A Reference to Maga in the Tibetan Translation of the *Tarkajvala*

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For a study of theories and practices of the Brahmanical, as well as the non-Brahmanical, religious schools in India around the fifth century, the *Madhyamaka-hṛdaya-kārikā* (hereinafter referred to as *MHK*) of Bhavya or Bhāvaviveka (490-570 ca.) and his auto-commentary *Tarkajvalā* (*TJ*) provide much valuable information. In the ninth chapter: *Mīmāṃsā-tattva-nirnaya-avatāra*, of these two works, which discusses the doctrinal differences between the Mīmāṃsakas and the Buddhists, we come across a noteworthy reference to the book of Maga (*maga-śāstra*).

“And this Veda is conjectured to be a work of a wicked person. Because it teaches such unmoral deeds as harming of living things and drinking of wine. Like the book of Maga.”

/ajuṃnyayā ca vedā 'yaṃ asat-puruṣa-kartaḥ/
/skye bu mi bzaṅ bha byas par/ /rig byed ḥdi ni gshal bya ste/
/bhūta-hinsā-surāpāna-kriyākter maga-śāstravat/ (*MHK* IX, 31)\(^1\)

/hbyun po ḥtshhe daṅ chaṅ ḥthuṅ-brdson/ /smra phyir ma gahi bstan bcos bsin/

This verse in *MHK* is commented in *TJ*, which is only available in the Tibetan translation, as follows:\(^2\)

“Maga and so on are the followers of a perverted belief (*vrata*), i.e. Persians and others who live in the land of barbarians (*mleccha*). Their teachings (*siddhānta*) are known to be like these:

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\(^1\) This Sanskrit verse in *MHK* is offered by Prof. V. V. Gokhale of Poona. It is a copy, made by his own handwriting, from what Rev. Śāṃkritāyana copied at Sha-lu monastery in Tibet. The present writer remains thankful to Prof. Gokhale’s kind guidance and his generous permission for the use and publication of this material.

The Tibetan translation “*brdson*” suggests “mithyā” or “mṛṣā” for “kriyā.”

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As they do harm to the earth, killing of ants and others does not go against morality.

By killing bulls and piling their horns, one can hope to reach heaven. In the same way, by burning the heart of beasts and with the smoke out of it, one will be born in the highest dwelling place in the utmost heaven, and so on.

In the same way, as all women are similar to mill-stone, flower, fruit, cooked food, descending steps for a bathing place, roads, and others, it is not right to say that one's mother, sisters, daughters, and so forth are improper as one's object of sexual intercourse.

The doctrines of Maga with the assertions above-mentioned have many points fairly common to the teachings of the Vedas. It is because the following assertions are made by the proponents of the Vedas: Such deeds as harming of others (hinsā) taught in the Vedas, although they are denounced in other books, do not constitute a sin as we can learn from those born in other lands. 'Honey should be collected.' 'A bull should be slain, too.' Or in the same way, 'A man, horse, bull or sheep should be consecrated in the fire to death.' Or again, 'They should be choked to death in a state of unconsciousness.' Or, 'In the

2) The Tibetan text: sDe dge bstan hgyur, dBu ma (dsA) 281b1— sNar than bstan hgyur, dBu ma (dsA) 304b5— Peking bstan hgyur, dBu ma (dsA) 318a4—. The present text is based on the sDe dge edition.

