A Pali Ghost Word: *dattu* and Related Issues[1]

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The compound *dattupaññatta* occurs four times in the Pali canon. Three of these four instances (Sāmaññaphalasutta, DN I 55, Sandakasutta, MN I 515, and Natthi Sutta, SN III 207) are in the concluding part of reports on a particular non-Buddhist doctrine that denies the efficacy of sacrifices, the existence both of this world and a yonder world and the presence in the world of enlightened ascetics or brahmans; on one occasion (DN I 55), this doctrine is identified as that of Ajita Kesakambalin, one of the Six Heretics of Buddhist doxography:

dattupaññattaṃ yad idaṃ dānaṃ.[2] *tesaṃ tucchaṃ musā vilāpo ye keci atthikavādaṃ vadanti. bāle ca paṇḍite ca kāyassa bhedā ucchijjanti vinassanti, na honti param maraṇā ti.*

"This giving is *dattupaññatta*. Those who teach existence – it is false, a lie, babble. After the dissolution of the body, both the fool and the wise man are split up and perish, and do not exist after death."

The fourth occurrence is in the Mahāmorajātaka (Jā IV 338 f.). Here a golden peacock (the Bodhisattva in a former birth) is caught in a snare. When the hunter approaches, the peacock promises him rebirth in heaven if he will set him free. The hunter is skeptical about the worth of this promise since he has heard it said that the gods do not exist (v. 7):

[1] I wish to thank Richard Salomon and Oskar von Hinüber for their valuable comments on this article, and the former for giving me access to photographs of the Dīrghāgama manuscript. An earlier version of the argument was presented at the seminar Komparativ Sprogforskning på Vej II, 20 and 21 October 2003, Københavns Universitet.

[2] SN III 207 has *idaṃ dānaṃ nāma* instead of *yad idaṃ dānaṃ*.

na santi devā iccāhu eke
idheva jīvo vibhavaṃ upeti
tathā phalaṃ sukatadukkatānaṃ
dattupaññattañ [vv.ll. *duṭhu-, daṭṭhu-*] *ca vadanti dānaṃ*
tesaṃ vaco arahataṃ saddahāno
tasmā ahaṃ sakuṇe bādhayāmīti

"'Gods do not exist,' some say,
'the soul ends in extinction[3] right here,
and likewise the fruit of good and bad deeds.'
They also say that giving is *dattupaññatta.*
Believing the words of these arhants
I therefore snare birds."

The peacock points out in reply that sun and moon clearly exist, yet are regarded as not belonging to this world. The hunter is forced to agree, and the peacock draws the conclusion that therefore those are wrong who teach that there is no yonder world in which retribution of good and bad deeds takes place (v. 10):

ettheva te nihatā hīnavādā
ahetukā ye na vadanti kammaṃ
tathā phalaṃ sukatadukkatānaṃ
dattupaññattaṃ [vv.ll. *datthu-, daṭṭhu-*] *ye ca vadanti dānan ti*

"In this matter they are defeated and have an inferior teaching,
the noncausalists who do not teach karma
and the fruit of good and bad deeds (in this world)
and who say that giving is *dattupaññatta.*"

The hunter declares himself convinced (v. 11):

addhā hi saccaṃ vacanaṃ tavetaṃ
kathaṃ hi dānaṃ aphalaṃ vadeyya
tathā phalaṃ sukatadukkatānaṃ
dattupaññattaṃ [v.l. *daṭhu-*] *ca kathaṃ bhaveyya*

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[3] For this translation of *vibhava* (instead of "highest bliss" in Cowell et al. 1895–1913: III 214) compare its collocation with *uccheda* in the standing phrase *sato sattassa ucchedaṃ vināsaṃ vibhavaṃ paññāpenti* (DN I 34 ff., MN II 228, Vibh 378, 383), and note that Ajita Kesakambalin's teaching likewise concludes with the verbal equivalents of *uccheda* and *vināsa* in *bāle ca paṇḍite ca kāyassa bhedā ucchijjanti vinassanti* (DN I 55).

"What you say is definitely true.
For how can one teach that giving is fruitless
and the fruit of good and bad deeds (in this world)?
And how can it be *dattupaññatta*?"

