

# The Formula “Non-A is A” in Vasubandhu’s commentary on the *Triśatikāyāḥ* *Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ*

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## Abstract

The well-known formula in the *Vajracchedikā*: “That A taught by the Tathāgata, it is taught as non-A by the Tathāgata, thus it is called A by the Tathāgata” (hereafter abbreviated as “non-A is A”) takes over the role of emptiness, and initiated debates among some Japanese scholars about its connotation and application. One of the topics of discussion is whether the “non-A is A” formula expresses emptiness in the ontological sense of the Madhyamaka, or whether it illustrates a graduated path to be performed by the Bodhisattva. These two views do not commensurate with each other, because, for them, the Madhyamaka non-A, that is emptiness, stands for the inexpressible highest truth, while in the graduated path non-A is a negation of what is falsely imagined by ordinary people. These scholars have not consulted the Yogācāra views on this formula. There is besides a verse summary of the *Vajracchedikā* composed by Asaṅga called the *Triśatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ* also a commentary written by Vasubandhu. The verse summary is comprehensible only by referring to Vasubandhu’s commentary, which is extant in only two

Chinese translations. These Yogācāra's works provide several ways of interpretation of the formula "non-A is A". In them both views of the Japanese debate, whether "non-A is A" expresses the highest truth or whether it illustrates a graduated path to be performed by the bodhisattva, are integrated together.

**Keywords:** Non-A is A, *Triśatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ*, Bodhiruci, Yijing, *Vajracchedikā*



## 1. Introduction

Long ago Edward Conze points out an important fact that the term emptiness does not occur in the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* (hereafter abbreviated as *Vajracchedikā*).<sup>1</sup> Watanabe Shōgo mentions that emptiness in this sūtra is expressed with a fixed formula where an object A is mentioned three times: “That A taught by the Tathāgata, it is taught as non-A by the Tathāgata, thus it is called A by the Tathāgata” (hereafter abbreviated as “non-A is A”).<sup>2</sup> This formula occurs as much as 30 times in the *Vajracchedikā*,<sup>3</sup> but it is uncertain in regard to the exact interpretation of this formula in the *Vajracchedikā*. Eventually the formula “non-A is A” gave rise to debate among the Japanese scholars. Suzuki Daisetsu is the first one to draw our attention to this formula in the *Vajracchedikā* and claims that it goes beyond the principles of Buddhist logic. To him all the sentences of this formula refer to the same and only one object

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<sup>1</sup> See Edward Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* (Roma: Is. M. E. O., 1973), 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Watanabe Shōgo 渡辺章悟, “Sukoien Korekushyun no Kongouhannyakyou: Bāmiyan Keikoku yori Hakken Sareta Vajracchedika no Shahon スコイエン・コレクションの『金剛般若』——パーミヤン溪谷より発見された Vajracchedika の写本: Schoyen Collection #2385—,” *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 印度學佛教學研究 50-1 (2001,12): 101。

<sup>3</sup> This number is according to Guo Qiongyao 郭瓊瑤, “The Inspiration of Japanese Debate/Discussion of ‘The Logic of Immediate Negation’ in Vajracchedikā-Prajñāpāramitā-Sūtra to Chinese Buddhist Researchers 《金剛經》の「即非」之辯——日本學界對「即非論理」的論考與爭議,” *Journal of World Religions* 世界宗教期刊 11 (6, 2008): 104, 117. She follows Tachikawa Musashi 立川武藏, “Kongouhannyakyou ni Mirareru ‘Sokuhi no Ron Li’ Hihan 『金剛般若經』に見られる「即非の論理」批判,” in *Kongouhannyakyou no shisou teki khenkuu*, 金剛般若經の思想的研究, ed. Abe Jion 阿部慈園 (Tokyo: Shunjuushya, 1999), 108.

and the formula expresses an ontological emptiness in the Buddhist sense.<sup>4</sup> Satoshi Fujio holds different views from Suzuki and argues that the three sentences concern different objects and the formula has nothing to do with emptiness.<sup>5</sup> He considers the first A as the experience pertaining to the Buddha, the second A the viewpoints from ordinary people and the third A a gradual guide and skillful teachings of the Buddha. According to him the formula expresses a gradual implementation of the teachings of the Buddha by a bodhisattva newly set out on the path. Sueki Fumihiko follows Satoshi in the division of the three As, but basing on the *Prajñāpāramitā in 8 000 lines* he differs slightly in the view of the second A, which according to him denotes the A grasped as substantially existent by ordinary people.<sup>6</sup> Takehashi Futoshi is the opinion that the argument of “non-A is A” in the *Vajracchedikā* has the function of emptiness expressed by Nāgārjuna in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika*, that is, the first A refers to the A grasped by ordinary people; this must be removed in order to obtain correct comprehension of A, that is the third A.<sup>7</sup> In this way he seems to return to Suzuki’s explanation. The only difference

<sup>4</sup> See Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙, *Kongoukyou no zen/Zen he no michi* 金剛經の禪／禪への道, vol. 4 of *Suzuki Daisetsu zen senshuu* 鈴木大拙禪選集 (Tokyo: Shunjuushya, 2001(1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1944)), 15-24.

<sup>5</sup> See Satoshi Fujio 谷口富士夫 “Kongouhannyakyou niokeru katari gen to obujekuto 『金剛般若經』における語言と對象,” in *Kongouhannyakyou no shisou teki khenku*, 139-157. Cp. Guo Qiongyao, “The Inspiration of Japanese Debate/Discussion of ‘The Logic of Immediate Negation’ in Vajracchedikā-Prajñāpāramitā-Sūtra to Chinese Buddhist Researchers,” 109-112.

<sup>6</sup> See Sueki Fumihiko 末木文美士, “Soku hi no ronri saikou 即非の論理再考,” in *Zen bunka kenkyuujo kiyou* 禪文化研究所紀要 20 (1994), 53.

<sup>7</sup> See Takehashi Futoshi 竹橋太, “Kongouhannyakyou niokeru hou to sou ni nitsuite 『金剛般若經』における法と想について,” in *Kongouhannyakyou no shisou teki khenku* 金剛般若經の思想的研究, 163.

is that he claims in contrast to Suzuki that this formula complies with Buddhist logic. Though Tachikawa Musashi also resorts to the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika*, he criticizes Suzuki’s interpretation of “non-A is A”.<sup>8</sup> He explains this formula in the following way: “The A, which is thought to be existent, does not exist as a matter of fact, thus it is called after the name A.” He considers the non-existence of A the same positive function of emptiness in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika*, that is, it is responsible for giving rise of everything. Sadakata Akira too stands close to Takehashi in his comprehension of this formula.<sup>9</sup> Despite all these diversified interpretations they all base exclusively on either the *Prajñāpāramitā* in 8 000 lines or the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika*. Their resort to the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika* in the explanation of the *Vajracchedikā* is prompted obviously by the alleged relationship of the latter to the former, as is evident in the usual loose grouping of the *Prajñāpāramitā* with the Madhyamika. There are, however, Indian commentaries on the *Vajracchedikā* ascribed to the Yogācāra, which explicate on the formula “non-A is A”. It is not to deny that the interpretations of the commentaries, not only the Yogācāra, but also the Madhyamaka, can hardly be taken as the meaning of the *Vajracchedikā* because of the time lapsed between them and the usual different concerns of the commentaries from that of the sūtra. Nevertheless, the Indian commentaries could, amidst the Madhyamika interpretations of the Japanese, serve as an alternative

<sup>8</sup> See Tachikawa Musashi 立川武藏, “Kongouhannyakyou ni mirareru ‘soku hi no ronri’ hihan 『金剛般若經』に見られる「即非の論理」批判,” 112。

<sup>9</sup> See Sadakata Akira 定方晟, “Kongouhannyakyou no paradokusu 『金剛般若經』のパラドックス,” in *Kongouhannyakyou no shisou teki khenkuu* 金剛般若經の思想的研究, 95-105.

to the understanding of the *Vajracchedikā*, especially in the analysis of the formula “non-A is A”. It is thus useful to draw attentions to the interpretations of the Indian commentaries, which have since been neglected.

The first Indian composition that comes to mind is a verse summary of the *Vajracchedikā*, the *Trīṣatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ* (hereafter abbreviated as *Kārikā*) ascribed to Asaṅga (4<sup>th</sup> cent. C.E.). Besides the Sanskrit original, which was edited by Giuseppe Tucci, the *Kārikā* is also extant in two Chinese translations, that is, T1511 translated by Bodhiruci (386-534 C.E.) and T1514 by Yijing (義淨, 635-713 C.E.), and in a Tibetan translation. Bodhiruci’s translation includes a commentary on the verses, *Jingang banruo boluomi jing lun* 金剛般若波羅蜜經論 (hereafter T1511) ascribed to Vasubandhu (4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> cent. C.E.) by the Chinese masters. It is not only a commentary on the verses, but also the earliest extant exegesis on the *Vajracchedikā*. There is another Chinese translation of Vasubandhu’s commentary, the *Nengduan jingang banruo boluomiduo jing lunshi* 能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多經論釋 (hereafter T1513) translated by Yijing, which contains also the *Kārikā*. Its Sanskrit version is no more extant, nor has it any Tibetan translation. Since the *Kārikā* is too abbreviated, Vasubandhu’s commentary is indispensable for unraveling the verses. Though Vasubandhu’s commentary contains inevitably Yogācāra influence, it is the only commentary that gives a thorough analysis and explanation of the formula. It comments on the formula from different angles at different places. This paper makes an attempt to provide a plausible interpretation of the formula from the viewpoint of the

Yogācāra.

