TIBETAN NYIN-RAŃS AND T'Ö-RAŃS

by WALTER SIMON

Dedicated to Professor Johannes Schubert on his seventieth birthday in remembrance of A. H. Francke, our first teacher of Tibetan.

I

It was H. A. Jäschke who first assigned identical meanings to nyin-rañs and t'o-rañs. In his Handwörterbuch der Tibetischen Sprache (Gnandau, 1871, p. 193), we find under the entry nyin-mo the equation "nyin-rañs Tar. = t'o-rañs das Morgengrauen. Schf."

On p. 541 of the same work, under the entry rañs-pa, an exact reference to A. Schiefner's edition of Taranätha's C'os-bbusñ1 and a Tibetan paraphrase is given:


Both entries reappear in practically identical form in Jäschke's Tibetan-English Dictionary of 1881 (or its various reprints), on pp. 188 and 524.

Sarat Chandra Das took over the equation into his Tibetan-English Dictionary (Calcutta, 1902, p. 483), but it suffered considerably in the process. Neither Taranätha nor Jäschke are mentioned, nyin-rañs appears in lieu of nyin-rañs, and Schr. (= Schröter) instead of Schr. (= Schiefner) is quoted as the authority.

Das's entry under rañs-pa is equally unsatisfactory. After the gloss "rañs-pa = ullása, rapture, ecstacy, ravishment" to be mentioned below, he simply repeats Jäschke's paraphrase of "nyin-rañs-par" as "t'o-rañs-keyi dus-su early in the morning", again without giving his authorities or the page references.

Schiefner's interpretation of nyin-rañs as "daybreak" is to be found in his German translation of Taranätha,2 In the passage in question (pp. 143–4) the arrival of deities is expected:

"An der Stelle verweilend, dachte er bei Tagesanbruch, ob nicht die Ärja's kommen würden; allein es kam niemand."

1 Taranätha's de doctrinae Buddhicae in Indiis propagandi. St. Petersburg, 1868. (Reprinted, together with the German translation, Tokyo, 1969, by the Suzuki Foundation as Vols. 2 and 3 of its Reprint Series.)

2 Taranätha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien. Aus dem Tibetischen übersetzt von Anton Schiefner. St. Petersburg, 1869. (See above, no. 1.)
The original text is as follows (p. 111):

"sa der bbad-nas nyin-ras-pa bhpags-pa bbyon-nam sems-pa-las ma byon."

Seeing the passage and its translation, Jäschke apparently surmised that Schiefner, though not saying so in so many words, must have regarded nyin-ras as a synonym of t'o-ras and therefore included an equation to that effect in his Dictionary. In support of Schiefner's and Jäschke's opinion it is now possible to quote the Tibetan--Tibetan--Mongolian Dictionary by Sumatrata, where (Vol. I, p. 749) nyin-ras-par has been translated as órjâye (early).

Nevertheless we can now easily convince ourselves that Schiefner's and Jäschke's interpretation of nyin-ras was mistaken. Basing himself on Professor F. Weller's Tibetan--Sanskrit Index to the Bodhicaryâvatâra (Vol. I, p. 132), Dr. Lokesh Chandra's Tibetan--Sanskrit Dictionary (Pt. 5, 1960, p. 860 and Pt. 11, 1961, p. 2217) has listed nyin-ras as translating Skt. dinânta ("day-end", sunset, evening). The first line of the ñâha in question (VIII, 73), viz. kecid dinânta-vyöpiraïk parisrântaḥ kuhumânaḥ, has been rendered as nyin-ras las-khyis yûns dub-sts, which L. Finot translated: Les uns, pleins de vils appétits, travaillent tout le jour à des besognes épuisantes.

A glance at the above-mentioned passage from Târanâtha will convince us that "at sunset" fits in fact the context much better than "at daybreak", as the expected deities do make their appearance shortly after midnight.

Far from being synonymous, nyin-ras and t'o-ras are in fact words of opposite meaning.

II

It is easy to account for this case of mistaken identity. It hinges on the meaning of rasâ-pa as the common element of the two compounds. As I suggested on another occasion, the basic meaning of rasâ-pa is "entire, complete, unimpaired." The compound nyin-ras, literally "day-complete" for "end of the day", sunset, evening, thus forms a parallel to hdbb-ras-pa, literally "leaves complete" = "full of leaves, with leaves fully developed", which Jäschke (Dict., p. 274) took over from I. J. Schmidt's dictionary.