These Jātaka verses are in the triṣṭubh metre. This means that the *ye* in 10d is hypermetrical (and indeed it is absent in the otherwise identical pāda 7d). It also suggests that the second syllable of *dattupaññatta* is probably heavy (*dattŭppa-* or *dattūpa-*), since ¯ ¯ ¯ ¯ ¯ is a much more common triṣṭubh opening than ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ¯ (Warder 1967: 207).[4]

The commentarial tradition (Buddhaghosa, fifth century, Dhammapāla, probably mid-sixth century[5], and the Jātakatthavaṇṇanā) took the word in question as a compound of *dattu* and *paññatta*, with the meaning 'taught by fools'[6]:

dattupaññattan ti dattūhi bālamanussehi paññattaṃ. idam vuttam hoti: bālehi abuddhīhi paññattam idaṃ dānaṃ, na paṇḍitehi. bālā denti paṇḍitā gaṇhantīti dasseti. (DN-a I 166 on DN I 55, MN-a III 227 on MN I 515, SN-a II 339[7] on SN III 207)

"*Dattupaññatta* means 'taught (or prepared) by *dattu*s, i.e., foolish people'. This is being said: fools and unintelligent people teach this (idea of) giving, not the wise. 'Fools give, wise men take' is what he shows."

dappanti [v.l. *dabbanti*] *muyhantīti dattū, mūḷhā puggalā* [v.l. *mūḷhapuggalā*]. *tehi dattūhi bālamanussehi paññattaṃ.* (DN-ṭ I 293 f.[8] on DN-a I 166, SN-ṭ II.1 239 on SN-a II 339)

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[4] While the PTS editions always write the word *dattupaññatta*, the alternative spelling *dattūpaññatta* is given for the SN passage in the *Buddha Jayanti Tripiṭaka Series* Sinhalese edition.

[5] Norman 1983: 137.

[6] The modern translations have followed the commentaries: "it is a doctrine of fools, this talk of gifts" (Rhys Davids & Rhys Davids 1899–1910: I 74), "it is imbeciles who speak of giving" (Horner 1954–59: II 194), "instituted by fools is this alms-giving" (Rhys Davids & Woodward 1917–30: III 167, also translating *paññatta*), "and giving is declared a foolish thing", "or who declare giving a foolish thing", "that giving is a foolish thing" (Cowell et al. 1895–1913: III 214).

[7] SN-a has *dassenti* instead of *dasseti*.

[8] DN-ṭ does not have *paññattaṃ*.

"(If somebody) is foolish and confused, they are (called) *dattu*s, 'deluded people'. It is taught (or prepared) by these *dattu*s, i.e., foolish people."

dattupaññattan ti ye ca dānaṃ lālakehi [vv.ll. *laḷa-, lāma-*] *paññattan ti vadanti.* (Jā IV 339 on v. 10)

"'*Dattupaññattaṃ* (etc.)' means: 'and who say that giving is taught (or prepared) by fools'."

Also elsewhere in the Pali canon a connection is made between the idea of giving and fools: *bālehi dānaṃ paññattaṃ paṇḍitehi paṭicchitaṃ* (Jā VI 225, part of the teaching of the ājīvika Guṇa Kassapa), *bālā ca* [...] *bahiddhā dadanti dānā* (AN I 162). In these other cases, however, the word used for 'fool' is *bāla*, not *dattu*. Further inquiry[9] shows that the alleged word *dattu* in fact never occur independently, but only in the one compound *dattupaññatta* on the occasions discussed.