Tucci has done an important work on the *Kārikā*. He translated the verses into English and gave a summary of Vasubandhu’s commentary on each verse. Since these summaries are not direct translations of Vasubandhu’s prose commentary, there are often uncertainties and ambiguities with regard to Vasubandhu’s arguments in Tucci’s work. In addition, Tucci took obviously preference of Yijing’s translation to Bodhiruci’s, because his translations of both the *Kārikā* and Vasubandhu’s commentary stand close to Yijing’s translations.<sup>10</sup> But Bodhiruci’s translation occupied a much more prominent place in ancient China, because it is translated much earlier than Yijing’s.<sup>11</sup> Considering this fact, this paper gives priority to Bodhiruci’s translation over Yijing’s in places where they deviate from each other. Despite the fact that Bodhiruci and Yijing translated the same texts, that is, the *Kārikā* and Vasubandhu’s commentary, there are disagreements consisting mainly in the translations. This paper delineates various problems in the Chinese translations by comparing

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<sup>10</sup> Just to cite an example: Giuseppe Tucci introducing Vasubandhu’s explanation of verse 46 says, “The Buddha is also spoken of as being without a body, akāya at p. 37, l. 17, because his is a body of the non-existence (viz. *asaṃskṛta-tathatā*).” See Giuseppe Tucci, “The Trisatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” in *Minor Buddhist Texts*, Part I (Roma: Is. M. E. O., 1956), 114. Tucci derives *asaṃskṛta* obviously from Yijing’s translation 非有為身, see T25.1513.881a29-b1: 斯何所陳? 以非有為身故, 名彼為非身, 即真如性故。由其無身故, 是故名此為具身大身。There is no equivalent of *asaṃskṛta* in Bodhiruci’s translation, instead the argument concerns “no appearances/characteristics” (無相), see T25.1511.791c6-7: 此說何義? 非身者無有諸相, 是名非身。大者, 有真如體, 如是即名妙大身。

<sup>11</sup> Kuiji 窺基 (630-682 C.E.) and his predecessors lived much earlier than Yijing and could not refer to Yijing’s translation. They all based on Bodhiruci’s translation in the composition of the commentaries on the *Vajracchedikā*.



Bodhiruci's and Yijing's translations with the Sanskrit version.

## 2. The problems of Chinese translations

Tucci's interpretation of the *Kārikā* is greatly influenced by the Chinese translations of Vasubandhu's commentary, especially by Yijing's translation. Since he neglected Bodhiruci's translation, he overlooked differences between both translations and the problems of Yijing's translation. As a result, his translation and interpretation of the verses are not faultless and exhaustive. I give below some examples of the problems in the Chinese translations encountered in the following discussions:

### (1) Miscomprehension due to misreading

Verse 46c *abhāvakāyabhāvāc ca* gives the reason why the magnificent body of the Buddha is not a body. Yijing translated Vasubandhu's commentary on verse 46c as follows:

The verse that says: "Non-existence of a body is existence [of a body], it is [thus] called non-body" [corresponds to the sūtra:] "The Tathāgata says it is not the body, thus it is called possessing a body, having a magnificent body." What does it mean? Since it has non-existence as the body, it is called non-body." 云「非有身是有，說彼作非身。」如來說為非身，由此名為具身、大身者。斯何所陳？以非有為身故，名彼為非身。<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See T25.1513.881a27-29.



Bodhiruci translated otherwise:

The verse says: “Non-body is exactly the body, it is thus called non-body,” as it is said in the sūtra: “That magnificent body taught by the Tathāgata, it is not the magnificent body, thus it is called by the Tathāgata the magnificent body.” What does it mean? The non-body has no appearances, this is called non-body. 偈言：「非身即是身，是故說非身」故。如經：「世尊，如來說人身妙大。則非大身。是故如來說名大身故。」此說何義？非身者無有諸相，是名非身。<sup>13</sup>

“Non-existence” (非有) in Yijing’s translation of verse 46c “non-existence of a body is existence” (非有身是有) is his customary rendering of *abhāva*.<sup>14</sup> But Tucci misread Yijing’s translation “since it has non-existence as the body”<sup>15</sup> (以非有為身故) as “since it is a body of *asaṃskṛta* (非有為)” out of incorrect punctuation. In consequence of that he took *asaṃskṛta* as the reason for non-existence and made the following conclusion: “...because his is a body of non-existence (viz. *asaṃskṛta-tathatā*).” In fact a similar wording 非有為相 occurs in 44d where it cannot be understood otherwise than “it has non-existence as nature/appearance”.<sup>16</sup> In addition Yijing rendered

<sup>13</sup> See T1511.791c4-7.

<sup>14</sup> The same rendering of *abhāva* is seen again in verse 44d: sarve *bhāvasvalakṣaṇāḥ* (Tucci, “The Trīṣatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 75), which Yijing translated as “all have non-existence as nature/appearance” (皆『非有』為相)。

<sup>15</sup> In the new Japanese translation of the commentary this verse is similarly translated: 非有を身と為すを以つての故に, see Ōtake Susumu 大竹晉, *Nengduan jingang banruo boluomiduo jing lunshi* 能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多經論釈 (Tokyo: Ōkura Shuppan, 2009), 134.

<sup>16</sup> See the previous note.

*asamṣkṛta* usually as “made of causes” ( 由因造 ).<sup>17</sup> Tucci overlooked this fact. There is no equivalent of *asamṣkṛta* in Bodhiruci’s translation either.

It is clear from the discussion of the Chinese translations of this verse that every Chinese translator had his own specific set of vocabularies. If we have not compared all the versions including the Sanskrit version, the Chinese translations can easily betray us.

### **(2) Mistranslation due to euphonic combination (*sandhi*)**

In the case of *vācya* in verse 15, the Sanskrit negation prefix *a* is swallowed due to euphonic combination, Yijing mistook it as positive *vācya* and mistranslated as “what is taught” ( 所說 ). As a result the verse does not conform to the prose commentary in Yijing’s translation.

### **(3) Mistranslation due to Indic orthography**

It is obvious either that Bodhiruci misread “support” *upastambha* ( 荷持 ) in verse 16 as *upasthāna* and translated it as “going forth” or that he had a corrupted Indic original. Both cases are highly possible, because these two terms look similar in Prakrit.

### **(4) Mistranslation due to multi-meanings of Sanskrit**

The Sanskrit *araṇā* occurred in verse 18 has several meanings such as “without fighting”, “free from passion” and “free from

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<sup>17</sup> See discussion of verse 43 of this paper.

impurity”.<sup>18</sup> While the first definition is responsible for Yijing’s mistranslation, the latter two fit the context of the verse very well.

In verse 24b Yijing rendered *uttamārtha* as “the most excellent event” (勝事) and explained it in the prose commentary as referring to the desire of the Buddha to explain the name of the highest perfection (*pāramitā*).<sup>19</sup> But Bodhiruci translated it as “the highest truth” (上義), and according to his translation Vasubandhu’s intention is to expound the reason why the *pāramitā* is the highest truth.<sup>20</sup> Though Sanskrit *artha* carries both meanings “event” and “truth”, the latter is appropriate in the context, where *uttamārtha* “the highest truth” and *durlabha* “hard to be found” form together a compound and act as an attribute to *pāramitā*.

### (5) Deviation due to uncertainty in the analysis of a compound

Bodhiruci translated verse 20ab *jñānaniṣyandavijñaptimātratvāt* as 智習唯識通 and explained it in the prose that “it is only comprehensible by consciousness of the outflow of the true knowledge”. That means he took *vijñapti* to mean “comprehension”. In contrast, Yijing rendered the verse as 智流唯識性 and explained in the prose that “It manifests as representation-only of the outflow of the pure knowledge”. He took *vijñapti* to mean “representation”.

<sup>18</sup> For the last two definition see Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, vol. II (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004), 64b.

<sup>19</sup> See T25.1513.878c14-15: 復是勝事，此言欲顯般若之名。此下意欲成立是勝妙事。

<sup>20</sup> See T25.1511.787c7-8: 又此法門第一，以說名般若波羅蜜故，此云何成以上義故。

### 3. Variants in the Sanskrit version and the Chinese translations

The comparison of the Sanskrit version and the Chinese translations in section 4 highlights important variants of the verses under discussion. An example of verse 54c suffices to illustrate the occurrence of variants.

In verse 54c “Dharmabody” (*dharmakāya*) in the Sanskrit version corresponds to “Dharmarealm” (法界) in both of the Chinese translations:

dharmakāyāvinirbhāgād deśanāpy asvalakṣaṇā//

不離於法界 說法無自相 (Bodhiruci)

由不離法界 說亦無自性 (Yijing)<sup>21</sup>

According to the Chinese translations this passage expounds emptiness of the Dharma-preaching by arguing that there is no difference between Dharma-preaching and Dharmarealm.<sup>22</sup>

(Bodhiruci:) [Since it states in the sūtra] : “No *dharmas* can be preached, thus it is called Dharma-preaching,” so the verse reads: “[Dharma-preaching] is not different from the Dharmarealm, because it has no self characteristics.” What does it mean? The self characteristics of the *dharmas* preached [by the Buddha] are not perceptible outside the true Dharmarealm.

(Yijing:) It is not that the intrinsic nature of Dharma-preaching

<sup>21</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.793b2; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.882b5.

<sup>22</sup> See section (5a), No. 10 of this paper.

is perceptible outside the Dharmarealm.<sup>23</sup>

According to Bodhiruci it is Dharma (法) taught by the Buddha that is not different from the Dharmarealm, but according to Yijing, it is Dharma-preaching. Both are translations of the Sanskrit *deśanā* “instruction, preaching” and equally make sense. Dharma or dharma-preaching is not different from the Dharmarealm and is like the latter has no intrinsic nature or self characteristics (相). Since Dharma or dharma-preaching has no intrinsic nature, the so-called “Dharma” or “dharma-preaching” is not perceptible.

But Dharmabody (*dharmakāya*) occurred in the Sanskrit verse is supported by Vasubandhu, who commented on Dharmabody:

(Bodhiruci:) The commentary explains: Again some may doubt: “If the Buddha, the preacher, is non-existent, [out of the fact that] the Dharma that is preached is not different from the Dharmabody, then it is also non-existent. Who could believe the Dharmarealm that is so deep?

(Yijing:) If it is said that the Lord is the preacher, since the Dharma preached by him is also not different from the Dharmabody, then it is non-existent either. Who would believe so deep a Dharma?

