

Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's Activities at the Vikramaśīla Monastery in Relation with the Pāla Dynasty

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Introduction

Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (Atiśa: 982–1054), who played a vital role in transmitting the teachings of Indian Buddhism to Tibet, is said to have been active at the Vikramaśīla monastery in India. Nevertheless, we have little information on his activities there. Most of the information on his works and biography can be found in indigenous Tibetan sources, but it is difficult to glean such information from Indic works ascribed to his contemporaries. If there had been any references to him in India, we would have known more about his activities before leaving for Tibet. However, there are no Indic sources available on his presence at the Vikramaśīla monastery.¹ What we can at least do is to investigate some biographical sources or historical literatures that were written in Tibet. In the present paper I will consider how Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's activities in India, especially at the Vikramaśīla monastery, are explained in Tibetan sources, focusing on his relationship with the kings of the Pāla dynasty.

1. Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's Biography in Tibetan Sources

In Tibetan Buddhism, it was traditional to write a biography (*rnam thar*) of a great teacher (*bla ma*), and in fact, there are many biographical records including those of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna. Since the authors of such texts tend to embellish everything with fictional details, they do not always tell us about historical events. In some cases, we also have to consider the possi-

¹ Cf. CHATTOPADHYAYA 1967: 127–142.

bility that a short biography might have been gradually enlarged without any historical evidence and transformed into a series of biographies. It is not my present purpose to scrutinize all the biographical sources of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna,² but it would be important to note that we cannot always regard all the descriptions of his stay at the Vikramaśīla monastery as historically true. In this respect, it should be noted that Helmut Eimer has already analyzed every source in his *Berichte über das Leben des Atiśa (Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna)*³ and published one of his biographies, “*Jo bo rje dpal ldan mar me mdzad ye shes kyi rnam thar rgyas pa (= rNam thar rgyas pa)*”, with his German translation.⁴ I would like to begin by investigating this biography, based on Eimer’s study. In the section of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna’s lineage, gSer gling pa, who taught the Madhyamaka teaching to Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, is introduced as follows:

Because Dharmakīrti as gSer gling pa has benevolent love, he is called Maitrīpa. Then there are three Maitrīpas. The prince Maitrīpa is Maitreya, the lord (*mnga’ bdag*) Maitrīpa [also known as Advayavajra], whom Jo bo excluded from the Vikramaśīla monastery, and gSer gling pa is also called Maitrīpa.⁵

The second Maitrīpa known as Advayavajra is said to have been excluded by Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna for some reason,⁶ although Advayavajra was one of his teachers in esoteric teaching. It indicates that he had the authority to judge a monk’s suitability for the monastery.

This episode is followed by the explanation of his academic career, and then we come across some references to his activities at the Vikramaśīla monastery:

In addition to the story about how this great teacher concentrating benefits of others was invited to Tibet, the history of how the Vikramaśīla monastery was built is described a little.⁷

² See also DAVIDSON 2004: 111.

³ EIMER 1977.

⁴ EIMER 1979.

⁵ EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 39, 055: gser gling pa chos kyi grags pa byams pa che bas mai tri pa yang zer / mai tri pa gsum byung ba la / rgyal sras mai tri pa ni rje btsun byams pa / mnga’ bdag mai tri pa ni jo bos bi kra ma nas btong pa de yin / ‘di gser gling mai tri bya ba de yin gsung /

⁶ TATZ 1988: 478, SHIZUKA 2015.

⁷ EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 124, 170: de ltar gzhan don rtse gcig tu mdzad pa’i bla ma rje btsun chen po ‘di nyid bri ka ma la ji ltar bzhengs pa’i lo rgyus zur tsam gsung ba la.

In this section [170–196], the text tells us about his activities at the monastery. Beginning with the story that he saw the image of Kambala, a great teacher at the Nālandā monastery, the text describes the relationship between the monastery and the kings of the Pāla dynasty. Citing the praising verse of a translator, which explains that there were 153 monks at the Odantapurī monastery and 100 monks at the Vikramaśīla monastery [182], Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna is introduced as follows:

Among these paṇḍitas Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna is like a jewel of heaven. Mahāpāla, who had succeeded Devapāla, invited him with glorious kindness from Vajrāsana to the Vikramaśīla monastery. Then those who stayed there respected him like a crest jewel.⁸

According to this passage, he was invited to the monastery in the reign of Mahāpāla.⁹ Furthermore, the text tells us that a picture of Nāgārjuna was hung on the right side of the gate of the monastery, and that of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna on the left side. Then the text explains how he was invited to Tibet at the monastery.