A further problem lies in how we are to interpret the alleged word *dattu* morphologically. The only analysis that suggests itself would be to take it as a derivative from the root *dṛp-*, which in Sanskrit has the meanings 'to be mad or wild' and 'to be proud, arrogant' (PW and MW s.v.), with an agentive suffix starting with *t*, the combination *p* + *t* yielding MIA *tt* according to the usual sound laws. This is also what Dhammapāla seems to have had in mind when using the verb *dappanti* (= OIA *dṛpyanti*) in his gloss on the DN passage.[10] The two possible agentive suffixes would be *-tu* (as in *mantu* 'counsellor' or *dhātu* 'milk cow', AiGr II.2 665) and *-tṛ* (which in Pali develops to *tu* when part of a non-final member of a compound, Geiger 1994: 82). Against this hypothesis speaks the fact that both the *-tu* and the *-tṛ* agentive formations require a root in guṇa grade, which would yield an unattested form **darptu* or **darptṛ*, whereas in actual fact it is *darpin* which is used as agent noun for the root *dṛp-*.[11]

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[9] With the help of PED, PTC and a digital version of the Pali canon (entered from the *Buddha Jayanti Tripiṭaka Series* Sinhalese edition and made available by the online *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* at http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/palicanon.html).

[10] PED s.v. suggests *dātṛ-* 'giver' as an etymology for *dattu*, but this is both at odds with the commentators' understanding and fails to yield a satisfactory meaning in context and requires assuming an analogical change of *dātu-* to *dattu-*.

[11] The non-existence of **darptu* and **darptṛ* would seem to be more than mere coincidence: the sound sequences V*r*C*t*V and V*l*C*t*V never occur in Sanskrit. The only two roots of the shape C*ṛ*C- that do form an agent noun in *-tṛ* are *dṛś-* and *sṛj-*, and in their case the infelicitous sequence is avoided by using *ra* instead of *ar* in the

I would like to suggest instead that the first member of *dattupaññatta* is *datta*, the perfectly regular phonetic outcome in Pali of OIA *dṛpta*, the past participle of *dṛp-*. While in Sanskrit, *dṛpta* is primarily attested in the meanings 'mad, wild' and 'proud, arrogant' (MW s.v.),[12] a semantic shift from 'mad, wild' to 'foolish, stupid' is entirely conceivable. Moreover, on those occasions where Pali *datta* occurs independently, it does appear to have the latter meaning (*unmatto 'si tvaṃ datto 'si tvaṃ* MN I 383, *ko nu datto parisaṃ āgamā* Jā VI 192) and is in fact glossed as such in the dictionaries.[13] At Jā VI 192 the commentary significantly glosses *datta* as *lāḷaka*, the same word used to explain the first member of *dattupaññatta* at Jā IV 339, the passage discussed above.

If we accept *datta*, not *dattu*, as first member of *dattupaññatta*, the *u* at compound boundary can be explained if the second member starts with the prefix *upa-*, not *pa-* (= OIA *pra-*). The rules of internal sandhi are more flexible in MIA than in OIA (Geiger 1994: 59 f., von Hinüber 2002: 213–215), and in Pali the combination of *datta-* with *-upa-* could in principle yield either *dattopa-* (on the historical pattern), or *dattŭpa-* (the *a* being dropped), or *dattūpa-* (preserving the historically expected syllable weight). It is generally the case that Pali manuscripts do not indicate the quantity of *i* and *u* reliably,[14] but our metrical analysis of the Jātaka passage makes it likely that of the three sandhi options listed we have *dattūpa-* with long *ū*; the analysis of the compound into *datta-upa-* does not depend on whether *u* is short or long.

It remains to determine the identity of the second member of the compound. The commentators' *paññatta* (= OIA *prajñapta*) would be the common past participle of *paññāpeti* (= OIA *prajñā-payati*), with the meanings 'ordered, prescribed, taught' and 'arranged (in a physical sense)'. Given our reanalysis of the compound, the canonical texts would at first glance seem to have *upaññatta* (= OIA *upajñapta*), a past participle from the causative **upaññāpeti* (= OIA **upajñā-payati*) 'to cause to be known'. But *upaññatta* occurs just once in Pali (*sabbhi dānaṃ upaññattaṃ* AN I 151), and no other form of a causative **upaññāpeti* / **upajñā-payati* is attested anywhere else in either Pali or Sanskrit. What does occur in Sanskrit is the non-causative past participle

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root syllable, resulting in *draṣṭṛ* and *sraṣṭṛ*. We can only observe that this has not happened in the case of *dṛp-*.

[12] But see below for the Sanskrit versions of the Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra.