To illustrate the meaning of rasâ-pa I shall set out in full the quotation from the Abhidharmakosa on which I based my suggestion (Ex. 1) and give three additional examples (Ex. 2-4):

Ex. 1 (a) ños-na debs p'yi-rol-gyi ños-su grib-ma bab-pas dkyil-k'or ma rasâ-pa snâñ-no.

(Tibetan) T[rîpîtaka] CXV, 184 d4-5

(b) aparâśrve châyâpatantâ vikâlanâmâlantâ darśayati.


(c) Par suite, l'ombre tombant sur le côté opposé, le disque apparaît incomplet.

(La Vallée Poussin, ibid., p. 158.)

Ex. 2 (a) k"ur-ba de-dag gtub-par btsams-pa dâñ tan-âî ldan-pa hC'ar-k'as smras-pa / ma gtub-par rasâ-pa brims šig.

Vinayavihânga

(Ti. T. XLIII, 163 a8-b1 = N[artha] hDulhNyâ 89b1-2)

(b) When they began to cut the cakes into pieces, the venerable Udâyin said: "Distribute them whole, without cutting them".

Ex. 3 (a) de-dag-gis buâg-gi bulgi rgyab sna-mk'o bzin-du rasâ-pa byed nus k'yan srid do snyam-du baams-nas .

Karmatataka.

(Ti. T. XXXIX, 141 d4-5 = N. MD/Sa 18b3-5.)

(b) thinking "they (the woodcutters) will be able to make my (hunch-backed) child's back whole as before" .

---

3 Sumatrata (Vol. I, p. 1905) has hdbb-ma rasâ-pa = nabci delgerken. Das failed to take over hdbb-ras into his dictionary. The entry "visîta-valikâ = gnyer ma reis-po (or rasâ-po)" of the Mahâvîpta-patita (ed.Salaka, No. 6946) apparently also belongs here (literally "wrinkle complete")", though Jäschke (Dict., p. 194, s. v. gnyer) quotes from the Tanjur a passage gnyer ma reis-po ñgyur and translates it as "wrinkles are made straight, are smoothed."

4 See above, n. 7.

5 I am greatly indebted to Professor E. Lamotte for pointing out to me that chûyâ-patantâ, representing chûyâ âpantâ, was certainly the reading of the ma. As Professor Sir Harold Bailey kindly informs me, the Sanskrit passage has been romanised as aparâśrve chûyâ patantâ vikâlanâmâlantâ darśayati on p. 325, l. 1 of the edition by U. Wogbara (Ogîwarâ Unr) of Yaśomitra's Sphuarthâ Abhidharma-kosāryayâkhyâda (Tokyo, 1929-36). The edition by Nazenda Nath Law = (Calcutta Oriental Series, No. xl. Calcutta, 1943, etc.) has (Pt. III, p. 90, l. 4-5): aparâśrve chûyâ patantâ vikâlamanâmâlantâ darśayati.

6 Similarly Ti. T. XXXIX, 142 a4-5 = N. MD/Sa 28a4: de k'ri-la kân-pa mod-la rgyab (5) sgur-ba de sna-mk'o bzin-du rasâ-pa gyur-to.
III

While the above four examples would seem sufficient to establish firmly the meaning of “entire, complete, unimpaired,” it is necessary to link up this usage of rāis-pa in the first instance with the well-known combinations of rāis-pa with yi (or yid) and sems on the one hand, and with the less frequent ones with snying and nyams on the other, all of which render Skt. words for “being glad at heart, delighted, rejoicing”, as assembled in Section CXLVI of the Mahāyānaśutradāra (Sakaki, Nos. 2929-45, see particularly Nos. 2931 (āltamanah = yid-rāis-ba, yi-rāis-ba), 2934 (kṣara-jñātah = rāis-pa snyor-pa) and 2935 (kṛṣita-cittah = sems-rāis-par gyur-ba). There can be little doubt that the meaning of rejoicing is conveyed by describing the mind or heart as “unimpaired” and therefore “perfect” (cp. sems mi rāis-par “discontended”, Jāschke, Dict., p. 243). It is easy to understand

18 It so happens that in this cliché (cp. yathā paṇḍūrīnā ṣāyam bhūtah, Jājakonda, Kern, 1896, p. 51, i. 14), so familiar to all readers of the mDrzā-blaṅ (cp. pp. 61, 9), occurs only in the “missing chapter” published in 1935 by the late Dr W. (=G.) Baruch (pp. 319-66, see p. 332) from the MS. Kanjur in the British Museum (B.M., Or. 6724) and the MS. of the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London (PL. MS., 4038), and is not found in the Translations of the mDrzā-blaṅ. The passage in question is: ces dem bca ma c’gna thub de’i bka’ blyi rgya ma’i rdo rje, bka’-pa bzhag-ste. But for this accident of the missing dictionary there could certainly not have been missed by Jāschke, who in