(D281b1) ma ga la sogs pa phyin ci log gi brol shugs can/ par sig la sogs kla klohi gnas na gnas pa de dag gi grub pa hi mthañ ni ndi itar grags te/ sa la gnod pa byed pa yin pa hi phyir/ greg ma la sogs pa bsad pa ni chos ma yin pa ma yin no/ ba lañ bsad na rva brtsags pa la brten nas mtho ris su hgro bar hgyur ro/ de bshin du phyugs gyi shiñ bsregs pas bdugs na gnas mthon po goñ mañi nam mkhar skye bar hgyur ro shes bya ba lta bu dañ/ (D281b3)/ de bshin du bud med thams cad ni gtun dañ/ me tog dañ hbras bu sogs pa dañ g'jos zin pañi zas dañ/ khrus bya bañi ÿab stegs dañ/ lam shes bya ba la dañ ÿdra ba yin pas ma dañ/ sriñ mo dañ/ bu mo la sogs pa la hgro par bya ba ma yin no shes zer ba ni legs pa ma yin no shes smra bar byed pañi ma gañi grub pañi mthañ de dañ rig byed la khyad par ci shig yod de/ gañ gi phyir rig byed pas smras pa/ rig byed ÿitshe ba gañ bstan pa/ bstan bcos gshan du smad gyur kyañ/ des ni sdig byas mi hgyur bar/ gshan du skye ba dag gis bstan to shes bya ba la sogs pa dañ/ sbrañ rtis bsdu bar byaño shes bya ba dañ/ ba lañ yañ gsad par byaño shes bya ba dañ/ de bshin du me la skyes bu dañ/ rta dañ/ ba lañ dañ/ ra rnam bsreg ciñ gsad par byaño/ yañ na ndi dag

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center of the fire surrounding them, they should be suffered by heat.' Or, 'In the Āsvamedha, every horse should be tormented with five hundred piercing needles and should be dedicated in the fire.'

These are the assertions (in the Vedas, similar to those of Maga). There an incestuous marriage is also spoken out. It is taught in the sacrificial rite (yajña) of the bull-observances (go-vrata): 'A Brahmin shall perform a sacrificial rite of a bull (go-sava) and keep himself in the bull-observances for one year (sāṃvatsara-govratin). He should drink water like a bull, take herb like a bull, have a sexual relation with his mother, with his aunts, with his own offsprings like a bull. Taking pleasure out of whomever and whatever are available, then by so doing he will reign over everything in the world. (upa mātaram iyād upa svasāram upa sagotrām upāvahāya udakam ācāmed upāvahāya trāṇāy āchindyaād/ yatra yatra enam viṣṭhā vindet tat tad vitiśheta anuḍuho ha lokaṃ jayati Cf. Jaimintya-
Brahmaṇa ii. 113). . . .

(D283b6) The Vedas are not a proper means for knowing the Dharma. As they teach with the assertions acknowledging and encouraging such deeds as harming (hinsā), unchastity (abrahmacarya), drinking wine (surāpāna) and so on, they are like the sayings of the huntsmen and the Persians who speak often of harming living beings. . . .

dbugs bsrubs la bsad par bya ste// sems pa med par byaḥo/ (D281b6)/ yaḥ na mes bskor baḥi dkyil du tsha bas gduṅ bar byaḥo shes bya ba dañ// yaḥ na rta dag gi mchod sbyin la rta re re la khab laṅ brgya laṅ brgya btsugs la śīn tu zug gzer dañ ldan par byas nas sbyin sreg byaḥo shes rjes su gnaṅ ba yod pa dañ/ bgrod par bya ba ma yin pa la bgrod par bya ba yaḥ rjes su gnaṅ n/io shes ba laṅ gi brtul shugs can gyi mchod sbyin las bstan tē// bram zes ba laṅ gi mchod sbyin byas nas lo gcig gi bar du ba laṅ gi brtul shugs la gnas par bya ste/ ba laṅ bshin du chu btuṅ (D282a1) śiṅ rtsva yaḥ gcad par bya la/ ma la yaḥ bshon par bya/ mahī spin zla la yaḥ bshon par bya/ raṅ gi rigs la yaḥ bshon par bya ste/ gaṅ dañ gaṅ du shugs śiṅ ḥdug pa der ṛṇed pa de daṅ de la spyad ciṅ ba laṅ bshin du spyad na ḥjig rten thams cad las rgyal bar ḥgyur ro shes bya ba dañ/ . . . . (D283b6)/ rig byed ni chos rtogs pa la tshad mar gyur pa ma yin tē/ ḥtše ba dañ/ tshaṅs par spyod pa ma yin pa daṅ/ chaṅ ḥtğun ba la sogs pa gsal bar byed pa daṅ/ rjes su mthun paḥi tshig brjod paḥi phyir rhion pa daṅ/ par sig la sogs pa ḥtšhe ba yoṅs su smra baḥi tshig bshin no/

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(D283b7-284a1) The Vedas are not a proper means for knowing the Dharma. As they teach the illicit sexual relation (agamyā-gamana), they are like the books of the Nāstikas and of the Persians.”