[13] PED advances a phonetically difficult etymology ("prob. = thaddha, with popular analogy to datta[1] ['given'], see also dandha & cp. dattu") that has nothing to recommend it over the derivation from *dṛpta* proposed here.

[14] "Da die Verteilung von *-i/-ī* und *-u/-ū* in den Pāli-Handschriften willkürlich ist, kann die Quantität dieser Vokale in der Regel nur mit Hilfe der Metrik bestimmt werden." (von Hinüber 2001: 116)

upajñāta from *upajānīte* 'to invent (especially independently, not based on tradition)', a meaning that fits the context very well: "giving is an invention of fools" instead of "giving is taught (or prepared) by fools." The Pali manuscript spelling *upaññatta* (with short *a* and double *tt*) instead of expected *upaññāta* (with long *ā* and single *t*) can be explained as follows on the background of the general phonetic development of MIA.

The Law of Two Moras, common to all or nearly all of MIA, says that no syllable can contain more than two moras: only syllables with short vowel and final consonant (two moras) or long vowel and no final consonant (also two moras) are admissible (von Hinüber 2001: 117 f.); syllables with long vowel and final consonant (three moras) are not. Those syllables that do have more than two moras in OIA can be restructured in one of two ways: either the vowel is shortened and the consonant cluster preserved (with the rules of MIA consonant assimilation applied), or the vowel stays long and the consonant cluster is reduced to a single consonant (after application of consonant assimilation). Both strategies competed, leading to doublets such as P *upassaya* : *upāsaya* (< OIA *upāśraya*) and P *issara* : Amg *īsara* (< OIA *īśvara*). By analogy with these doublets, some words that should have long vowel and single consonant turn up with short vowel and double consonant (e.g., P *thulla* besides *thūla* < OIA *sthūla*, von Hinüber 2001: 118), and some that should have short vowel and double consonant turn up with long vowel and single consonant (e.g., P *sāsapa* instead of **sassapa* < OIA *sarṣapa*, Geiger 1994: 5).

I suggest that in the four passages under discussion (three of which – DN I 55, MN I 515, SN III 207 – are word-for-word identical), an original *upaññāta* 'invented' has been replaced by *paññatta* 'taught' (as has been proposed in connection with the Jātaka passage by CPD s.v. *upaññāta*). This was possible because the latter was formally close to the former due to the effect of the Law of Two Moras and the operation of MIA sandhi, and because both alternatives were similarly meaningful in the context; it was facilitated by the fact that *paññatta* (together with other derivations from *pra-jñā-*) is by far the more common of the two. That this is a case of completely replacing one word with another, not of understanding one word (*upaññāta*) with the meaning of another (*paññatta*), is shown by the fact that the Pali commentaries separated off *dattu* as first member of the compound, making it clear that they did not intend their *paññatta* as a gloss on something else, but accepted it as the reading of the canonical text.

Based on internal arguments, an interpretation of Pali *dattupaññatta* as *datta-upaññāta* 'invented by a fool' is thus likely to be correct for the early Pali textual tradition. This is further supported by the Sanskrit and Tibetan parallels of the Sāmaññaphalasutta (the Chinese versions do not translate the sentence in question). The Gilgit manuscript of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Saṅghabhedavastu has *dṛptopajñātaṃ dānam*, attributing the passage to another heretic teacher, Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, and adding a complementary *paṇḍitopajñātaḥ parigrahaḥ* "taking has been invented by a wise man" (Gnoli 1977–78: II 221). The addition of the second phrase adds to the proverbial flavour of the statement and ties in nicely both with the end of Buddhaghosa's comment on the passage (*bālā denti paṇḍitā gaṇhanti* "fools give, wise men take") and with the conclusion of Ajita Kesakambalin / Pūraṇa Kāśyapa's teaching, also referring to fool and wise man, in both the Pali and the Sanskrit version (*bāle ca paṇḍite ca kāyassa bhedā ucchijjanti vinassanti, na honti param maraṇā*; *bālaś ca paṇḍitaś ca ubhāv apy etau pretya ucchidyete, na bhavataḥ paraṃ maraṇāt*). Whether a common source of the Pali and the Sanskrit version also contained the equivalent of *paṇḍitopajñātaḥ parigrahaḥ* remains in the realm of speculation.