Here the reason for non-duality is explained not only by using Dharmabody instead of Dharmarealm, but the reason given is also

<sup>23</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.793b5-7: 無法可說是名說法者。偈言：「不離於法界，說法無自相」故。此以何義？所說法離於真法界不可得自相見故。and Yijing’s see T1513.25.882b6: 由不離法界外有說法自性可得。

very different from the one above where “no self characteristics” or “intrinsic nature” is mentioned: The Dharmabody is identified with the Buddha, and there is no Dharma preached by the Buddha, because the Dharma-preacher, the Buddha, is said to be non-existent. In this way the non-duality of the Dharmabody and the Dharma is established through the relationship of the Dharma-preacher with the Dharma preached. It shows clearly that the Sanskrit version and the Chinese translations hint at different reasoning for non-duality with the employment of different term, either Dharmabody or Dharmarealm.

#### 4. The meanings of non-A

The following are translations and discussions of all the verses in the *Kārikā* that delineate the formula “non-A is A”. Each verse is divided into a, b, c and d parts. Tucci supplemented those missing words within square brackets [], about which it seems indubitably legitimate, but left most of the missing portions of the *Kārikā* unrestored. I make an attempt to restore them in italics by taking the Chinese and Tibetan translations into consideration. Since these restorations are approximate, they are not to represent the Sanskrit original, but just to ease my translation.

The following discussion will group all verses accordingly under the reasons given for non-A in order to provide a clear picture of all the arguments. I give also a synoptic comparison of the Sanskrit version, Bodhiruci’s and Yijing’s translations. The English next to the Sanskrit verse is my own translation. Since Yijing’s translation is well known for its inaccuracy, I will not discuss it anymore, but concentrate

on just important variants.

**(a) Non-A, the so-called A cannot be found**

**(1) Verse 15**

nairmāṇikena no buddho dharmo nāpi ca deśitaḥ/

deśitas tu dvayāgrāhyo ’vācya ’vākpathalakṣaṇāt//

[The Buddha] is not the Buddha, because [the so-called Buddha] is a manifestation. Nor is the Dharma taught.

What has been taught is ungraspable in two aspects, it is not taught, because it has no characteristics of the range of speech.

應化非真佛	亦非說法者
說法不二取	無說離言相 (Bodhiruci)
化體非真佛	亦非說法者
說法非二取	所說離言詮 (Yijing) <sup>24</sup>

Bodhiruci’s and Yijing’s translations deviate from each other in verse 15d. While Bodhiruci translated ’*vācya* as negative “no teaching” ( 無說 ), Yijing rendered “teaching” ( 所說 ). In the prose commentary, however, both translations has negation for ’*vācya*.<sup>25</sup> Yijing’s rendering without a negation is easily explained by the elision of the negation *a* after an *o*. He failed to take note of the inconsistency

<sup>24</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.784b19-20; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.876c22, 28.

<sup>25</sup> See T25.1511.784c9-11: 如彼聖人所證法，不可如是說，何況如是取。何以故？彼法遠離言語相，非可說事故。And T25.1513.877a8-9: 凡所有事言不能宣者。此即豈能取也。



in his translations.

The “two aspects” mentioned in the verse are *dharma* and *adharma*, which are both non-perceptible. The negation of *dharma*, that is, “not *dharma*”, means according to Bodhiruci’s translation the non-existence of self-characteristics of the phenomena. Yijing’s translation gives almost the same argument that all phenomena have no intrinsic nature. They also agree with each other in the argument for negating *adharma*, “not non-*dharma*”, in a way unique to the Yogācāra. Both translations argue from the Yogācāra perspective that the Selfless-nature exists.<sup>26</sup> It is clear that “non-*dharma*” here denotes the nature after the intrinsic nature is negated. But the Selfless-nature exists, therefore it cannot be said to be non-existence, thus “not non-*dharma*”. In the Yogācāra perspective “not *dharma*” removes only the falsely imagined *dharma*s, but not the perfected nature. The perfected nature is devoid of all imaginings, the highest truth, and exists.<sup>27</sup>

## (2) Verse 18

agrāhyānābhiḥpyatvaṃ svaphalānām anudgrahāt/

<sup>26</sup> See T25.1511.784c1-3: 亦不二說法、非法故。何以故？彼法非法、非非法。依何義說？依真如義說。非法者，一切法無體相故；非非法者，彼真如無我相實有故。And T25.1513.876c29-877a3l: 如是二種，謂法性、非法性。非耳能聽，非言能說，是故應知。非法、非非法，此據真如道理而說。彼非是法，謂是法無為其性故。復非非法，由彼無自性體是有故。

<sup>27</sup> In *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* (hereafter MSA: 11.41a) the perfected nature is said to exist in a way devoid of perverted imaginings, see S. Bagchi, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra of Asaṅga* (Darbhanga: The Mithila Insititute, 1999), 65, 14: *bhāvatā ca tadabhāvatvena bhāvāt*. Cp the discussion of M. D’Amato, “Three Natures, Three stages: An Interpretation of the Yogācāra trisvabhāva-theory,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 33. 2, 193.

dvayāvaraṇanirmokṣāt subhūtāv araṇādvayam//

One’s own spiritual fruits are ungraspable, inexpressible, because there is no grasping of one’s own fruits.

Since Subhūti got rid of the twofold impediments, he had the twofold freedom from obstructions.

不可取及說 自果不取故  
依彼善吉者 說離二種障 (Bodhiruci)  
不取自果故 非可取可說  
解脫二障故 說妙生無諍 (Yijing)<sup>28</sup>

Yijing rendered *araṇādvayam* in both the verse and the commentary as “without competition” (無諍) and “without the twofold competition” respectively,<sup>29</sup> of which the latter is incomprehensible. There is no equivalent of “without competition” (無諍) in Bodhiruci’s translation, except only a problematic statement: “Out of this reason the Buddha called it the twofold competition. Since one is without this twofold obstruction, one is called without competition, one who practices without competition.”<sup>30</sup> But it is given in the footnote that “the twofold obstruction” (二種障) stands in the other versions instead of “the twofold competition”. This shows clearly that “competition” is just an error in the Chinese editions. As it is clear from Bodhiruci’s rendering of verse 18d as “one, who has got

<sup>28</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.785b24-25; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.877b18, c1.

<sup>29</sup> See T25.1513.877c3-4: 此言二無諍性即是諍之非有。

<sup>30</sup> See T25.1511.785c11-12: 以是義故，說名二種諍。離彼二種障故，名為無諍無諍行。

rid of the twofold obstructions” ( 離兩種障 ), he understood Sanskrit *araṇā* as “without obstruction”. The twofold obstruction refers to the obstructions of affliction and concentration.<sup>31</sup> The difference in the Chinese translations are caused by the fact that *araṇā* has both these meanings. Since “the twofold without competition” does not make sense, Bodhiruci gave a better translation of the Sanskrit word.

This verse clarifies the statement in the sūtra: “In actual fact there is no *dharma* called ‘Stream-Enterer’, [because a Stream-Enterer] does not enter visible matter, sound, smell, taste, touch and mental objects, thus he is called Stream-Enterer.”<sup>32</sup> Though the saint is called a Stream-Enterer, he does not enter anything. The so-called “Stream-Enterer” is denied out of the fact that one cannot find an entity corresponding to “entering”.

### (3) Verse 43

paścād vyākaraṇān no ca caryā dīpaṃkare parā/  
bodhis taccaryayā tulyā na *satyā saṃskṛto bhavaḥ* //

Since the prophesying happened later, [my] practice at the time of Dīpaṃkara was not the highest.

Awakening is the same as the practice [leading to] it. It is not real, because [it] is conditioned.

以後時授記      然燈行非上

<sup>31</sup> See T25.1511.785c9-10: 二種障者，一者煩惱障，二者三昧障。

<sup>32</sup> See T25.236a.753c7-9: 實無有法名須陀洹，不入色聲香味觸法，是名須陀洹。

菩提彼行等      非實有為相 (Bodhiruci)  
授後時記故      然燈行非勝  
菩提彼行同      非實由因造 (Yijing)<sup>33</sup>

In the Chinese versions “conditioned” ( 有為 ) and “made of conditions” ( 因造 ) are translations corresponding to the Sanskrit *saṃskṛta*.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore *bixing* ( 彼行 ) in both Chinese translations is a rendering of the Sanskrit *taccaryayā* customarily in the order of the elements of the compound without explicating the relation between them. The “it” (Ch. *bi*, Sk. *tat*) in the compound refers to the foregoing “Awakening” (*bodhi*). The compound means “the practice having Awakening as its aim”.

This verse refutes the assertion that the Buddha attained Awakening and that the Bodhisattva practices, just as the statement in the *Vajracchedikā*: “Was there any dharma, which the Buddha attain in front of Buddha Dīpaṃkara? No.”<sup>35</sup> The reason is that if one speaks of “attainment” and “practice”, one is not speaking the truth, since there is not even a dharma that one can attain.

#### (4) Verse 30

nāmaskandhās ca tadvastu tatsaṃjñāpagamāḥ jine/

tadabhāvo hi buddhānāṃ tattvadarśanayogataḥ//

<sup>33</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.791a18-19; for Yijing’s see T1513.25.880c20-21 .

<sup>34</sup> Bodhiruci and Yijing rendered *saṃskṛta* in verse 21 again as “conditioned” ( 有為 ) and “made of conditions” ( 因造 ) respectively.

<sup>35</sup> See Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 47, 10-18.

Because imaginings like these—the name ‘five aggregates’ and the reality of the [five aggregates]—are removed on the part of the Victor.

For all Buddhas do not possess these [imaginings], because they acquired the vision of truth.

假名及陰事      如來離彼相  
 諸佛無彼二      以見實法故 (Bodhiruci)  
 彼事謂名聚      最勝除其想  
 諸世尊無此      由真見相應 (Yijing)<sup>36</sup>

According to the commentary this verse explains the statement in the sūtra: “That living beings (*sattva*) taught by the Buddha, it is not living beings.” The reason lies in that the so-called “living beings” has no real entity.<sup>37</sup> The latter fact is argued from the vision of the Buddha. If living beings has real entities, than the Buddha must have the view or imagination of living beings, because the Buddha is the one who has the vision of reality.<sup>38</sup> The same reasoning by referring to the insight of the Buddha is also used for “non-imagination” (非相), as in verse 44, where it is explained that all phenomena are the realization of the Buddha, because all phenomena have the nature free from imagination.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> See T1511.25.788c2-3; and T1513.25.879b22, c1-2.

