terminology, a “term” is quite different from a “word.” Lugli identifies the core of the theory as positing that “a lexical item qualifies as a term only if it stands in biunivocal rela-

tion with its referent and is unambiguously defined.” That is, to qualify as a term, the same word must always be used for the phenomenon in question, in the same way. However, new theories have emerged over the last few decades that challenge this definition and argue instead that “terms are dynamic and stand on a continuum with general language words.” The new theorists assert that the concepts behind terms can be multifaceted and vague, terms can behave more like ordinary words than the classical model allows, words and terms are on a semantic continuum, and the need for contextualization is not obviated by the designation of a word as a term. The impact this has on translation is that translators need to take care when assessing each instance of appearances of common words (that denote doctrine and practice) in relation to terminological value, that is, the extent to which they are functioning as a technical term in that instance. Failure to correctly assess this can create problems. While aware of the many complexities that vex translators of ancient Buddhist texts—temporal distance, hermeneutical questions, and language issues—Lugli argues that in Buddhist studies there has been, historically, an overemphasis on rendering words as technical terms. This stems from opaque adherence to the classical model of terminology. To illustrate her point, Lugli then presents a case study of *saṃjñā*, an instrumental word in early Buddhist discourse that has, historically, proven difficult to translate. Lugli surveys the many attempts by modern scholars to render correct translations of this word (or term) and highlights some of the consternation caused by adherence to the classical model whereby scholars attempt to find a singular English word or phrase applicable in all instances. She concludes her discussion with her own suggestion that, rather than trying to find one suitable English word or phrase that is applicable in all instances, instead, the best way to understand *saṃjñā* is to see it as corresponding to a “lexical gap” in the English language. That is, there is no one corresponding English word that comfortably fits all occurrences of it in Sanskrit Buddhist texts; no word in English covers the semantic spectrum of *saṃjñā* nor is able to express the concept in a way that replicates the specialized parameters of its usage in Buddhist texts.

CHAPTER 7

Chapter 7 is my own chapter, the first in part 3 of the volume, the section that focuses on applied examples. Taking up themes already discussed in

parts 1 and 2 of the volume, I examine the question of the extent to which *antevāsini* can be considered a technical *vinaya* term. This investigation blends with questions already posed by Collett Cox, on the stability of texts; by Amy Langenberg, on how we read *vinaya* texts; and by Ligeia Lugli, on the nature of technical terminology on Buddhist literature.

According to Buddhist *vinayas*, *antevāsini*—and its male counterpart *antevāsin*—is a term used to denote pupilage within the tradition. It is part of a fourfold classification of defined roles that relate to ordination and become delineated through formal monastic procedures. The ordination system is formulated around a novice period that involves training. An individual wishing to join the order has a *pabbajjā* ordination and becomes a novice (*sāmanera/ī*) and a pupil (*antevāsin/ī* or *saddhivihārika/ā*) with both a preceptor (*upajjhāya/ā*) and a teacher (*ācariya/ā*). After a period of two years, the novice takes full or higher ordination (*upasampadā*) and becomes a monk or nun (*bhikkhu/nī*). According to the *vinayas*, this formal process happens in gender-segregated communities; that is, male novices have male preceptors and teachers and female novices have female preceptors and teachers. The epigraphic evidence, however, challenges our perception of *antevāsini* as a technical *vinaya* term repetitively denoting a role with clear parameters that is enacted within a community segregated along gender lines. In inscriptions we find records of women who consider themselves direct pupils (*antevāsini*) of male monastic teachers, a situation that, according to *vinaya* norms, should not happen. Given this seeming discrepancy between the textual and epigraphic evidence, doubts are raised about the exact meaning of the term. The question is not one of literal translation, which is invariably “pupil” in each case, but rather with semantics and terminology configuration, that is, the extent to which *antevāsini* can be understood as a standardized technical *vinaya* term, with the same semantic range, always specifying a particular collection of behaviors.

CHAPTER 8

In the second chapter of applied examples, C. V. Jones challenges translations of *tīrthika* as “heretic.” Initially, Jones takes us on a short tour of the origins of the term “heretic” in Abrahamic and Western contexts. Here, he skillfully reveals that a heretic came to be understood as the “enemy within” a religious tradition, one who adheres to “a heterodox,

potentially divisive position within the parameters of one's own tradition." Next, in a survey of writers of modern dictionaries of Old and Middle Indic languages relevant to purpose, Jones highlights the consistency with which the primary translation of *tīrthika* from Buddhist texts was "heretic." Although, recently, there have been a few other options suggested, "heretic" has remained the option of choice. Jones then turns to Buddhist texts themselves. First, he groups together systematizers and commentators on Buddhist thought who understood the *tīrthika* as some sort of opponent of a rival school. Such opponents might have, for instance, contrasting views about the nature of the self, or the nature of liberation, but were most often not—in contrast to the semantics underpinning "heretic" in Christian usages—inside the Buddhist community, espousing false views as the truth. This Jones especially demonstrates in his exegesis of a *Ratnagoṭravibhāgaśāstra* passage.