After dispelling doubts and learning what was to be known, he thought that he would bring an Indian paṇḍita if he had invited one, or that he had to go to ask a paṇḍita if he had not already invited one. He promised Indian beggars to give rewards and asked beggars from all directions whether there was a helpful paṇḍita for Tibet or not, but he could not find one. Arriving at the Vikramaśīla monastery, he asked whether there was a paṇḍita who might be helpful for Tibet or not, then he was given the name of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (Jo bo). He was told, “There is one who took monastic vows from a royal family, became a crest jewel of Buddhism and became the second omniscient one among five hundred. If you do not invite him, there will be no benefit for Tibet.”¹⁰

⁸ EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 132–133, 183 (The same contents are referred to in 207): de lta bu'i pa ṇḍi ta lha gcig rin po che de / rgyal po de ba pā la'i gdung brgyud du gyur pa / rā dza ma hā pā la bya ba'i kun drin dpal rdo rje gdang nas bri kra ma shī lar gdang drangs nas de na bzhugs pa thams cad kyis kyang gtsug gi nor bu ltar bkur ba yin /
⁹ or Mahāpāla (r. c. 977–1027). See SANDERSON 2009: 87.

¹⁰ EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 148, 206: the tshom ni bcaad shes par bsblabs nas da ni bod la phan pa'i pa ṇḍi ta -cig spyan 'drons na drang / ma 'drons na dris la 'gro dgos snyam nas / rgya gar gyi sprang po la bya dga' khas blangs nas bod la phan thogs pa'i pa ṇḍi ta yod dam med phyogs thams cad du 'drir btang bas ma rnyed nas -bkur ka ma shī la'i gtsug lag khang du phyin nas pa ṇḍi ta rnams la bod la phan thogs pa'i pa ṇḍi ta yod dam med dris pas / jo bo'i mtshan nas phyung nas 'di na rgyal rigs las rab tu byung

Here we can see how Tshul khirms rgyal ba met him at the monastery and how Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna was acknowledged as the second omniscient one at the monastery.¹¹ The story also tells us about the relationship between rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge¹² and Tshul khirms rgyal ba, and about his works composed or translated at the monastery.

The virtuous teacher from Gung thang (Tshul khirm rgyal ba) stayed two years in India, was taught the teaching of Abhidharma by rGya brTson seng and learned how to translate into Tibetan. Knowing what was brought in specially, he translated the teachings of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna during his stay in India. These two great and small translators (rGya and Nag tsho) translated the *Satyadvayāvātāra* with its commentary, the *Garbhasaṃgraha*¹³ written by the teacher himself with its commentary by Sa'i snying po, the **Madhyamakaratnāvalī* and the *Yogācāra* with its summary (*piṅḍārtha*) at the Vikramaśīla monastery.¹⁴

Although some works referred to here cannot be identified in the Tangyur, we can at least know that brTson 'grus seng ge and Tshul khirms rgyal ba had already translated his works with him during their stay at the monastery.¹⁵

Regarding his other activities at the Vikramaśīla monastery, of which no mention is made in this biography, much work remains to be done. Here I will limit myself to summarizing Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's activities described

ba nang pa sangs rgyas pa rnam kyī gtsug gi nor bu lta bur gyur pa / lnga brgya pa rnam kyī thams cad mkhyen pa gnyis par gyur pa -cig yod de / khyod kyis spyen mi 'drons / de min bod la phan thogs pa med gsungs /

¹¹ This process to invite him to Tibet was reported to the Tibetan king in 222. EIMER 1979 1. Teil: 222, 2. Teil: 163–164.

¹² HADANO (1987: 99, note 20) understands him as a Tibetan layman from Stag-tshal, but CHATTOPADHYAYA (1967: 32) understands him as Indian Vīryasiṃha.

¹³ We know two versions of the *Garbhasaṃgraha* in the Tibetan Tangyur, namely the *Garbhasaṃgraha* (D. Nos. 3049, 4469, P. Nos. 5345, 5382) and the *Hṛdayanikṣepa* (D. Nos. 3050, 4470, P. Nos. 5346, 5383). But the former was translated by Tshul khirms 'byung gnas and the latter was translated in central Tibet. See MOCHIZUKI 2005: 47–48.