<sup>37</sup> See T25.1511.788c5-6: 以無彼實體故。以是義故，眾生即非眾生；and T25.1513.879b26-27: 即彼眾生不是眾生。謂於五蘊名為眾生。由彼眾生自體無故。此我法無性。

<sup>38</sup> See T25.1511.788c11-12: 若彼二實有者。諸佛如來應有彼二相。何以故。諸佛如來實見故；and T25.1513.879c3-4: 由非彼二是實有性。而諸大師強除彼想。然諸如來與真見相應故。

<sup>39</sup> With regard to the imagination of non-imagination in the meditation on the Buddha see Yamamoto Masahiro 山本正博, “Mucho no Kongoukyou no

**(b) non-A, A is only consciousness.**

**(5) Verse 20**

jñānaniṣyandavijñaptimātratvāt kṣetranodgrahaḥ/

avigrahatvād agratvād avyūhaṃ vyūhatā matā//

There is no apprehension of the [pure] land, because it is merely representation of the outflow of [the Buddha’s] knowledge.

Since [the embellishment of the pure land] assumes no form [and] is the highest, [thus] non-embellishment is considered as embellishment.

智習唯識通	如是取淨土
非形第一體	非嚴莊嚴意 (Bodhiruci)
智流唯識性	國土非所執
無形故勝故	非嚴許嚴性 (Yijing) <sup>40</sup>

The Chinese translations rendered the Sanskrit compound *jñānaniṣyandavijñaptimātratvāt* in verse 20a differently. Bodhiruci translated the compound as “it is merely comprehensible by the consciousness of the outflow of knowledge,” while Yijing rendered it as “it is the nature of mere consciousness of the outflow of knowledge.”<sup>41</sup> The former means only the Buddha could know the pure land; while the latter means the so-called pure-land is a mere

shakuronge niokeru mitsumi shisou 無著の金剛經の釋論偈における三身思想,”  
*Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 印度學佛教學研究 9-1 (1961), 128-129.

<sup>40</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.786a13-14; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.877c16, 22.

<sup>41</sup> See Tucci, “The Trīṣatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 63; T1511.25.786a13 and T1514.25.885b17. Bodhiruci translated *niṣyanda* as 智通，in verse 23 he translated the same Sanskrit word as 智證。

representation. Bodhiruci and Yijing differed from each other not only in the translation of the verse, but also in the translation of Vasubandhu's prose commentary. Bodhiruci rendered the explanation of the commentary thus: "Only the Buddhas, the Tathāgatas know thoroughly with the consciousness of the outflow of true knowledge." But Yijing translated as follows: "It is manifested in mere-consciousness of the outflow of the pure knowledge of the Buddhas."<sup>42</sup> Bodhiruci understood the word *vijñapti* to mean comprehension, apparently Bodhiruci reads the word as more a verb, while Yijing, representation. The other apparent difference is that Bodhiruci did not translate the Sanskrit suffix "tva," while Yijing did. Tucci followed obviously Yijing's translation and stands close to Yijing: "a mere denomination which is the mental outflow of the Buddha".<sup>43</sup>

Nevertheless Bodhiruci's and Yijing's translations give the same argument why embellishment of the pure land is not an embellishment. The reason is that it is just a manifestation of consciousness. On the other hand it is called "embellishment", because it is the highest, the most excellent one, since it assumes no forms.

<sup>42</sup> Bodhiruci's translation: 唯諸佛如來真實智慧習識通達。Yijing's translation: 除從諸佛淨智所流唯識所現。Though Ozawa Kentama 小沢憲珠 cited Bodhiruci's translation, he understood "mere" *mātra* a modification of "consciousness" *vijñapti*, and translated the verse as "the pure land is the nature of mere consciousness that is the outflow of knowledge" (國土は智慧等流の唯識性), the same as Yijing's. See Ozawa Kentama, "Shougon Kokudo Shisou no Ichi Men: Kongouhannyakyou no Chuushaku Sho otooshite 莊嚴国土思想の一面—金剛般若經の註釈書を通して," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 印度學佛教學研究 22-2 (1974), 923。

<sup>43</sup> See Tucci, "The Trisatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga," 102-103.



**(c) Non-A, A is not conducive to spiritual fruits.**

**(6) Verse 16**

grahaṇadeśaṇā cāsya nāpārthā puṇyasaṃgrahāt/

puṇyaṃ bodhyanupastambhād upastambhād dvayasya ca//

Upholding and preaching the [Dharma] are not meaningless, because they accumulate merits.

Merits are ascribed to the two, because [other merits] do not support Awakening, and because these two support it.

受持法及說	不空於福德
福不趣菩提	二能趣菩提 (Bodhiruci)
自受為他說	非無益集福
福不持菩提	彼二能持故 (Yijing) <sup>44</sup>

The Sanskrit *upastambha* occurs not only in the verse above, but also in Vasubandhu’s commentary. Bodhiruci rendered it in both places as “forth going” (趣進), obviously misread into something like *upasthāna*. But Yijing translated it as “upholding” (持荷), the correct rendering of *upastambha*. Verse 16cd explains “heap of merits” (*puṇyaskandha*) in the *Vajracchedikā* with a pun: The Sanskrit word *skandha* carries the meanings of “upholding” and “heap”, which are both denied in the verse. Yijing was aware of this pun and translated: “The word *skandha* has two meanings: One means “heap”, another means “support”. But Bodhiruci did not realize the pun and translated:

<sup>44</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.784c29-a1; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.877a16, 19.

“There are two meanings of skandha: One means ‘heap’, the other means ‘forth going’.”<sup>45</sup>

This verse explains the statement of the *Vajracchedikā*: “That ‘heap of merit’ taught by the Buddha, it is not ‘heap of merit’, thus it is called ‘heap of merit, heap of merit’.” It is clear from verse 16c that “heap of merit” is negated, because merit cannot support the Awakening of the Buddha, or it is not its chief cause. But upholding and preaching Dharma lead to Awakening, therefore they are called “heaps of merit”.

**(d) Non-A, A is not conditioned.**

**(7) Verse 21**

Sumeror iva rājatve saṃbhoge nāsti codgrahaḥ/

Sāsravatvena cābhāvāt saṃskṛtatvena cāsyā hi//

Just like the mountain Sumeru, when he enjoys being the king, there is no apprehension [of kingship],

For [the Buddha] neither exists in a contaminated form nor is he conditioned.

如山王無取      受報亦復然

遠離於諸漏      及有為法故 (Bodhiruci)

譬如妙高山      於受用無取

<sup>45</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.785a7-8: 聚義有二種：一者積聚義，二者進趣義；and Yijing’s see T1513.25.877a24-25: 由其聚聲有二種義：一是聚積義，二是肩荷義。

非有漏性故 亦非是因造 (Yijing)<sup>46</sup>

This verse explains the statement in the *Vajracchedikā*: “The non-body taught by the Buddha, it is called magnificent body”.<sup>47</sup> According to Bodhiruci’s and Yijing’s translations the magnificent body of the Buddha is negated, because the Enjoyment-body of the Buddha is pure and unconditioned. Both translations define *asaṃskṛta* as “arising not depending on conditions”.<sup>48</sup>

**(e) Non-A, it is emptiness.**

**(8) Verse 44**

*tasyālakṣaṇalakṣaṇāt na mṛṣā paridīpitā/*

*dharmās tato buddhadharmāḥ sarve ’bhāvasvalakṣaṇāḥ//*

It (= Awakening) is expounded as not false, because it has no characteristic as its characteristic,

Therefore the phenomena are Buddhadharma, all have non-existence as their characteristic.

彼即非相相 以不虛妄說

是法諸佛法 一切自體相 (Bodhiruci)

<sup>46</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.786b5-6; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.878a3, 11.

<sup>47</sup> See Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 49, 6-8.

<sup>48</sup> See T1511.786b12: 佛說非身是名大身。彼身非身是名大身故。何故如是說。偈言遠離於諸漏及有為法故。彼受樂報佛體離於諸漏。若如是即無有物。若如是即名有物。以唯有清淨身故。以遠離有為法故。以是義故。實有我體以不依他緣住（住應是生之誤）故。

And T1513.878a12: 然受用身非有漏性故。由此非有說為有身。皎然純淨自體有故。亦非是因造。由此有身非是仗他因緣生故。

無彼相為相      故顯非是妄  
由法是佛法      皆非有為相 (Yijing)<sup>49</sup>

Verse 44 comments on the following passage in the sūtra:

Subhūti, in fact there is no Dharma, through which the Buddha attained the supreme and perfect Awakening. Subhūti, the supreme and perfect Awakening attained by the Buddha is neither true nor false. This is the reason the Tathāgata says, “All phenomena are Buddhadharma.”<sup>50</sup>

This verse explains why the Awakening attained by the Buddha is neither true nor false. “Buddhadharma” means the Dharma realized by the Buddha. Here all phenomena are identified with Buddhadharma, because they have the same nature as the content of realization of the Buddha, that is, they all have non-existence as their characteristic. The Awakening of the Buddha could not be true, because it is non-existence, while it is not false either, because non-existence is its nature. In short the reason for the negation of the Awakening here is emptiness.

### (e.i) Neither identical nor separated

#### (9) Verse 46

guṇamahātmyataś cāpi mahākāyaḥ sa eva hi/

abhāvakāyabhāvāc ca akāyo 'sau nirucyate//

<sup>49</sup> For Bodhiruci's translation see T1511.25.791b10-11; and Yijing's see T1513.25.881a8-9.

<sup>50</sup> See Harrison, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 152, 22; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 48, 14-15: *sarvadharmā Buddhadharmā iti*.

Again,<sup>51</sup> for it is the magnificent body because it possesses exalted state of good qualities.

Furthermore, it is said to be non-body, because it exists as non-existence of body.