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The teachings of Maga as described in TJ agree with what we already know about Maga in the following points:

1) Killing of ants

In his description of the Persian manners and customs, Herodotus (ca. 484-430 B.C.) writes about the attitudes of their priesthood toward ants and other small creatures. “The Magi, on the contrary, kill animals of all kinds with their own hands, excepting dogs and men. They even seem to take a delight in the employment, and kill, as readily as they do other animals, ants and snakes, and such like flying or creeping.”

2) Drinking of wine (surāpāna)

Again, Herodotus mentions the Persian attitude toward wine as follows: “They are very fond of wine, and drink it in large quantities.”

3) Animal sacrifice, especially bull-slaying

The above-mentioned sentence from Herodotus’ History tells us also about Maga’s practice of animal sacrifice. The sacrifice of bull (taurobolium) is generally accepted as the central act of worship in Mithraism, and is represented in relief in every Mithraic sanctuary. In a Zoroastrian literature, Yasna xxxii, 10, we hear of the teacher of evil who ‘declares the ox and the sun are the worst thing to behold with the eyes,’ which may perhaps refer to the nocturnal sacrifice of bull by Mithraists. Zoroaster, in his reform, accused the priesthood of the old cult of handing the ox over to ‘fury’ or ‘violence.’ In Yasna xxix, 1, the soul of the ox itself cries out saying ‘violence, fury, cruelty, fri-

……(D283b7)/ rig byed ni chos rtogs pa la tshad mar gyur pa ma yin te/ gaṅ gi phyir bgrund par bya ba ma yin pa la yaṅ bgrund par bya bar ņe bar ston paṅi phyir med pa pa (D284a1) daṅ/ par sig gi bstan bcos bshin no/


ghtfulness, and might hem me in.6)

4) Incestuous marriage (agamyā-gamana)

This is one thing the mal-impression of which the modern successor of Zoroastrianism, the Indian Parsis, endeavour to eradicate out of their sacred literature. It cannot be denied, however, there are frequent references to the so-called illicit love, Khvētūk-das, in it.7)

Bhavya is not the first Buddhist writer who gives a description of this custom among the ancient Persians. The Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya of Vasubandhu, whose date of activity has been a topic of heating controversy (4th or 5th century), has a reference to the Persian (pāraśīka) custom of mercy killing for the aged parents8) and also to their custom of sexual life with mother and so on (moha-jo yathā pāraśīkanām matrādi-gamanām).9) Vasubandhu’s following quotation: “ye ca āhur/ udūkhala-puṣpa-pakvānna-tīrtha-mārga-prakhyo māṭr-grāma iti” is actually the same with what we have in TJ.10) The Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣa-śāstra (Taishō vol. 27, 606a), of which neither the Sanskrit original nor the Tibetan translation is available, and the date of composition of which precedes to that of Vasubandhu’s work, has the following Chinese translation on this context: “Again in the west hence, there live Mlechchas called Maga 目迦 who have this kind of opinion and this kind of view: ‘It is not sinful to attain one’s desire at one’s mother, daughters, sisters and sons’ wives. What is the reason? Whoever women are they, are all like ripe fruit, or food, road, bridge, ship, steps, mill-stone and so forth. Just as these things are shared by people in public, a woman is an object of love and enjoyment

9) Ibid. p. 241.
10) See the author’s tr. of TJ. Supra p. 2. Paramārtha’s translation of the Abhidharmakośa mentioned a Tirthika P’in-na-k’o 頻那柯 as the proponent. (Taishō vol. 29, 241b)
in common.’ 又此西方有蔑戾車名日日目迦。起如是見。立如是論。母女姊妹及見妻等。於彼行欲悉無有罪。所以者何。一切母邑。皆如熟果已辨飲食道路橋船階梯臼等。法爾有情共所受用。

The Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya tells us about a Vedic ritual, *gṛ-sava*, saying, “gosave ca yajñe/ yathoktaṃ 'brāhmaṇo gosavena iṣṭyā saṁvatsara-govrati bhavati/ upahā udakaṃ cūṣatī tṛṇāni cchinatti upaiti mātaram upa svasāram upa sagotrām’ iti.”[11] As we learn from La Vallée Poussin’s footnote to his French translation of the Abhidharmakośa, this Vedic quotation is from the Jaimintya Brāhmaṇa ii, 113.[12] Like TJ, the Tibetan translation of the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya has this quotation in full with “yatra yatrainam viṣṭhā vindet tat tad vitiṣṭheta anuḍuho ha lokaṃ jayati,” a sentence lacking either in Dr. Pradhan’s Sanskrit text or in the Chinese translation of the Abhidharma-kosā-bhāṣya. We do not know how was the corresponding paragraph in the original text, now lost, of the Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā-śāstra. It is very probable, anyway, that Bhavya should have acquired his knowledge on Maga from a certain Abhidharma work.

It is evident and valuable that the Buddhist knowledge of Maga, like that of Herodotus, includes much of the survival of old cults and primitive conceptions such as Zoroaster endeavoured to eradicate. It has been long known that there was, before the arrival of the Parsis on the Indian west coast, a colony of the old Iranian stock called Śākvātēpya-brāhmaṇa or Maga-brāhmaṇa on the bank of the Candrabhāgā in Punjab, who preserved their old worship of Mithra or Mihira and sun-worship.[13] It is not utterly impossible that the

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Buddhists might have been supplied with the information about the Maga religion from such a group of people living in India. So far, however, we cannot find any reference to Maga’s sun-worship either in TJ, or in the Abhidharma works.

There is another question: whether there was “the book of Maga (maga-śāstra)” as is mentioned in TJ. In the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya, there is no reference to the existence of such a book, while the Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣa has a sentence which is in a way possible to be rendered as follows: “Maga who have this kind of opinion and this kind of book (起如是見。立如是論)”. For lack of the Sanskrit original and the Tibetan translation of the Mahāvibhāṣa, we have no further way of finding what was the Maga-śāstra.14)

Remarkable it is that Bhavya noticed of many similarities in the teachings of Maga in old Persia and the Vedic religion, between the two most easterly branches of the Aryan race!

A study on the Dbus ma la Ḫug pa'i rgya cher bsdod pa by Tson khapa —

Ichijo Ogawa

PUDGALA-NAIRĀTMYA

Tson khapa's commentary on the Madhyamakāvatāra-bhāṣya by Candrakirti, Dbus ma la Ḫug pa'i rgya cher bsdod pa "Dgongs rab gsal," is as important as Jeyānanda's commentary. This paper is the synopsis of the portion of Madhyamakāvatāra VI 120°–178°, given by Tson khapa's commentary, with the pages of CMA and JMA. This portion deals with the discussion of Dk巴rdzam, purusha and skandha, i.e. Satkāyādhyāti, especially discussing about the relation between Dk巴rdzam and skandha.

CMA: Madhyamakāvatāra par Candrakirti, traduction tibétaine (Bibliothèque Bud-

Tson khapa's commentary; Peking Edition of Tibetan Tripitaka, vol. 154, no. 6143.

1) choi kyi bsdag med rigs pa bhrug pa 8°–119°
2) tshad rdod rgyas bshin gnyis gnyis gnyis grub pa bhrug pa 120°–178°
3) par bstan pa (201a2–201a3) 120°
5) JMA: 283b2–284a3.

-1) bsha ma brjod pa
-2) bsha ma bhrug pa (201b3–203a4) 121°
-3) bsha ma bhrug pa
-4) bsha ma bhrug pa (201b3–203a4) 121°
-5) bsha ma bhrug pa

CMA. P. 235, l. 3-p. 239, l. 6.