¹⁴ EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 154–155, 213: de'i dus su dge bshes gung thang pas rgya gar du lo gnyis bzhugs nas lo tstsha ba rgya brtson seng la mngon pa yang gsan / lo tstsha yang bslabs pas mkhas pa'i phul du skyol bar shes nas / rgya gar rang du yang chos bsgyur ba la bden pa gnyis la 'jug pa dang / de'i 'grel pa dang / bla ma nyid kyis mdzad pa'i snying po bsdus pa dang / de'i 'grel pa sa'i snying pos mdzad pa dang / dbu ma rin po che'i 'phreng ba dang / yo ga tsar ya dang / de'i pi ṅa rta dang bri ka mar lo tstsha b ache chung gnyis kyis bsgyur /

¹⁵ See KAWAGOE 2000: 297.

in the *rNam thar rgyas pa*. Tshul khirms rgyal ba, who was looking for a beneficial paṇḍita for Tibet, arrived at the monastery. Having heard about the reputation of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, Tshul khirms rgyal ba chose him among some candidates and decided to invite him to Tibet. Some of his works were translated by Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna himself, with the help of Tshul khirms rgyal ba or rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge, during their stay at the monastery. However, this does not always mean that these texts were composed in Indic script and translated into Tibetan. We can also assume that they were orally taught to Tshul khirms rgyal ba or rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge, and that they were immediately translated into Tibetan.

2. Tibetan sources on the History of Buddhism in India

Although no historical records of Indian Buddhism was written in India at the time of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, some Tibetan scholars wrote about the history of Indian Buddhism. In their works, we can see some references to Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna at the Vikramaśīla monastery. They may be no Indian sources, but we can see how his position in the history of Indian Buddhism has been acknowledged in Tibet.

First let us look at the “*History of Buddhism (bDe bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod)*” of Bu ston rin chen grub (1290–1364). He also explains how Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna was invited to Tibet.

Of these three, the latter gave gold to five men, Nag tsho Tshul khirms rgyal ba etc., and ordered them to select the translator rGya brTson 'grus seng ge as their chief, and to invite a good Paṇḍita. Accordingly, they invited Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, who was the son of Kalyāṇaśrī, the king of Bengal, and who had received a brilliant education at the Vikramaśīla monastery. (Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna) accordingly accepted their invitation and came, since he had obtained a corresponding prophecy from Tārā. On the way rGya brTson seng died and they arrived, having appointed Nag tsho Tshul khirms rgyal ba to be interpreter.¹⁶

¹⁶ SZERB 1990: 85–86 (OBERMILLER 1932: 213): de'i sras 'od lde dang / pho brang zhi ba 'od dang / btsun pa byang chub 'od dang gsum gyi byang chub 'od kyis nag tsho tshul khirms rgyal la sogs pa mi lnga la gser bskur / lo tstsha ba rgyal brtson 'grus seng ge dpon du bskos nas / paṇḍi ta bzang po dang drongs la shog byas pas / shar phyogs rgyal po dge bad pal gyi sras bi kra ma shī la'i gtsug lag khang du legs par sbyangs pa / dī paṃ ka ra shīrī dznyā na spyang drangs pas / sgrol mas lung bstan te byon pas / rgya brtson seng lam du 'das / nag tsho lotstsha byas te byon /

Here two Tibetans, rGya brTson 'grus seng ge and Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba, came to India, in order to search for any good scholar who can introduce Indian Buddhism to Tibet. Then they chose Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, who was well known as an excellent scholar there. However, his position at the monastery is not referred to in this text.

Secondly, we can find a detailed explanation of the biography of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna in the *Deb ther sngon po* of gZhun nu dpal¹⁷ (1392–1481), more specifically, in the section of bKa'gdams pa. The first reference to his activity at the Vikramaśīla monastery, along with the explanation of his academic career, runs as follows:

Later, Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna visited the Teacher gSer gling pa (Dharmakīrti, Chos kyi grags pa). From him he obtained numerous secret precepts, placing foremost the Mental Creative Effort towards Enlightenment. He spent most of his time as Elder (*mahāsthavira*, *gnas brtan chen po*) of the monastic college of the Vikramaśīla monastery, and his great fame encompassed all quarters (of the World). On numerous occasions lHa btsun pa Byang chub 'od sent him invitations (to visit Tibet), accompanied by large presents of gold.¹⁸

Here the author enumerates his sixteen teachers from Jñānaśrīmitra to Dharmakīrti (gSer gling pa). It is also said that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna had become the elder of the monastery and that he was invited because of his great fame in India. Then the text describes the scene of his invitation, in which Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba, who had studied there, returned to India to invite him. His arrival at the monastery is explained as follows:

Nag tsho, after receiving the king's command, took with him the largest part of a piece of unwrought gold with the value of 16 srangs. When he was on his way to India, accompanied by a large retinue, he cleverly diverted an attack by brigands, and safely reached the Vikramaśīla monastery during the night. While they were reciting prayers in Tibetan, rGya brTson 'grus seng ge, who was sitting on the roof of the entrance hill, overheard them, and shouted: "Are you Tibetans? Tomorrow we shall

¹⁷ HADANO 1987: 55–65.