功德及大體      故即說大身  
非身即是身      是故說非身 (Bodhiruci)  
及德體大故      亦名為大身  
非有身是有      說彼作非身 (Yijing)<sup>52</sup>

Bodhiruci rendered qualities ( 功德 ) and greatness ( 大體 ) as a dvandva, but in the prose commentary they are analysed as a bahuvrīhi meaning “possessing great qualities”.<sup>53</sup> The Sanskrit *mahātmya* consists of meanings such as “having a noble nature” and “magnanimous”, therefore the Chinese translation “greatness” carries not only the meaning “large”, but also “noble”.

This verse explains the statement in the sūtra: “That magnificent body taught by the Tathāgata, it is not the magnificent body, thus it is called by the Tathāgata the magnificent body.”<sup>54</sup> It is not to deny that

<sup>51</sup> “Again” is the translation of Sanskrit *cāpi*. The foregoing verse explains the first reason for the “magnificent body”, and this verse gives the second reason.

<sup>52</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.791b10-11; and Yijing’s see T1513.25.881a22-23.

<sup>53</sup> See T25.1511.791c1-3: 此復云何有二種義，一者遍一切處，二者功德大，是故名大身。偈言：功德及大體故。T25.1513.881a24-26: 言遍滿者是遍行義。遍諸處故名為具身，及德體大故，亦名為大身。得體大 stands in Taishō instead of 德體大，it is corrected according to Tucci, “The Triśatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 76.

<sup>54</sup> See Gómez, Gilgit Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā*, 8a6; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 49, 5-8: *yo ’sau bhagavaṃs tathāgatena puruṣo bhāṣita*

Yijing's translation of the verse "not having a body" (非有身) is a better rendering of the Sanskrit verse *abhāvakāya* than Bodhiruci's translation "not a body" (非身). However, the meaning of this negation is unclear unless we take Vasubandhu's interpretation into consideration. The only extant versions of Vasubandhu's commentary are translated by both Bodhiruci and Yijing. They agree for the first part why "the magnificent body" is taught by the Buddha. The reason is that the magnificent body is endowed with great qualities. The verse, "it is non-existence of the body (*abhāvakāyabhāva*)," corresponds to the second part of the statement: "it is not the magnificent body". According to Bodhiruci's translation, Vasubandhu explained the verse "non-existence of the body" in the sense that the Buddha body has no appearances, and according to Yijing's translation the Buddha body is non-body (非身), because it has non-existence as body.<sup>55</sup> The former, unlike the latter, does not deny the body completely. Without further investigation, it is premature to interpret the verse according to Yijing's translation or to identify "the non-existence of the body" with the unconditioned (無為) like Tucci, because it is unclear what kind of body is denied in the verse and in Vasubandhu's commentary. If the body denied here is, in accord with Yogācāra's interpretation, the body that appears to the mind tinted with error-producing names and concepts, then, it is not very different from the denial of appearances in Bodhiruci's translation.

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*upetakāyo mahākāya iti akāyaḥ sa bhagavaṃs tathāgatena bhāṣitaḥ. tenocyata upetakāyo mahākāya iti.*

<sup>55</sup> See T1511.791c6: 非身者，無有諸相；T25.1513.881a29: 以非有為身故，名彼為非身。

With regard to the last part of the affirmation (thus it is called by the Tathāgata the magnificent body) according to Bodhiruci’s translation, it is called the magnificent body, because Suchness (*tathatā*), which is the real body of the Buddha, is also without appearances.<sup>56</sup> But according to Yijing’s translation Suchness, which is the real body of the Buddha, has also no body.<sup>57</sup> Therefore the formula here could be interpreted as follows: The “magnificent body” is a name taught by the Tathāgata; the Buddha body does not have appearances or is not a body just as it appears to ordinary people, whose minds are tinted with error-producing name “magnificent body”, but the “magnificent body” should be understood apart from the appearances or body that appears to ordinary people. In this way the denial and affirmation of the magnificent body is performed in the Mahāyāna sense of emptiness, that is, the Buddha body is neither identical with the “magnificent body” in concept nor separated from the “magnificent body” referred to by the Tathāgata.

#### (10) Verse 52-53

[na dharmakāyaṇiṣpattir anu]vyañjanam ucyate/

na ca lakṣaṇasampattis tadakāyatvato matā//

dharmakāyāvinirbhāgān na dvayaṃ na tathāgataḥ/

sampattir ucyate bhūyo dvayaṃ nāsty astitā tataḥ//

The accomplishment of the Dharmabody is not taught as the minor

<sup>56</sup> See T25.1511.791c7: 大者，有真如體，如是即名妙大身。

<sup>57</sup> See T25.1513.881a29-b1: 即真如性故，由其無身故，是故名此為具身大身。



signs [of the Buddha].

It is also not considered as the accomplishment of the major marks, because the [Dharmabody] is not a body.

Since they are not separated from the Dharmabody, it is not that these two [major marks and minor signs] are not the Tathāgata.

Therefore the accomplishment [of the Dharmabody] is again taught: The twofold [marks and signs] does not exist, [yet they] exist [in the accomplishment of the Dharmabody].

法身畢竟體	非彼相好身
以非相成就	非彼法身故
不離於法身	彼二非不佛
故重說成就	亦無二及有 (Bodhiruci)
謂於真法身	無隨好圓滿
亦非是具相	非身性應知
於法身無別	非如來無二
重言其具相	由二體皆無 (Yijing) <sup>58</sup>

Yijing's translation "possession" (具) in verse 52c and 53c is equivalent to Sanskrit *sampatti*, which carries this meaning besides "accomplishment". Bodhiruci, however, rendered it as "accomplishment" (成就). According to the context both renderings are adequate. There is no rendering of "[yet they] exists" (*astitā*) in verse 53d of Yijing's translation. Here the denial and affirmation of the

<sup>58</sup> For Bodhiruci's translation see T1511.25.793a4-7; and Yijing's see T1513.25.882a13-16.

32 major marks and the 80 minor signs of the Dharmabody correspond to the statement in the sūtra: “That accomplishment of all marks taught by the Tathāgata, it is not the accomplishment of all marks, thus it is called by the Tathāgata the accomplishment of all marks.”<sup>59</sup> It is clear that the affirmation is absent in Yijing’s translation.

The verse explains that the Dharmabody does not possess all the marks, because the Dharmabody has no body. But the Dharmabody can be “taught as possessing all marks,” because the 32 major marks and the 80 minor signs are not separated from the Dharmabody. In this way the claim that the Dharmabody and the marks are neither identical nor separated bases upon the teaching of emptiness in the Mahāyāna sense.

#### (11) Verse 54

buddhasyeva deśanāyā abhāvād dvaya[ka]lpitā/  
dharmakāyāvinirbhāgād deśanāpy asvalakṣaṇā//

Since Dharma-preaching is non-existent like the Buddha, it is imagined as two kinds.

Since Dharma-preaching and the Dharmabody are not separated, Dharma-preaching too is without characteristics.

如佛法亦然      所說二差別  
不離於法界      說法無自相 (Bodhiruci)

<sup>59</sup> See Gómez, Gilgit Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā*, 9b2-3; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 53, 1-4: *yaiṣā bhagavaṃ lakṣaṇa-sampat tathāgatena bhāṣitā alakṣaṇa-sampad eṣā tathāgatena bhāṣitā. tenocyate lakṣaṇa-sampad iti.*

如來<sup>60</sup> 說亦無      說二是所執  
由不離法界      說亦無自性 (Yijing)<sup>61</sup>

It is noteworthy that “Dharmabody” (*dharmakāya*) occurs in the Sanskrit version instead of the rendering of “Dharmarealm” (法界) in the Chinese and Tibetan translations. In the prose commentary Vasubandhu mentioned both Dharmarealm and Dharmabody.<sup>62</sup> Since the latter serves in the context as an introduction for the next coming verse, “Dharmarealm” seems to be original. But viewing from the argument of the commentary, “Dharmabody” is more appropriate in the context, because the emptiness of Dharma-preaching is established on the basis of the emptiness of the Buddha, with which Dharmabody can be more easily identified than Dharmarealm. According to the commentary since Dharma is preached by the Buddha, it has no characteristics, because the Buddha has none, therefore there is no Dharma being preached. On the other hand, since the Dharma preached by the Buddha is not separated from the Dharmabody, and since the Dharmabody could not be totally non-existent, the Dharma is not totally non-existent either. Argument as such of the commentary shows “Dharmabody” a more appropriate term than “Dharmarealm”.

According to Vasubandhu’s commentary “it (= Dharma-

<sup>60</sup> Tucci (“The Triṣatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 80) 將「如來」改為「如佛」。

<sup>61</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.793b1-2; for Yijing’s see T1513.25.882b1.5.

<sup>62</sup> See T25.1511.793b6-7: 所說法離於真法界不可得自相見故。…(793b13) 論曰：復有疑，若言諸佛說者是無所說，法不離於法身，亦是其無有。And also T25.1513.882b6: 由不離法界外有說法自性可得。…(882b6-8) 若言無有世尊是能說者。所說之法亦復不離法身，故成非有。

preaching) is imagined as two kinds” refers to the discrimination of the Buddha’s preaching in two aspects: the language used and the meaning of the sermon. This verse explains the statement in the sūtra: “It is called ‘dharma-preaching, dharma-preaching,’ there is, however, no Dharma, which the so-called ‘dharma-preaching’ is perceivable.”<sup>63</sup> The meaning of which could, according to Vasubandhu, be understood as follows: “There is no Dharma, which the so-called ‘dharma-preaching’ is perceivable,” because preaching has no self-characteristics, “it is called ‘Dharma-preaching,’” because Dharma-preaching is not separated from Dharmarealm/Dharmabody, which is not totally non-existent. In this way the elaboration that the conventional truth and the highest truth are neither identical nor separated is again emptiness in the Mahāyāna sense.

### (e.ii) Neither identical nor difference

#### (12) Verse 70

asaṃcayatvā<sup>64</sup> piṇḍatvam anekatvanidarśanam/

saṃhatasthānatā tasmin nānyatve ca nidarśanam//

The mass [of atoms] shows muchness, because it is not an accumulation.