11 I noted from the Vīryaśrabhāga (Narthang, bDul, I, 191.96) the passage “gzhon mu-ste’g-ba on-dag g’i’ brtan on dha da’i mrsams ta’-ma’ na...” (At the time when he the Buddha by expelling the other heretics gave joy to gods and men and filled with delight: lit.: made perfect) the hearts of the

19 In the Tibetan version of the Karmalatāka the phrase nyam rāis-sa bzhag-ste is the pregnant wife who is “made comfortable” by her husband on the upper floor of the phrase also occurs in this cliché in the Tibetan version of the Avcadatalatā, of (m)kha’la in Ex. 1 above. I am much indebted to Professor J. Brough for the information that the rendering ayanam drisṛyatī is reminiscent (edited by E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neil, Cambridge, 1886, p. 21, l. 48) the phrase is left

12 I am indebted to Professor Sir Harold Bailey for directing my attention to a passage of the Tibetan translation of the Siddhāśāra in which yi-rāis-ba apparently

that yi(d) could also simply be understood, in which case we meet rāis-pa as “rejoicing” in our texts, and the above mentioned gloss rāis-pa = ṭhāgta, extracted by Das from the mNon-brjod-khyi bstan-bcos mk’as-pa mi-tgyan and translated by him as “rapture, ecstasy, ravishment”, records as usage as a noun in the same meaning.

It may therefore be assumed that rāis-pa in the meaning of “entire, complete, unimpaired” is in fact identical with rāis-pa “glad at heart, delighted, rejoicing” (with or without yi(d), sems, etc.) and that in both meanings it must be derived from the verb rāh-ba (pl. rāhis) as we have indeed found rāis-sa for rāhis-par in the phrase nyam rāhis-sa bzhag-ste. Over and above the meaning of “to rejoice”, noted so far only in our dictionaries, of “to be complete, unimpaired, perfect” can now be suggested as its basic meaning.

IV

It would seem necessary to separate rāh from rāhi-ba, “to complete” if we base ourselves on the entry rāh in Jāschke’s dictionary, where “self” is given as its first and foremost meaning. With rāh covering both Skt. svā and atman, it is surprising that Jāschke, followed therein by Das (who has list of Sanskrit equivalents was headed by these two words!), should have omitted the meaning of “own”. It is easy to combine “own” with “self” from the semantic point of view, since we find Tib. bdag “self” belonging with bdag-po “proprietor” and bdog-po “to be possessed of”, thus recalling English “own, owner, to own”.

A combination of “own” and “complete” in one and the same word seems so difficult to accept. We witness, however, a semantic link between these two meanings in the Indo-European field. It is apparently provided by the idea of exclusive possession, which as such is complete, unimpaired, uncurtailed and not shared by other persons. This semantic combination is to be found in Skt. kevala (related to

Continued from previous page—

Continued on following page

Continued on following page
English *whole* and the contention, then, is that Tibetan *raṅ* "own, self", *raṅ-ba* "to be complete, unimpaired, perfect" and *raṅs-pa* "entire, complete, unimpaired" constitute a word family of a similar semantic pattern.

Without in any way attempting to rewrite the entry *raṅ*, I should like to draw attention to the fact that Csoma\(^2\) listed *raṅ-bu* "single, alone", *raṅ-bur* "singly, alone, without a consort", *raṅ-po* "an unmarried man", *raṅ-mo\(^2\)" an unmarried woman", of which the first two words again recall Skt. *kevala(m)*.

V

The meaning of "complete, entire, unimpaired" allows also of an analysis of the compound *t'o-raṅs*. Through the *Mahāvyutpatti* (Sakaki, No. 8244) we are acquainted with its Skt. equivalent, *paṅcama pārahūḥ*. The fifth night-watch is described as the "fifth striking" (of the bell or gong). No doubt the *t'o* of *t'o-raṅs* must then be connected with *t'o-ba* (or *mi-t'o-ba*) "hammer", and the term for the night-watch in question, which is in fact the last watch, be translated literally as "hammer complete", constituting as such further evidence of the meaning of *raṅs-pa*, with which this paper has been preponderantly concerned.

---


\(^2\) See Jäschke, *Dict.*, p. 5238.

\(^2\) *ibid.*, p. 598, the entry *hraṅ-ba*.