¹⁸ *Deb ther sngon po*: 299 (ROERICH 1949: 244, HADANO 1987: 72): phyis bla ma gser gling pa'i thad du byon nas / byang chub mchog tu sems bskyed pa gtso bor byas pa'i gdams pa mtha' yas pa gsan zhing / phal cher bi kra ma shi la'i gnas brtan chen po mdzad de / che ba'i snyan pas phyogs thams cad du khyab pa las / lha btsun pa byang chub 'od kyis lan mang po'i bar du gser mang po bskur ba'i spyen 'dren pa mang du brdzangs te /

meet surely.”¹⁹

This passage suggests that Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba returned to the Vikramaśīla monastery in order to invite Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, who was well known as the elder of the monastery, and that rGya brTson 'grus seng ge, who understood Tibetan, stayed there. Both of these two Tibetans are known as co-translators of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's works. The next day they met with him and rGya brTson 'grus seng ge told him what Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba intended. Then Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna answered as follows:

“You are right! The king has spent much gold for my sake! Several people, who had come by invitation, had been smitten by fever. I feel ashamed before the Tibetan king, and having considered the matter, I have decided to proceed in any case to Tibet, if I can be of help. But it is difficult for the Elder (*sthavira*) of the Vikramaśīla monastery to let us go, and one must find a way out of difficulty.”²⁰

His answer does not explicitly tell us about his position in the monastery, but we can assume that he had to get permission to leave the monastery from the Elder. And he seems to have acknowledged himself as an important teacher at the monastery. Based on this information from the *Deb ther sgon po*, it would be reasonable to suppose that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna was known as a supreme teacher at the monastery and that Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba met him to invite him to Tibet. However, he was probably not in a position to leave the monastery without permission.

Let us turn to the “History of Buddhism in India (*dPal gyi 'byung gnas dam pa'i chos rin po che 'phags pa'i yul du ji ltar dar ba'i tshul gsal bar ston pa dgos 'dod kun 'byung*)” by Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po (1575–1634). He is also known as a great teacher of the Jo nang pa school in Tibet. He wrote some accounts of late Indian Buddhist teachers in connection with

¹⁹ *Deb ther sgon po*: 301 (ROERICH 1949: 245–246, HADANO 1987: 74): khong gis kyang gser ling bag cig la shing srang bcu drug yod pas mgo drangs gser tshan che ba bskur / dpon g-yog mang rab rgya gar du chas pa na / lam du chos rkun gyi 'jigs pa byung ba rnam kyang thabs mkhas pas zhi bar byas te / bi kra ma shī lar mtshan mo zhig brtol / der bod kyi skad du kha thon byas pa na / rgya brtson 'grus seng ge sgo khang steng na bzhugs pas gsan / khyed rnam bod yin nam / sang nges par 'phrad do gsung ba'i skad chen po btang /

²⁰ *Deb ther sgon po*: 302 (ROERICH 1949: 246, HADANO 1987: 74–75): khyed bden nga'i ched du bod kyi rgyal po'i gser mang po yang song / gdan 'dren pa'i mi mang po byung ba'ang tshad pas gum / bod kyi rgyal po la ngo yang gngong ba yod / da kho bos brtags te bod la phan na cis kyang 'gro / 'on kyang bi kra ma shi la'i gnas brtan gyis 'o skol gtong ba dka' bas thabs mkhas pa zhig bya dgos /

the kings of the Pāla dynasty. With regard to Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, he refers to two kings, i. e., Beyapāla and Neyapāla.

Then king *Bheyapāla ruled for about thirty-two years. He maintained the older tradition, but excepting this did nothing significantly new for the Law. He conferred **patra*-s on only seventy paṇḍitas of the Vikramaśīla monastery. So he is also not counted among the seven pālas.

After the Six Door-keeper Scholars had passed away, during the period of this king, Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, famed as Jo bo rje dPal ldan Atīṣa, was invited to be *upādhyāya* (of the Vikramaśīla monastery). He also looked after Odantapurī.²¹

Tāranātha relates that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna was appointed to the first seat of the Vikramaśīla monastery during the reign of the king Bheyapāla. The same story is repeated later in the section of the Vajrayāna teaching at the Vikramaśīla monastery, and it is told as follows:

After the Six Gate-keeper Scholars, there was no continuity in the succession of *upādhyāyas* for some years. Then came *upādhyāya* Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna. After him, there was no *upādhyāya* for seven years.²²

With regard to his departure to Tibet, Tāranātha continues:

King Bheyapāla's son was Neyapāla. In the authentic biographies, it is stated that he became the king shortly before Jo-bo-rje left for Tibet. There also exists a letter²³ sent (by Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna).²⁴