The state of accumulation [of atoms] is the appearance when there is

<sup>63</sup> See Gómez, Gilgit Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā*, 9b3-5; j Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 53, 12-13: *dharmadeśanā dharmadeśaneti subhūte, nāsti sa kaścid dharmo yo dharmadeśanā nāmopalabhyate.*

<sup>64</sup> This could not be the gerund *asaṃcayayitvā*, because such a gerund form is not documented. More probably is an ablative as it stands in another Ms., see Tucci, “The Trīṣatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 88, n. 1.

no difference.

非聚集故集      非唯是一喻  
 聚集處非彼      非是差別喻 (Bodhiruci)  
 非聚非集性      顯是非一性  
 於彼總集性      明其非異性 (Yijing)<sup>65</sup>

This verse employs the neither identical nor different relationship between the accumulation and the atoms to explain the statement in the sūtra: “That ‘accumulation’ taught by the Buddha, it is not accumulation, thus it is called accumulation.”<sup>66</sup> Here “accumulation” means the accumulation of atoms. The atoms do not accumulate, because the atoms in an accumulation could not exist at only one place, just as in Vasubandhu’s commentary:

What is the meaning of that? Just as when an atom is grinded into powder, these particles could not exist at only one place, because [they] are not accumulated. (Bodhiruci)  
 Take for example those grinded into dust: since there are a lot of dust particles, they could not occur at only one place, because this accumulation is not a single thing. (Yijing)<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.796a24-25; for Yijing’s see T1513.25.883c20-21.

<sup>66</sup> See Gómez, Gilgit Manuscript of *Vajracchedikā*, 11b2-5; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 59, 17-60, 2: *yo ’sau bhagavan paramāṇu-saṃcayas tathāgatena bhāṣitaḥ, asaṃcayaḥ sa tathāgatena bhāṣitaḥ. tenocyate paramāṇusaṃcaya iti*. Cp. also Gómez, 12a1; Conze 60,7-8: *yaś caiva piṇḍa-grāhas tathāgatena bhāṣitaḥ, agrāhaḥ sa tathāgatena bhāṣitaḥ. tenocyate piṇḍagrāha iti*.

<sup>67</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.796a26-27; for Yijing’s see T1513.25.883c22-23.

Despite small differences the arguments in both translations are similar. Here the concept “accumulation” is refuted by making use of the contradiction that exists in all conceptual imagination: The so-called “accumulation” could not be a single thing, because a single thing could not accumulate. Since it is not a single thing, it could not situate at only one place, but rather spreads allover the place. Since it spreads allover the place, it could not be an accumulation. On the other hand the affirmation of “accumulation” is argued as follows:

Nor [the atoms] are different and occur in different places, because the difference of accumulated atoms is imperceptible. (Bodhiruci)

Nor there is difference, because each [of the particles] is not separated from each other, since they are an accumulation. (Yijing)<sup>68</sup>

One cannot deny “accumulation” altogether, because one cannot find differences between the atoms in an accumulation on account of the definition of “accumulation” as “the coming together of similar atoms”.

In other words, the denial of “accumulation” bases on the argument of nonidentity of the atoms, while the affirmation is argued from their non-difference.

**(f) Non-A, A is unknown.**

**(13) Verse 24**

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<sup>68</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.796a27-28; for Yijing’s see T1513.25.883c23-24.

tatphalaśreṣṭhaduḥkhatvād durlabhārthottamārthataḥ/

jñeyāpāramitatvāc ca parāsādhāraṇatvataḥ//

Since this fruit [of giving oneself for the sake of Dharma] is better than that of [giving wealth] in view of difficulty [in practice];

Since the truth of [the Perfection of insight] hard to obtain is the highest truth;

Since what is to be known has no end; and [the Buddha-dharma] is not common to non-Buddhist.

苦身勝於彼	希有及上義
彼智岸難量	亦不同餘法 (Bodhiruci)
彼果勝苦故	難逢勝事故
境岸非知故	於餘不共故 (Yijing) <sup>69</sup>

The Chinese translations are difficult, because this verse consists of many compounds and Yijing rendered them according to the order of words in the compound without making any sense. In the prose commentary too Bodhiruci and Yijing's translations deviate from each other. According to Bodhiruci's translation verse 24a compares the merit of giving one's own body for the sake of Dharma and that of wealth-giving. The former is better than the latter, because abandoning one's own body is extremely difficult to practice, not to say abandoning for the sake of Dharma. But according to Yijing's translation the gift of Dharma is better than the gift of wealth, because

<sup>69</sup> For Bodhiruci's translation see T1511.25.787b24-25; for Yijing's see T1513.25.878c5-6.



the latter results in the enjoyment of the body, which is suffering. In contrast, the gift of Dharma is conducive to abandonment of many lives of cyclic existence.<sup>70</sup> Tucci consulted obviously Yijing’s translation and neglected Bodhiruci’s, because he gives the same explanation in Yijing’s translation.

This verse explains the statement in the sūtra: “That highest Perfection (*pāramitā*) taught by the Buddha, it is not the highest Perfection, thus it is called the highest Perfection.”<sup>71</sup> According to this verse the so-called “highest Perfection” is denied, because no one could know the Perfection of insight thoroughly. On the other hand the so-called “highest Perfection” is affirmed out of three reasons: First, the Perfection consists in the highest truth, and this truth is not found in other philosophical systems, but only in Buddhism; secondly, The Perfection is profound, its follower could give rise to twofold knowledge of non-self.<sup>72</sup> The third reason, which is given in verse 25, claims that all Buddhas expound the Perfection.<sup>73</sup> In other place the

<sup>70</sup> See T1511.25.787b28-c2 : 此二偈說何義。捐捨身命重於捨資生珍寶等。彼如是捨無量身命果報福德，此福德勝彼福。何以故。彼捨身命苦身心故，何況為法捨故。念彼身苦。T1513.25.878c9-11 : 經云如此述何義。答施寶之福獲得自身所受用果。彼身（施？）是勝。以能捨彼無邊之身。此福勝前，由彼自身是苦性。何況為彼而行其施。Tucci’s understanding is close to Yijing’s translation, see Tucci, “The Trisatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 105: “from the practice of those lower merits one gets as a fruit higher pains (in so far as the practice of liberality, as a result, causes enjoyment to be experienced by one’s own body in a future life, and that body is essentially sorrow, while the merit derived from the gift of the Law makes us abandon numberless bodies).”

<sup>71</sup> See Harrison, *Vajracchedikā Prañājpāramitā*, 126,6; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prañājpāramitā*, 40, 20-41, 2: *paramapāramiteyaṃ subhūte tathāgatena bhāṣitā yaduta apāramitā. yāṃ ca subhūte tathāgataḥ parama-pāramitāṃ bhāṣate.*

<sup>72</sup> See T25.1511.787c11-13, T25.1513.878c19-21.

<sup>73</sup> See T1511.25.787b20-21, T25.1513.879a7-9.

Perfection is said to be the best among all merits.<sup>74</sup>

**(14) Verse 26**

sahiṣṇutā ca caryāyāṃ duṣkarāyāṃ śubhā yataḥ/

tadguṇāparimāṇatvād agrārthena nirucyate//

Because endurance is the most virtuous among all difficult practices,

Because its qualities are immeasurable, it is described as the highest truth.

能忍於苦行      以苦行有善  
 彼福不可量      如是最勝義 (Bodhiruci)  
 彼行堪忍時      雖苦行善故  
 彼德難量故      由斯名勝事 (Yijing)<sup>75</sup>

Bodhiruci translated verse 26a by constructing *caryāyāṃ duṣkarāyāṃ* twice with *sahiṣṇutā* and *śubhā* and came out with “endurance in difficult practices” (*sahiṣṇutā caryāyāṃ duṣkarāyāṃ* 能忍於苦行) and “because difficult practices possess virtue” (*caryāyāṃ duṣkarāyāṃ śubhā yataḥ* 以苦行有善) respectively. Yijing, however, seemed not to have followed the Sanskrit grammar and grouped verse 26a differently by rendering: “When he practices endurance” (*sahiṣṇutā ca caryāyāṃ* 彼行堪忍時) and “notwithstanding those difficult practices, because it is virtue” (*duṣkarāyāṃ śubhā yataḥ* 雖苦行善故). But all these interpretations are not found in Vasubandhu’s

<sup>74</sup> See T25.1511.788b2-5, T25.1513.879a19-23.

<sup>75</sup> For Bodhiruci’s translation see T1511.25.788a26-27; for Yijing’s see T1513.25.879a14-15.

prose commentary.

According to Vasubandhu’s commentary, the qualities of the Perfection of endurance is said to be immeasurable, because the Perfection (*pāramitā*) is not Perfection. The reason for “not Perfection” derives from the alleged semantic meaning of the Sanskrit word *pāramitā*, “the other shore”. “Not Perfection” because the other shore is unfathomable.<sup>76</sup>

**(g) Non-A, no perverted A.**

**(15) Verse 23 (no afflictions)**

Dvayasya pātrīkaraṇān niṣyandatvamahatvataḥ/  
asaṃkleśasya hetutvād dhīnābhibhavanād api//

Because [the gift of Dharma] makes both [the place of preaching and the preacher] respectable, and because [the fruit of] its outflow is great, Because it is the cause of no afflictions, and because it surpasses all lower gifts [of wealth].

尊重於二處	因習證大體
彼因習煩惱	此降伏染福 (Bodhiruci)
兩成尊重故	由等流殊勝

<sup>76</sup> See T25.1511.788b2-5: 彼岸有二種義。一者波羅蜜清淨善根體。二者彼岸功德不可量。如經即非波羅蜜故。非波羅蜜者。無人知彼功德岸故。言非波羅蜜。

T25.1513.879a19-23: 有其二因。一是善性故。由諸波羅蜜多皆以善為體性故。二是彼德難量故。如經云此即是其非波羅蜜多。由彼德岸曾無知者。為此名為不知其岸。

煩惱因性故 由劣亦勝故 (Yijing)<sup>77</sup>

This verse explains why Dharma-giving is more superior than wealth-giving. Both Chinese translations differ in the rendering of verse 23d. Bodhiruci and Yijing rendered *abhibhavana* in *hīnābhibhavana* as “subduing” (降伏) and “surpassing” (勝) respectively. The same is true in their rendering of the prose commentary. According to Bodhiruci’s translation, the commentary explains the superiority of Dharma-giving as follows: “Its merits subdue that of the jewelry”, while according to Yijing’s translation, the explanation is accordingly different: “It surpasses also the merits of wealth-giving.”<sup>78</sup> The reason for these deviations lies in that *abhibhavana* carries both meanings of “subduing” and “surpassing”.