While the Gilgit Saṅghabhedavastu thus neatly confirms the proposed interpretation of Pali *dattupaññatta*, the other extant manuscript of the Sanskrit Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra, the recently discovered 'Gilgit' Dīrghāgama, at first sight seems to complicate the issue.[15] The manuscript is damaged in this passage, but the words *tṛptoprajñātaṃ dānaṃ paṇḍitopajñātaḥ pratigrahaḥ* can be clearly read. The scribe of this manuscript often confuses voiced and voiceless consonants; it is therefore not difficult to accept *tṛpta* as a simple misspelling of *dṛpta*, further helped by the existence of the common word *tṛpta* 'satisfied' (though of course semantically it does not fit the context). The patently wrong *uprajñāta* would seem to indicate an original *upajñāta* that has been incompletely changed 'in the direction of' the lectio facilior *prajñapta*. Alternatively, it could be original *prajñāta* altered halfway to *upajñāta* because the meanings of *prajānāti* ('to know, understand' and 'to find out, learn'[16]) did not fit the context, which in turn also would point back to a wrong reanalysis at the MIA stage of the type *dattūpaññāta* to *dattuppaññāta*[17])

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[15] See Hartmann 2000 and 2002. This manuscript's Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra is now being edited by Lance Cousins, Oxford. My readings are based on the set of black-and-white photographs originally distributed to scholars, where the phrase under study occurs in line 7 of the verso of the folio labelled "C12."

[16] In Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit also 'to claim', cf. BHSD s.v.

[17] An alternative MIA reanalysis of original *dattuppaññatta* to *dattuppaññāta* is theoretically not impossible, but it is very unlikely that straightforward *dattu-*

but would put the 'Gilgit' Dīrghāgama manuscript at odds with the Saṅghabhedavastu manuscript and the Tibetan evidence (see below). In either case, both Sanskrit manuscripts confirm the suggested original reading of the Pali texts.

The Tibetan version of the Saṅghabhedavastu (dGe 'dun dbyen gyi gźi), itself translated from Sanskrit in the latter half of the eighth century, reads (Peking Kanjur vol. ce, 240a8):

'di ltar rmoṅs pas ñe bar bstan pa ni sbyin la mkhas pas ñe bar grtan[18] *pa* [*ni*][19] *len to* ||

"In this way, what the fool teaches is giving, and what the wise man teaches is taking."

The verb *ñe bar bstan pa* is of interest. When translating from Sanskrit to Tibetan, it is often the case that a Sanskrit preverb-verb combination corresponds to a simple verb in Tibetan. The translators then like to add a semantically superfluous Tibetan adverb to the verb, for no other reason than to indicate what prefix was attached to the Sanskrit verb that they are translating. In this case, *bstan pa* on its own would be a semantically perfectly satisfactory translation of Skt. *prajñapta* 'taught', but the adverb *ñe bar* is invariably used to indicate the Sanskrit prefix *upa-*, not *pra-*. It is therefore virtually certain that the translators' Sanskrit exemplar had a verb with the prefix *upa-*. On the evidence of the Sanskrit and Pali parallels, we can assume that verb to have been either *upajñāta* or a modification thereof.[20] That it is rendered as *ñe bar bstan pa* shows that the textual tradition to which the Indo-Tibetan translator team belonged was just as uncomfortable with the reading that we must assume they had as the Pali tradition (changing *upaññāta* to *paññatta*) and the makers of the 'Gilgit' Dīrghāgama (changing *upajñāta* to *uprajñāta*) with theirs, and that all of them would have expected the lectio facilior *paññatta* / *prajñapta* in this context. That the Pali tradition and the Sanskrit/Tibetan tradition introduced independent solutions for the perceived textual problem shows that the modifications

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ppaññatta would ever have been misunderstood and replaced by a considerably less clear *dattuppaññāta*.

[18] Evidently a mistake for *bstan* 'teaches'.

[19] The Peking Kanjur has a negation *mi* instead of the topic particle *ni* that would be expected for reasons of parallelism and on the basis of the Sanskrit version. This is likely to be no more than a graphical misprint since the Tibetan letter *na* looks just like the left half of a *ma*.