²¹ SCHIEFNER 1868: 185 (CHATTOPADHYAYA 1980: 304, SCHIEFNER 1869: 243, TERAMOTO 1928: 327): de nas rgyal po bhe ya pā las rgyal srid lo sum cu so gnyis tsam byas na'ang / sngar gyi rgyun ma nyams par skyong ba'i rnam pa las bstan pa la bya ba dmigs su thon pa cher ma byung / bi kra ma shī lar ni / pa ṇḍi ta bdun cu tsam gyi sa tra las ma tshugs te / de'i phyir 'di yang pā la bdun la mi bgrong ngo / rgyal po 'di'i dus la / mkhas pa sgo drug 'das pa'i 'og tsam du / jo bo rje dpal a ti shar grags pa dī paṃ ka ra shrī dznyā na mkhan por spyān drangs / 'dis o tanta pu ri yang bskyong /

²² SCHIEFNER 1868: 198 (CHATTOPADHYAYA 1980: 329, SCHIEFNER 1869: 261, TERAMOTO 1928: 351): mkhas pa sgo drug gi 'og tu / lo 'ga' zhiḡ thor bur gnas pa las mkhan po med / de nas mar me mdzad dpal ye shes byon / de nas lo bdun mkhan po med /

²³ For more details of this letter, see below (74–76).

²⁴ SCHIEFNER 1868: 185 (CHATTOPADHYAYA 1980: 305, SCHIEFNER 1869: 244, TERAMOTO 1928: 326): rgyal po bhe ya pā la de'i sras ne ya pā la yin te / jo bo rje bod du byon dus 'di rgyal srid la 'khod la brzangs pa'i 'phrin yig gcig kyang snang /

From these references²⁵ it follows that Tāranātha refers to Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna in connection with the Pāla kings who built the Vikramaśīla monastery. That is to say, he was upādhyāya at the monastery in the reign of Bheypāla and he left for Tibet during the reign of his son, Neyapāla.

3. Works of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna

The colophons of the works by Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna also suggest that he translated most of them with the help of Tibetan translators. Although we cannot get sufficient information as to where they were written, they seem to have been translated after his arrival in Tibet, to use for his lectures on the teachings of the Buddha. Helmut EIMER tries to consider where his works were written or translated²⁶ and refers to both the *Śaṃsāramanoniryāṇīkāranāmasaṃgīti* and the *Kāyavāccittasupratīṣṭhā* as the works written at the Vikramaśīla monastery, and both the *Triratnātārāstotra* (anonymous) and the *Āryatārādevīstotramuktikāmālā* of Candragomin as those translated there.

The colophon of the *Śaṃsāramanoniryāṇīkāranāmasaṃgīti* explains as follows:

The Indian upādhyāya himself and the great translator rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge translated at the Vikramaśīla monastery.²⁷

This means that it was written in India, although one of his biographies says that it was taught during his stay at dBu in Tibet. Does this mean that this small text was sung in verse in Tibet after having been written in verse and translated in India? I do not think it natural to record the publication of the older text, which was once written in India. Therefore, that biography seems to give us wrong information. In the colophon of the *Kāyavāccittasupratīṣṭhā*, it is said as follows:

²⁵ There is one more reference in which he is referred to as a teacher of his five disciples during the reign of two kings, Neyapāla and Amrapāla. Cf. CHATTOPADHYAYA 1980: 310, SCHIEFNER 1868: 188, 1869: 248, TERAMOTO 1928: 333.

²⁶ EIMER 1977: 114. Although he says that the *Ratnakaraṇḍoghāta* was also written at the Vikramaśīla monastery, it is not obvious from its colophon. I will discuss it later. He refers to other works translated during his stay in India, namely, the *Āryaṇīlāmbaḍharavaṅgīrapāṇīkalpanāmadhāraṇīkā* of Nāgārjuna (D. No. 2675, P. No. 3500) at the Nālanda monastery and the *Madhyamakaratnapradīpa* of Bhavya (D. No. 5254, P. No. 5254) at Somapuri.

²⁷ D. No. 2313, Zhi 254b6–7 (D. No. 4473, P. Nos. 3152, 5386, MOCHIZUKI 2007, MOCHIZUKI 2011: 5): rgya gar gyi mkhan po de nyid dang / zhus chen gyi lo tsā ba rgya brtson seng gis bikrama shī la'i gtsug lag khang du bsgyur ba'o //

The Indian upādhyāya Dīpaṃkara himself and translator rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge translated, revised and established [the *Kāyavācittasupratīṣṭhā*] at the Vikramaśīla monastery.²⁸

These two texts seem to have been translated during his stay at the Vikramaśīla monastery at almost the same time. We can recognize that there were some Tibetan students at the monastery and some Buddhist texts there had been already translated into Tibetan. Therefore, Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna might have mastered Tibetan to some extent before his departure for Tibet.²⁹ Since these texts are collected in the esoteric section of the Tangyur,³⁰ he seems to have written esoteric works in India.