Verse 23c explains two things at the same time: Why the pure land of the Buddha is neither a land (非世界) nor made of atoms (非微塵). The reason for being not a land lies in that the pure land of the Buddha does not have afflictions as its cause; and not made of atoms in that it is not made of afflictions.<sup>79</sup>

### (16) Verse 25

gāḍhagaṃbhīrabhāvāc ca parasūtraviśiṣṭataḥ/

mahāsuddhānvayatvāc ca puṇyāt puṇyaṃ viśiṣyate//

Because [this sūtra] is penetrating and profound, because it is more

<sup>77</sup> See T1511.25.787a5-6 and T1513.25.878b8-9.

<sup>78</sup> See T1511.25.787a27-28 and T1513.25.878c1.

<sup>79</sup> See T1511.25.787a20 and T1513.25.878b21-22.

excellent than the other sūtras,

Because it is linked to the great purity, because [its] merit is more superior than [the other] merit.

堅實解深義 勝餘修多羅  
大因及清淨 福中勝福德 (Bodhiruci)  
是甚深性故 勝餘略詮故  
胄族高勝故 望福福殊勝 (Yijing)<sup>80</sup>

Bodhiruci translated *anvaya* as “cause” ( 因 ), while Yijing rendered it as “descendants of nobles” ( 胄族 ). The latter rendered *anvaya* as “descendants” and treats *śuddha* as a modifier of *anvaya*. But such a rendering makes verse 25c unintelligible. In contrast, Bodhiruci resorted to another meaning of *anvaya*, “the logical cause”, which is appropriate in this context.

This verse provides an explanation for the expression “non-imagination” in the sūtra: “any imagination of a living being is non-imagination”.<sup>81</sup> The reason lies in that there are no perverted views in the perception of the Awakened.<sup>82</sup>

### (17) Verse 57

upāyānuttaratvāc ca sāsraṇatvād adharmataḥ/

<sup>80</sup> See T1511.25.787b26-27 and T1513.25.878c7-8.

<sup>81</sup> See Harrison, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 127, 11: *yaiva ca satvasaṃjñā, sa evāsaṃjñā*; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 42, 7-8: *yā caiṣā subhūte sattvasaṃjñā saiva asaṃjñā*.

<sup>82</sup> See T25.1511.787c18-19: 我等相即非相者。示能取境界不倒相故。此二明我空法空無我智故；and T25.1513.878c24-26: 於我等想即是非想者。明於能取無有顛倒。此二如其次第明我法二無性智。

*śubhā na dharmās te tasmāt sā śubha dharma ucyate //*

Because [the other wholesome dharmas] are not *dharmas*, since they are contaminated and since [the Awakening of the Buddha] is the supreme means.

The [other wholesome *dharmas*] are not pure *dharmas*, therefore the [Awakening of the Buddha] is called good *dharma*.

有無上方便	及離於漏法
是故非淨法	即是清淨法 (Bodhiruci)
及方便無上	由漏性非法
是故非善法	由此名為善 (Yijing) <sup>83</sup>

Yijing's translation of verse 57b "[the other wholesome *dharmas*] are non-*dharmas*, since they are contaminated ( 由漏性非法 )" stands close to the Sanskrit version *sāsravatvād adharmataḥ*. But Bodhiruci's translation deviates from them: "[the Awakening of the Buddha] is devoid of contaminated *dharmas* ( 離於漏法 )." Vasubandhu explained "non-*dharmas*" and "good *dharma*" in the prose commentary. His argument according to Bodhiruci's translation runs as follows:

What is the meaning? Since [the Awakening of the Buddha] is not endowed with contaminated *dharmas*, it is called 'non-good-*dharma*' on account of its freedom from contaminated *dharmas*. [On the other hand it is said,] "Thus it is called good *dharmas*", because it is invariably good.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> See T1511.25.793c14-15 and T1513.25.882c25, 6-7.

<sup>84</sup> See T1511.25.794a3-5: 此以何義？彼法無有漏法故，名「非善法」，以無有漏法故。「是故名為善法」，以決定無漏善法故。

The Awakening of the Buddha is “non (-good-) *dharma*s”, because it is not contaminated. In other words, worldly good *dharma*s are contaminated. On the other hand, it is called “good *dharma*s”, because the Awakening of the Buddha is invariably good. However, Yijing’s translation gives a different argument for “non-*dharma*s”:

All Awakenings other [than the Awakening of the Buddha] are imperfect in terms of good *dharma*s, that is, there are better means than these [Awakenings], this is why the Tathāgata taught them as “non-*dharma*s”... From the viewpoint of contamination, the [Awakening of the Buddha] is not endowed with the characteristics of contamination. Since it is not endowed with that, it is thus taught as “good *dharma*”. The reason is that non-contamination supports invariably goodness.<sup>85</sup>

According to the passage above, the other Awakenings are non-*dharma*s, because they are not perfect and there are *dharma*s higher than them. But the reasoning for “good *dharma*s” is the same as Bodhiruci’s translation, that is, the Awakening of the Buddha is not contaminated, and thus must be good.

In short good *dharma* is affirmed from the non-contamination of the supreme Awakening of the Buddha in Bodhiruci’s and Yijing’s translations, but the negation of good *dharma*s is argued differently in both translations. Bodhiruci was consistent in referring “non-*dharma*”

<sup>85</sup> See T25.1513.886c3-4, 8-9: 餘菩提於諸善法不圓滿故，即此方便實為有上，此乃如來說為非法。…由有漏性，彼不是持有漏之相。不能持故，由此說為善法。由無漏性決定能持是善性故。

to the Awakening of the Buddha and therefore not the ordinary good *dharma*s; while Yijing interpreted it as Awakenings other than the Buddha's, which are contaminated. In this way the reasons for non-*dharma*s is different in both translations.

This verse explains the statement in the *sūtra*: “That ‘good *dharma*, good *dharma*’ taught by the Buddha, it is not good *dharma*, thus it is called ‘good *dharma*’.”<sup>86</sup> The denial of good *dharma* argues on the basis that good *dharma*s are contaminated or that the Awakening of the Buddha is not like the worldly contaminated good *dharma*s.

**(h) Non-A, not exactly A**

**(18) Verse 55**

deśyadaiśikagāmbhīryaśraddhā na ca na santi hi/

na sattvā nāpi cāsattvās te 'nāryāryatvayuktatvāt//

But it is not that there are no people who have faith in the deepness of what is taught and in the preacher.

They are neither living beings, because they are not endowed with holy qualities; nor are they not living beings, because they are endowed with holy qualities.

所說說者深      非無能信者

非眾生眾生      非聖非不聖 (Bodhiruci)

<sup>86</sup> See Gómez, Gilgit Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā*, 10a3; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 54, 15-17: *kuśalā dharmāḥ kuśalā dharmā iti subhūte adharmāś caiva te tathāgatena bhāṣitāḥ. tenocyate kuśalā dharmā iti.*



能說所說雖甚深 然亦非無敬信者  
由非眾生非非生 非聖聖性相應故 (Yijing)<sup>87</sup>

This verse is difficult. Tucci’s translation is unclear.<sup>88</sup> Vasubandhu’s explanation can be helpful here. According to Bodhiruci’s translation, Vasubandhu explained it as follows:

What does it mean? If there is a person who believes in this sūtra, he is than not a living being. The expression “not a living being” means not bereft of holy qualities. “One is not bereft of holy qualities”, because one possesses not the body of an ordinary person. The expression “one is not non living being”, because one possesses holy qualities. This person is not an ordinary living being, since he is not a living being bereft of holy qualities. Just as it is said in the sūtra: “The so-called ‘living being, living being’, it is taught by the Buddha as not a living being, thus it is called a ‘living being’.” It is taught by the Buddha as not a living being” means not an ordinary living being. “Thus it is called ‘living being, living being’”, because he is a living being, who is a saint, therefore he is called “non living being”.<sup>89</sup>

According to Bodhiruci’s translation “living being” is one bereft of

<sup>87</sup> See T1511.25.793b15-16 and T1513.25.882b10-13.

<sup>88</sup> See Tucci, “The Trīṣatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ by Asaṅga,” 118.

<sup>89</sup> See T1511.25.793b18-25: 此以何義？若有信此經，彼人非眾生。「非眾生」者，非無聖體；非無聖體者，非凡夫體故。「非不眾生」者，以有聖體故，彼人非凡夫眾生，非不是聖體眾生。如經：「何以故？須菩提眾生、眾生者，如來說非眾生，是名眾生故。」「如來說非眾生」者，非凡夫眾生。「是故說眾生、眾生」，以聖人眾生，是故說「非眾生」。

holy qualities, and “non living being” is a saint, and “not non living being” is an ordinary person with holy qualities. The affirmation of a living being and its negation pertain to the same person, who is an ordinary living being endowed with holy qualities. Yijing’s translation reads as follows:

Those who would give rise to faith, they are “not living beings”, because the other living beings do not possess holy qualities, instead they possess the nature of an ordinary person. “Nor are they not living beings”, because they are [only] endowed with holy qualities. In other words, from the point of view of his being an ordinary person he is not [ordinary] living being; from the point of view of his holy qualities, he is not [yet a] non living being. The sūtra says: “What is the reason? The so-called ‘living being, living being’, it is taught by the Buddha as not a living being,” this saying bases on [the comparison with] the nature of an ordinary foolish person; “Thus it is called ‘living being’,” this saying bases on [the comparison with] the nature of a saint.<sup>90</sup>

Similarly, according to Yijing’s translation “living being” is an ordinary person bereft of holy qualities, “non living being” is a saint, and the negation of both is an ordinary person endowed with holy qualities. “Living being” is negated out of the consideration that the

<sup>90</sup> See T1513.25.882b14-20: 諸有當能生敬信者，彼「非眾生」，由餘眾生不與聖性相應，即與凡夫性相應故。「非非眾生」者，由與聖性相應故。此中義者，由彼望其凡夫性故，不是眾生；由望聖人性故，非非眾生。「何以故。眾生、眾生者，如來說彼為非眾生。」此據愚小異生性；「由此說為眾生」者，此據聖人性。

bodhisattva is not perfectly an ordinary living being, and “non living being” is denied, because the bodhisattva is not yet a saint.