[20] If it were not for the parallels, then one might also have suspected *upa-diś-* behind the Tibetan translation.

discussed postdate their formation as separate (though not necessarily isolated) branches of the Buddhism.[21]

Returning to Pali, we need to discuss the respective roles that *datta* and *dattu* have played in the lexicon of that language. The first thing to notice is that the rare *datta* 'foolish' has a more common doublet in *ditta* 'proud, arrogant'. Both words are derived from OIA *dṛpta*. While the default outcome in Pali of OIA interconsonantal *ṛ* seems to have been *a*, *i* and *u* occur in palatal and labial environments, and have spread more widely by processes of analogy (Geiger 1994: 9 f., von Hinüber 2001: 126–129). In such cases, the different results have often undergone semantic specialisation vis-a-vis their OIA progenor, the standard example being *miga* 'deer' vs. *maga* 'animal', both from OIA *mṛga*.[22] The same has happened with *datta* and *ditta*, where the single OIA word *dṛpta* had meant both 'mad, wild' (> 'foolish') and 'proud, arrogant', a semantic range that was then distributed among the two Pali reflexes of that word, *datta* and *ditta*. One of the reasons for the relatively little use we see of *datta* may be that in Pali it had become homonymous with *datta*, the past participle of *dadāti* 'to give' (itself somewhat rare outside of proper names, the regular Pali past participle being *dinna*).

Is it true, then, that *dattu* is a Pali ghost word? The answer partly depends on what stage of Pali one is looking at. Our analysis will have made it clear that for the canonical language it is. None of the cited canonical passages has signs of containing anything else but *datta*. On the other hand, the commentaries of the fifth and sixth centuries use case forms of *dattu* (*dattūhi*, *dattū*) in their explanations of the compound. But one would probably not want to say that *dattu* had become a true part of the Pali lexicon unless it had gained wider and independent currency in postcanonical Pali literature, something for which so far there are no indications.[23]

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[21] According to Mhv ch. XXXVII, vv. 225–237, e.g., Buddhaghosa himself started his career in Northern India and only later moved from there to Sri Lanka, where on the basis of the (no longer extant) Old Sinhalese commentaries he wrote the definitive Pāli commentaries on the greater part of the Buddhist canon.

[22] Cf. English *deer* vs. Danish *dyr* and German *Tier*; Pali has the luxury of having both meanings, assigned to phonetically minimally differing versions of the same word. The situation is of course not completely the same: in the former case, we have to do with semantic narrowing (Germanic 'animal' > English 'deer'), in the latter with lexical split and semantic specialisation (Old Indo-Aryan 'animal, deer' > Pali 'animal', 'deer').

[23] In general principle it is of course quite possible for sandhi reanalysis to give rise to new words, a good example being the English word *adder* that owes its existence to a reinterpretation of Middle English *a naddre* as *an addre*; *nedder* survives as a Northern dialectal form (OED, and cf. German *Natter* and *Kreuz-otter*).

In conclusion, the present study suggests the following modifications of our knowledge of the Pali and Sanskrit lexicon (and of the dictionaries describing that knowledge). Pali *dattupaññatta* is a compound of *datta* and *upaññāta*. The word *dattu* does therefore not occur at all in the canonical language, and even in the commentarial language it is used strictly as a nonce-word, made up in order to explain the misunderstood compound *dattupaññatta*. On the other hand, this compound now adds to the attestation of the somewhat rare, but doubtless existing, Pali word *datta* 'foolish', and it provides evidence for Pali *upaññāta* 'invented', a meaning previously only attested in Sanskrit for the ātmanepada of *upa-jñā-*. On the evidence of Pali in turn, the previously unattested meaning 'foolish' can be added to the (Buddhist) Sanskrit word *dṛpta* (in the Gilgit Saṅghabhedavastu's *dṛptopajñāta*), and *dṛptoprajñāta* in the 'Gilgit' Dīrghāgama can be understood as a corruption of *dṛptopajñāta*. The Pali and Sanskrit evidence as a whole helps understand the origin of the Tibetan translation *ñe bar bstan pa*.

Abbreviations and References

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