In the colophon of the **Triratnatārāstotra* (anonymous), it is also said as follows:

The Indian upādhyāya Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna and the Tibetan translator Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba translated, revised and established [the *Triratnatārāstotra*] at the Vikramaśīla monastery.³¹

Furthermore, the colophon of the *Āryatārādevīstotramuktikāmālā* of Candragomin also describes the situation as follows:

Indian upādhyāya Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna and Tibetan Buddhist translator from Nag tsho Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba translated, revised and established it at the Vikramaśīla monastery.³²

From these passages we can conclude that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna and Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba translated these two esoteric texts written by others into

²⁸ D. No. 249, Zi 260a1–2 (P. No. 3322, Tshi 322a1): rgya gar gyi mkhan po d'i pam ka ra dang // lo tsā ba rgya brtson seng ges bi kra ma shī lar bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o //.

²⁹ Of course his ability of Tibetan language is open to further discussion. Did he learn Tibetan language from his co-translator in India? How was the ability of Indian language of his co-translators? If the texts were really translated in India, this would mean that there were fluent Indian speakers of Tibetan or those of Indian language(s) at the Vikramaśīla monastery and they were requested to translate Indian texts into Tibetan privately. It seems to be interesting to consider the details of Tibetan students at the monastery.

³⁰ The former is also included in the volume of the Madhyamaka.

³¹ Tib. D. No. 1695, Sha 52a7-b1 (P. No. 2567): rgya gar gyi mkha po dī paṃ ka ra shrī dznyā na'i zhal snga nas dang / bod kyi lo tsā ba nag tsho tshul khriṃs rgyal bas bi kra ma shī la'i gtsug lag khang du bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa //

³² Tib. P. No. 4869, Zu 181a7–8: rgya gar gyi mkha po ti paṃ ka ra shrī dznyā na'i zhal snga nas // bod kyi bad dhe sgra sgyur lo tstsha ba nag tso tshul khriṃs rgyal bas bi

Tibetan at the Vikramaśīla monastery. The co-translator Tshul khirms rgyal ba should have mastered the Indian language, since he already translated them during his stay at the monastery.³³ Of course there might have been not only Tibetan students, but also international students from other countries at the monastery, so various languages might have been spoken there. It would be interesting to consider what kind of language was used there at that time.

The colophon of the *Sūtrasamuccayasāñcayārtha*³⁴ runs as follows:

The Tibetan bhikṣu Tshul khirms rgyal ba, offering 14 palas of gold with flowers to ācārya Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, requested him to come to Tibet. After 16 months spent on completion of his meditational practice, he could go to Tibet. At the time of his departure for Tibet, the beloved students requested the final upadeśa of him. He delivered this, which was the essence of the scriptures, as his upadeśa for them. At that time rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge asked for his permission to translate [the *Sūtrasamuccayasāñcayārtha*] and it is established.³⁵

Although it is not obvious where this text was written, it seems to have been completed before his leaving India for Tibet. Tshul khirms rgyal ba and rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge, who are both referred to here, play a key part in linking Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna with the Vikramaśīla monastery. Therefore, we can assume that the *Sūtrasamuccayasāñcayārtha* and the above-mentioned esoteric texts were written at almost the same time and the same place.

4. Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna and the Kings of the Pāla Dynasty

In the process of investigating his activities in India, we come across some references to his relationship with the kings of the Pāla dynasty. In this respect, the closing verses of the *Ratnakaraṇḍoghāta* provide some useful information:

ka ma la shī la'i gtsug lag khang du bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o //

³³ *Deb ther sgong po* says that he came from Gung than to study Buddhism in India and was taught by Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna. See HADANO 1987: 74.

³⁴ Cf. EIMER 1977: 117, CHATTOPADHYAYA 1967: 463.

³⁵ Tib. D. No. 3937, Ki 340b5–7: slob dpon Di paṃka ra shrī znyā na la bod kyi dge slong Tshul khirms rgyal bas gser srang bcu bzhi'i sbrang bu me tog du phul nas bod du byon pa'i zhu ba phul ba las sgom sbyong ba rnam mthar phyin par bya ba'i don du bla ma zla ba bcu drug tu lam du ma chud do // de nas bod du byon khar slob ma sems sbyong ba rnam kyis zhal chems gzhang par zhus pas mdo'i don man ngag tu byas pa 'di zhal chems su gnang ngo // de'i dus su rgya brtson seng ges bsgyur bar zhus pas gnang ste gtan la phab po //

Requested by a good student named Tshul khirms rgyal ba who is a Śākya bhikṣu with sharp mind, wisdom, compassion and disciple, he wrote [this text].

Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna wrote it following the tradition of great teachers who taught at the great monastery named Vikramaśīla with the commitment of Devapāla.³⁶

If the adverbial phrase “at the great monastery named Vikramaśīla” in the second verse reads as associated with the verb “wrote”, we must understand that this work was written at the monastery. However, the *Deb ther srong po* informs us that he wrote the two (large and small) *Madhyamakopadeśas* at Lha sa.³⁷ Accordingly, it seems to be reasonable to suppose that he wrote them at the request of Tshul khirms rgyal ba, just like the great teachers of the monastery who had taught at the Vikramaśīla monastery with the commitment of Devapāla (r. c. 812–850).³⁸ This verse implies his relationship with the monastery.

As mentioned in the history of Indian Buddhism by Tāranātha, Tibetan scholars wanted to invite Indian scholars who were connected with the Pāla kings.³⁹ Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's contemporaries are Mahīpāla I (r. c. 977–1027) and Nayapāla/Neyapā (r. c. 1027–1043).

Regarding his relationship with Neyapā, it is said that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna wrote a letter to him in Nepal:

Then the letter sent to King Neyapā was translated by the teacher himself and the translator. Then they stayed at 'Ol kha in Nepal.⁴⁰

This letter, known as the *Vimalaratnalekha*, is included in the Tibetan canon. From the above passage, which refers only to its translation, it is impossible to judge where it had been written. This passage probably comes from

³⁶ MIYAZAKI 2007: 69: Śākya'i dge slong blo rnon po // shes rab snying rje khirms dang ldan // tshul khirms rgyal ba zhes bya ba'i // slob ma bzang pos bskul nas bris // de ba pā la'i thugs dam bi kra ma // shī la zhes bya ba'i gtsug lag khang chen du // bla ma dam pa rnams kyis gsungs pa bzhin // mar me mdzad dpal ye shes de yis bris // Cf. APPLE 2010: 183.

³⁷ CHATTOPADYAYA 1967: 457 and EIMER 1977: 114 assume that it was written at the Vikramaśīla monastery.

³⁸ Devapāla reigned 150 years before Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, therefore this king did not obviously have any direct relationship with him.

³⁹ SANDERSON 2009: 87–108.

⁴⁰ EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 184, 247 (Cf. KAWAGOE 2000: 298–299): de'i dus su rgyal po ne ya pā la la brdzangs pa'i 'phrin yig bla ma nyid dang lo tstsha ba gnyis kyis bsgyur ro //

the colophon of the *Vimalaratnalekha*. However, the textual relationship between them is not entirely clear, because of the lack of other sources.⁴¹

Neyapāla's episode is also seen in the first verse of the *Vimalaratnalekha*:

To the victorious Neyapāla, who has spread the teaching of the Buddha since his birth at Mahāgati and has protected his empire with this teaching!⁴²

The colophon of the same text mentions Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's relationship with the Pāla dynasty as follows:

The letter named *Vimalaratnalekha* which the sthavira and great paṇḍita Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna sent to the king of Pāla is completed.⁴³

According to above-mentioned explanation of Tāranātha, this text seems to be identical with the letter written in Nepal to Neyapāla.⁴⁴ However, there are some doubts about its authorship, since the content of this text is almost the same as that of the *Bodhisattvamaṇyāvalī*, attributed to the same

⁴¹ The biography tells us about the episode of a great struggle between King Neyapāla and King Karṇa known as non-Buddhist. But it also relates that the latter came to believe in Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna because he had protected this king and his army with love and compassion although five Buddhists had been killed. EIMER 1979, 2. Teil: 118–119, 159 (Cf. KAWAGOE 2000: 299): 'gro ba mang po'i don yang byams pa'i sgo nas mdzad pa yin te / jo bo rdo rje gdan na bzhugs tsa na / ma ga dha'i rgyal po ne ya pā la dang / nub phyogs ka ṅa'i mu stegs kyi rgyal po gnyis rtsod pa chen po byung ba'i tshē ka ṅa'i rgyal pos ma ga dhar dmag drangs pa'i tshē grong ma thub nas gnas gzhi rnams su drangs pas / rab tu byung ba bzhi dang dge bsnyen gcig dang lnga bkroṅgs / yo byad mang po yang gang du khyer ba'i dus su jo bo la zhe sdang mi mnga' bas ko long la sogs pa gang yang mi mdzad par byams pa snying rje byang chub kyi sems bsgom bzhin bzhugs / der g-yul log nas ka ṅa'i dmag mi thams cad gsod pa la thugs kyi ma bzod nas / rgyal po dang dmag mi thams cad bskyabs nas btang bas / ka ṅa'i rgyal po de jo bo la dad nas nub phyogs su jo bo spyang drangs nas bsnyen bkur chen po byas / jo bos kyang rgyal po fnyis kyi bzlum mdzad 'tsho ba'i yo byad ma gtogs pa'i phyag na yod tshad sdums la btang / lus srog la ma gzigs par bar na chub o chen po yod pa la brgal nas de gnyis sdums nas mdza' bor mdzad de sems can bde ba la bkod do //