Jones next surveys texts that present a *tīrthika* as an obstacle to practitioners as they seek to advance on the Buddhist path. Interestingly, certain of the Mahāyāna texts that present this possibility also allude to a Śāntideva-type notion of the obstacle as an aid on the path. Finally, in his reverse trajectory, Jones returns back to the beginning and surveys the initial uses of *tīrthika* in the earliest Buddhist sources. Demarcated by an awareness of historical milieu, he identifies the shared religious metaphor of the cycle of transmigration understood as a flood, which needs to be traversed by the religious adept, and which may be the origin of the notion of a *tīrthika* as a ford-maker who is so enabled and able to galvanize others. He also notes the early Buddhist nuancing of this metaphor to allude to states of mind. Acknowledging Buddhism's move away from these shared *śramaṇa* metaphors, he concludes that while a *tīrthika* is one of a distinct religious view, doctrine, practice or sect to one's own, nowhere in Buddhist literature is the term used in a sense that warrants translation of it as "heretic," a translation choice which he implores we abandon.

CHAPTER 9

In the penultimate chapter of applied examples, Dhivan Thomas Jones considers the doctrine *paṭicca-samuppāda*. Noting, initially, its significance as a fundamental doctrine of early Buddhism, Jones begins his assessment of the term with a twofold goal in mind—to argue in favor of one of the usual English translations of the term over others and to reconsider

the extent to which the concept needs to be considered as a theory of causation or, indeed, an articulation of human experience in the world.

He begins, picking up on points already made in the volume, by designating *paṭicca-samuppāda* as a specialist term that “refers unambiguously to a particular concept.” He then takes in turn the two individual components of the compound and surveys the semantic range of each. Putting the conclusions of these subsections together with an analysis of the nature of the term as a syntactic compound, he concludes that “dependent arising” is the neatest expression of the full literal meaning of “(a phenomenon’s) arising dependent on (a causal basis).”

Having established his basis translation point, Jones then proceeds to a more existential discussion of the nature of causation in early Buddhist thought, and a reflection on whether the notion of causation here is not theoretical but experiential. That is, rather than the concept expressed by *paṭicca-samuppāda* being simply a doctrinal statement on the nature of the world, does it instead attempt to communicate some fundamental aspect of human experience that a practitioner needs to become aware of to proceed on the path? Jones’s essential point here is that there is more of a metaphorical slant than is often considered to be the case. He argues that *paṭicca-samuppāda* needs to be understood as a conceptual metaphor, that is, an item of language that enables “transfer of meaning from one conceptual domain to another.” Closing with a discussion of agricultural metaphors relating to organic growth that accompany expositions of the doctrine, Jones concludes that if textual expressions of *paṭicca-samuppāda* were constructed out of familiar metaphors of life and growth in the ancient Indian milieu, then our own translation of it into English ought likewise to be as comfortable a fit as possible.

CHAPTER 10

The chapter that completes the volume is a study of the word *desanāsīsa* as it appears in Pāli commentarial literature attributed to Buddhaghosa. The word is often translated as “a headword for a discourse,” or variations on that theme. However, in this chapter, Gamage questions such translations and explores the extent to which they are unerringly applicable and function to communicate the breadth of meaning of *desanāsīsa* in the various contexts in which Buddhaghosa employs it. Gamage argues that *desanāsīsa* has a broad application and is in fact similar to the grammatical

ekaśeṣadvandva in that it is often used in a similarly reductive way. He identifies three discrete ways in which *desanāsīsa* is employed in Buddhaghosa's commentarial expositions of the canon. First, he argues, *desanāsīsa* is used to highlight synecdoche, that is, to indicate instances in which a word operates as a part signaling a whole, or two or more parts. One example he gives for this is the use of the word "mother" to infer both parents. Second, he notes its usage to highlight merismus. In this function, *desanāsīsa* is employed to indicate a situation when two (often opposing) things are used to represent more. Third, Gamage argues that *desanāsīsa* also indicates metonymy. Given the range of applications for the rubric *desanāsīsa*, any literal—or even dynamic or interpretive—translation may fall short of being able to convey a meaning that does justice to the multifarious exegetical purposes that underpin Buddhaghosa's use of the word.



Essentially, the bare components of the subdiscipline of translation studies (in Buddhist studies) are texts, translators, and words. The volume so constituted, each part raises and attempts to address some questions in relation to each of these factors. Relating to texts, contributors discuss the nature of Buddhist texts, how it is we came to have an understanding of what constitutes a text, how we might engage in translation practices that communicate something more than literal words, upholding other aspects of the function of the text for its intended audiences and explorations of hermeneutics, genre, and intertextuality. Motivations of translators old and new are explored and questions raised about how ambitions, perceptions, and prejudices of a translator might impact translation. Finally, through some applied examples, so-called technical terms, religious titles, doctrine, and exegetical strategies have been explored.

Conclusions that can be drawn from the contributions that make up this volume are admittedly piecemeal but nonetheless considerable: that a "historically sensitive" approach to translation is the most fitting for Buddhist studies; that it is possible to translate taking into consideration more than a literal rendition of the words in the source language; that hermeneutics and genre impact translation choices; that Buddhist translators themselves did not always possess the same motivations; that colonial attitudes have influenced translations and production of dictionaries in a variety of ways; that the classical model of terminology has been impacting

translation choices Buddhist studies scholars have made; that what comes to be understood as technical terminology went through developmental processes; that Christian presuppositions impacted translation choices; that loose translations of core doctrine need to be challenged; and that Buddhist exegetes used words in multivalent ways that are not always possible to convey via literal translation.

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