## 5. “Non-A is A”

If the three As in the formula are distinguished as  $A_1$ ,  $A_2$  and  $A_3$  as follows: “That  $A_1$  taught by the Buddha, it is not  $A_2$ , thus it is called  $A_3$ ,” then, according to the verses discussed above, the *Vajracchedikā* and Vasubandhu’s commentary place importance on the reason for non  $A_2$ . If they sometimes touch on  $A_3$ , they argue mainly from the qualities of the highest truth or the actual effect and function of  $A_3$ . As for  $A_1$  there is no discussion of it at all. That means  $A_1$  could be taken as what the formula tells us, that is, the expression in the teachings of the Buddha, and  $A_3$  refers to what is really meant by the Buddha, while  $A_2$  stands for wrong grasping in the way phenomena are thought to exist as they appear to the mind contaminated with names and concepts. However, the denying  $A_2$  is different in many cases. The following is a summary of the various ways of denial of  $A_2$ :

(1) The denial of anything denoted by the Sanskrit word:

Verse 16 “The so-called ‘heap of merits’ is not heap of merits, thus the Tathāgata called it ‘heap of merits’” negates “heap of merit” with the reason that merit cannot support the Awakening of the Buddha. Thus the negation denies anything of a “support” in a pun of the Sanskrit word *skandha*.

Verse 18: The statement: “In actual fact there is no *dharma* called ‘Stream-Enterer’, [because a Stream-Enterer] does not enter into

visible matter, sound, smell, taste, touch and mental objects, thus he is called Stream-Enterer.” negates any meaning of “entering” of the Sanskrit word *āpanna*.

In verse 26 the claim: “It is not the Perfection of endurance.” is made on account of the fact that the limit of the other shore is unknown. It negates anything of the traditional accepted meaning of *pāramitā* as “gone to the other shore”.<sup>91</sup>

Verse 57 states that the Awakening of the Buddha is non-wholesome-*dharma*, because wholesome *dharma*s are contaminated, but the Awakening of the Buddha is not contaminated. Wholesome *dharma* as an attribute of the Awakening of the Buddha is negated according to the definition of wholesome *dharma* as contaminated *dharma*.

(2) The denial of any truth in worldly perception:

(a) The denial of a real entity:

Verse 20 states: “The ‘embellishment’ taught by the Tathāgata, it is not embellishment, thus it is called ‘embellishment.’” The reason given is that the pure land is just mind-only, that is, the manifestation in the mind.

Verse 21 claims that it is non-body, thus it is called the magnificent body, because the body of the Buddha is not made of conditions, it is unconditioned. There are a few more verses

<sup>91</sup> See Donald S. Lopez, *The Heart Sutra Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 22.

that give the same argument.

Verse 30 gives the reason for “non living being”, that is, the so-called ‘living being’ has no real entity.

- (b) The verses from the largest group item e (including items e.i and e.ii):

They argue from the viewpoint of Mahāyāna emptiness, that is, A is neither true nor false in terms of the highest truth. This view includes the reasoning of neither identical nor separated, neither identical nor different of the conventional and the ultimate.

- (c) Outside the limit of comprehension: Verse 24 states that the highest Perfection (*pāramitā*) is “non highest Perfection”, because the limit of the highest Perfection is unknown.

- (d) Outside the realm of an ordinary person: Verse 23 claims that the pure land of the Buddha is not made of elements which have defilements as its cause. Verse 25 defines “non-characteristics” as the non-perverted knowledge of No-self. In verse 57 “non-wholesome-*dharma*” is established from the fact that the Awakening is not ordinary wholesome *dharma*s.

Disregarding the first item where  $A_2$  is negated from the semantic point of view, the various reasoning given in the second item conforms to the result of investigation of the Japanese scholars, that is, the negation of  $A_2$  has the purpose of removing wrong grasping of ordinary people. As for the debate, the tension between two hypotheses –

whether the formula proclaims the ontological emptiness of Buddhism or it expresses a gradual implementation of the teachings of the Buddha by the bodhisattva – dissolves in Vasubandhu's commentary. Since Vasubandhu explained the ontology of phenomena from the Yogācāra point of view, the emptiness expressed in this formula is not the Madhyamaka emptiness interpreted by the Japanese. In the Madhyamaka emptiness, non-A means the non-existence of A,<sup>92</sup> and therefore A can hardly be the truth. In contrast, non-A in the Yogācāra teachings is very different. According to the Yogācāra, non-A denies only the wrong grasping of A. Through removing the error-producing concept of A the true A reveals itself. In this way one comes closer to true A by successively negating wrong conceptions of A. Therefore in Vasubandhu's commentary the formula "non-A is A" expresses both an ontological emptiness and a gradual guide as well as skillful teachings of the Buddha to the bodhisattva, so that the bodhisattva comes closer to what the Buddha refers to. Even though Asaṅga's verses and Vasubandhu's commentary are tinted with Yogācāra thought, they somehow provide an interpretation of the formula "non-A is A", which can best settle the debate.

Other than this non-A in the formula "non-A is A" there are

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<sup>92</sup> The Madhyamika negates all phenomena in the ultimate truth, that is, no phenomena exist in emptiness, as Yijing made a conclusion on the Madhyamika philosophy after his translation of Asaṅga's verses in *Lueming banruo mohou yisong zanshu* (略明般若末後一頌讚述, T40.1817.783a29-b1): 瑜伽則真有俗無 ... 中觀乃真無俗有 ... Malcom David Eckel translates this passage as follows: "For the Yogācāra the real exists, but the conventional does not exist ... For the Madhyamaka the real does not exist, but the conventional does exist ..." see Malcolm David Eckel, *Bhāviveka and His Buddhist Opponents* (London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 69.

other forms of negation in the *Vajracchedikā*, which negates both A and non-A: “non-A” and “not non-A”. The latter two could form an opposite pair like verse 15, where not non-A means “existence”, exactly the opposite of non-A, “non-existence”. But verse 55 has the pair of double negation in a different usage, where “not living being” and “not non living being” means neither totally a living being nor a saint.

## 6. Conclusion

Yogācāra inclinations are discernible in the summary verses and their commentary under discussion. This is the reason why the ancient Chinese (or also the Tibetan) translators ascribed the verse to Asaṅga and the commentary to Vasubandhu. Yogācāra thoughts are especially obvious in verse 15 and 20 and in Vasubandhu’s commentary. The Japanese scholars resort to only the *Prajñāpāramitā* and the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika* in the interpretation of the *Vajracchedikā*, because the *Vajracchedikā* being one of the *Prajñāpāramitā* literatures is like the latter loosely grouped together with the *Mūlamadhyamakakārika*. But the many Yogācāra exegeses, that is, Asaṅga’s verse summary as well as his commentary and Vasubandhu’s commentary,<sup>93</sup> are evidence for the keen interest of the Yogācāra School taken in the *Vajracchedikā*. Here is not the place to discuss the close relationship between the *Vajracchedikā* and the Yogācāra School, which I am working on in another topic. The debate, whether the

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<sup>93</sup> Beside Vasubandhu’s commentary under discussion (T1511, T1513) there is another commentary T1510, which the Chinese ascribed to Asaṅga and the Tibetan to Vasubandhu again.

formula is an expression of ontological emptiness or a description of a gradual fulfillment of the teaching of the Buddha by the bodhisattva, stems from the interpretation of the formula “non-A is A” solely from the Madhyamaka view. As shown above, these two antagonistic views can easily be consolidated in the Yogācāra interpretation. It could thus be helpful for settling the debate of the interpretation of the formula “non-A is A” by taking the Yogācāra commentaries into consideration.





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## 《金剛般若論頌》中「非 A 即 A」句型初探

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### 摘 要

東西學者已注意到《金剛般若經》中沒有出現「空」，相反地「佛說是 A，非是 A，故說是 A」（以下簡稱為「非 A 是 A」）的句型出現頻繁，代替了「空」的地位。日本學者對《金剛般若經》中「非 A 是 A」的句型有不同的詮釋。其中的爭論是此句型是在表達本體論的空性，或是一種菩薩漸次趨向佛的境界的實踐過程。他們的爭論的起因主要是單從中觀的立場來詮釋此句型。因為根據中觀「非 A」是勝義，但在菩薩的漸次道上「非 A」是遮遣錯誤觀念的 A。他們都沒有參考《金剛般若經》的印度釋論，因此忽略了在世親的釋論，也即是唯識的詮釋中，表達本體論的空性與菩薩的漸次實踐道並非互不相容的。

中國與西藏將《金剛般若波羅蜜多經論頌》（漢譯《能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多經論頌》，義淨（635-713 C.E.）譯。藏譯收入《北京版西藏大藏經》，冊 146，No. 5864。《德格板西藏大藏經》並無收藏此經。）視為無著針對《能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多經》要義所作的頌文。根據梵文寫本的後記，此頌的梵文名叫 *Trisatikāyāḥ Prajñāpāramitāyāḥ Kārikāsaptatiḥ*，共有 77 頌。已由 Tucci 所校勘。此頌文簡潔，必須參考世親的注釋，才能理解。世親的注釋有菩提流支所譯《金剛般若波羅蜜經論》（《大正新修大藏經》冊 25，經號 1511）。在此譯本菩提流支也譯出無著

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的頌文。同樣世親的注釋還有義淨所譯《能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多經論釋》（《大正大藏經》，冊 25，經號 1513）。在頌文的校勘中，Tucci 比對菩提流支和義淨的翻譯，並譯成英文。由於 Tucci 對無著頌文的翻譯偏重於義淨的譯本，所以有再重譯的必要。本文翻出此頌與「非 A 是 A」句型有關的偈頌，並參考世親對這些句型的注釋。

**關鍵字：**非 A 即 A、能斷金剛般若波羅蜜多經論頌、菩提流支、義淨、金剛般若經