⁴² DIETZ 1984: 302: ma hā gha tir sku bltams nas // sangs rgyas bstan pa 'phel mdzad cing // rgyal srid chos kyi skyong mdzad pa // nir ya pa la rgyal gyur cig //

⁴³ DIETZ 1984: 318: dri ma med pa'i rin po che'i phrin yig ces bya ba gnas brtan mkhas pa chen po dī paṃ ka ra shrī dzjnyā nas rgyal po ni rya pha la brdzasngs pa rdzogs so //

⁴⁴ CHATTOPADHYAYA 1980: 305, TERAMOTO 1928: 327. DIETZ (DIETZ 1984: 303) calls the king Niryapāla.

author.⁴⁵ For this reason, we cannot deny the possibility that this letter was edited in order to emphasize his relationship with the Pāla dynasty.

In this regard, the last verse of the *Satyadvayāvātāra* should not be overlooked:

After the King of Suvarṇadvīpa, the Guru Pāla, sent the monk Devamati to me, and under auspices, I compose this *Satyadvayāvātāra*. It should be examined by present day scholars.⁴⁶

Christian LINDTNER and Yasunori EJIMA translated this king of Sumatra as Dharmapāla.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the Tibetan commentator interprets “the Guru Pāla” as “guruphala” in the sense of a good spiritual teacher (*bla ma bzang po*) and refers to the two teachers of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, gSer ling pa and Ratnākaraśānti,⁴⁸ Therefore, the commentator seems to have regarded “the King of Suvarṇadvīpa” as Dharmakīrti from Suvarṇadvīpa (gSer gling pa). However, we must reconsider this confusion: is it possible that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna called his teacher by a wrong name? We should not exclude the possibility of reading this passage as referring to the king of the Pāla dynasty.

5. Conclusion

Let me summarize the information on his stay at the Vikramaśīla monastery. As for the relationship with the Pāla dynasty, Tibetan sources inform us that Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna was invited to the monastery at the time of

⁴⁵ 80 percent (89/111) of the *Bodhisattvamaṇyāvali*'s lines (BM, D. Nos. 3951, 4471, P. Nos. 5347, 5384) can be found in the *Vimalaratnalekha* (VM, D. Nos. 4188, 4566, P. Nos. 5480, 5688), BM 1–8 = VR 13–20, 9–26 = 25–42, 34–39 = 43–48, 40–43 = 50–53, 44 = 56, 45–46 = 59–60, 47–54 = 73–80, 56 = 84, 58 = 85, 59–61 = 89–91, 62–64 = 92–95, 66–73 = 98–105, 74 = 107, 76 = 108, 77–88 = 110–122, 89 = 125, 90–91 = 123–124, 92–95 = 131–134, 106 = 144, 108–110 = 149–151. Cf. EIMER 198: 327; MOCHIZUKI 2005: 21. However the *Bodhisattvamaṇyāvali* has two textual traditions, namely the Tangyur version and the bKa' gdams pa version, and the order of verses in each version is different (BM 27–33 which is not cited in the *Vimalaratnalekha* come at the end of the text in the bKa' gdams pa version), so these works may have complex textual problems. Cf. LOBSANG 1978, THUPTEN 2008, MOCHIZUKI 2005: 21. Further, we can find many parallel lines with these two works also in his *Bodhisattvacaryāsūtrikṛtāvavāda* (D. Nos. 3946, 4472, P. Nos. 5342, 5348, 5385). Cf. MOCHIZUKI 2016.

⁴⁶ APPLE 2013: 321 (LINDTNER 1981: 196, EJIMA 2003: 367): gser gling rgyal po gu ru pha la yis // dge slong de ba ma ti btang gyur nas // de yi ngor byas gnyis la 'jug 'di // ding sang mkhas pa nams kyis brtags par rigs //

⁴⁷ EJIMA 2003: 354, note 21.

⁴⁸ APPLE 2013: 321.

Mahāpāla and became the elder of the monastery at the time of Bheyapāla, and that he left for Tibet at the time of Neyapāla. However, we must carefully reconsider the authenticity of these sources, since they simply intended to link Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's activities with these kings.

As for his works, he is said to have already begun to translate them in India with the help of Tshul khrim s rgyal ba and rGya Brtson 'grus seng ge. However, the descriptions of the colophons mentioned in the present paper are also based on Tibetan sources, so we must carefully judge whether his works were actually composed in India.

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