

No matter whether the stories pertain to ghosts or not, all items have been masterfully translated. Were it not for transliterated Chinese names, the reader would be unaware of reading a translated text. With a judicious turn-of-phrase, Pollard enlivens what is already absorbing content. His tone readily captures that of an erudite, eighteenth-century scholar-official while rendering his ideas into easily digestible prose. Readers may well feel as though they are sitting in Ji Xiaolan's living room being regaled with tantalizing tidbits from an old friend. Given the literary flavor of the translation, explanatory notes appear only rarely. Abstruse quotations that would be unfamiliar to the general reader are, therefore, occasionally paraphrased. For example, instead of translating a reference to the Tang dynasty historian Liu Zhiji's (661–721) suggestion that the deposed emperor Li of the Former Qin (r. 355–357) was maligned by official historians which appears alongside a similarly obscure reference, Pollard glosses both as, "He responded by citing past examples of distortion of true personalities in literature" (p. 208).

Throughout his translation, Pollard has selected *Perception's* longer items of socio-historical interest in addition to those that illustrate their author's thought and opinions. These he has topically arranged under four major sections that are further subdivided. Concepts and social practices possibly unfamiliar to the general reader are explained at the outset of each subsection. In order to further contextualize the stories and contribute additional information, Pollard has translated entire letters written by Ji Xiaolan that pertain to the story in question, presenting them at its conclusion. Such a meticulous synthesis will be of great value to specialist readers. The book is prefaced with an authoritative introduction that includes a concise biography of Ji Xiaolan, his socio-political background, his attitude to ghosts along with that of his contemporaries, the writing and arrangement of *Perceptions* as well as its place in the Chinese literary tradition. The book is beautifully illustrated with photos by Eva Hung in addition to surprisingly high-quality color reproductions of eighteenth-century paintings and calligraphy. The cover's intriguing design is based on a late eighteenth-century handscroll featuring cavorting ghosts and underworld denizens. As is usual with translated volumes, the book has not been indexed. This is a pity. Such is the scholarly importance of Ji Xiaolan's vignettes of life, specialists may have benefitted from an index. Nevertheless, this book is a significant landmark in the translation of China's late imperial anecdotal literature and such a joy to read that one is loath to put it down.

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An Early Chinese Commentary on the Ekottarika-āgama: The Fenbie gongde lun 分別功德論 and the History of the Translation of the Zengyi ahan jing 增一阿含經. By ANTONELLO PALUMBO. Taipei: DHARMA DRUM PUBLISHING CORP., 2013. Pp. xiv + 424. NT\$460.

Among the four Āgamas translated into Chinese in the fourth and fifth centuries, the translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, or the *Zengyi ahan jing*, is arguably the most mysterious and controversial. Antonello Palumbo's book is a groundbreaking piece of research, which wades through the jungle of problems, offering valuable clues and solutions to the mysteries concerning this collection.

This volume consists of two parts. The first part provides insight into the history of the translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, including the stories of how monks and scholars from India and Central Asia arrived in Chang'an in the fourth century to form translation teams led by Dao'an, an eminent scholar monk. The second part is a textual-historical inquiry into the *Fenbie gongde lun*, an incomplete commentary on the *Zengyi ahan jing*. The inquiry serves as a viable means of exploring the translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama* from new perspectives.

This book attests to the author's comprehensive grasp of the Buddhist sources in classical Chinese and Indic languages. Antonello Palumbo is also able to read scholarly works in several modern languages, including Chinese, Japanese, French, German, and Italian, and thus can utilize a large amount of relevant information to enrich his understanding of the issues. He delves into an extraordinarily

tangled textual history, carefully analyzing the interconnections between texts, and yields noteworthy discoveries. He is so perceptive as to discern the subtleties and nuances of the sources, and to distinguish between genuine and inauthentic elements. For example, he convincingly identifies the “Post-script to the Scriptural Collection of Saṃgharakṣa” as apocryphal (pp. 85–89). Two sources referred to in Baochang’s catalog are rejected as possible forgeries (pp. 147–50). Such examinations clarify the historical background to the translation and circulation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*.

In the first part of the book, Palumbo elaborates on the historical narratives relating to the translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*; he says: “I zoom in tightly on the background and circumstances of its translation, the men who took part in it and its obscure aftermath” (p. 6). We can see the fruitful outcome of his endeavor to reconstruct the history of translations of the *Ekottarika-āgama* and several other texts produced by Dao’an’s group. The study elicits valuable information from a wide variety of sources, some of which have hardly been noticed. It vividly describes and analyzes the different characteristics of the translators and their bearing on the translators’ various approaches to translation. Here are some examples: “Dao’an . . . professes a concern for faithfulness to the Indic original even at the expense of the literary quality of the output, a position that he shared with Zhao Zheng” (pp. 92–93). “Zhu Fonian himself says . . . Sometimes I get explanations from the reciter, or if the substance is abridged I add the details . . . This statement reads like a candid disclaimer, revealing Zhu Fonian’s awareness of his weakness as a translator” (p. 89).

Palumbo makes the plausible suggestion that from 384 to 385 the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama* yielded three different redactions of the *Zengyi ahan jing* (pp. 36–49). He also argues for the existence of a fourth redaction, which he thinks was made by Saṃghadeva. While many scholars accept that “Saṃghadeva translated the *Zengyi ahan jing* anew in A.D. 397” according to the information stemming from the *Lidai sanbao ji*, Palumbo aptly refutes this very source as unreliable (p. 66). On the other hand, he infers the fourth redaction by Saṃghadeva from Daoci’s document (pp. 68–71). Without invoking any source that explicitly mentioned Saṃghadeva’s redaction of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, Palumbo remarks: “His ‘new issue’ of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, then, can only be imagined as a new redaction—and it would have been the fourth one—of the *Zengyi ahan jing*, possibly including retranslations of selected scriptures in this āgama” (p. 77). In the second part of the book he says: “This fourth redaction cannot have been a wholesale retranslation of the entire collection, but . . . it may have involved a new rendition, perhaps from different originals, of selected scriptures within it” (pp. 267–68). These statements amount to no more than guesswork or imagination.

Some portions of the book lead the reader into detailed historical and geographical backdrops. This can be advantageous, but sometimes such rich information may blur the focus. Take the following passage as an example:

The Buddhist biographer portrays Zhao Zheng as a smooth-faced, lean man, further remarking that although he had a wife, he had no children, and people would call him a ‘eunuch’ (*yan* 閹). The secular historian—Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086), no less—simply states that he was an appointed eunuch (*huanguan* 宦官). If so, he would have enjoyed a degree of intimacy with the ruler that would not have ensued from his mere literary talents. (p. 30)

Such anecdotes and “records” are not only irrelevant to the subject of the study, but flatly contradict the fact, stated by Palumbo, that “Zhao Zheng . . . upon the death of Fu Jian in October 385 could eventually fulfil his wish to be ordained as a Buddhist monk” (pp. 58–59), which, according to the Vinaya, the Buddhist monastic code, would not have been possible had he been a eunuch (see Harvey 2000: 413–16). The above description of Zhao points to his being a *paṇḍaka*, which has generally been translated as “eunuch” (*ibid.*, 413) and is “nearly always referred to in the context of sexual, specifically homosexual, behavior” (*ibid.*, 416). Palumbo mentions much later in his book that the first Chinese translation of a complete Vinaya, which belongs to the Sarvāstivādins, was produced in 405, two decades after Zhao’s ordination (p. 204). The book, however, also acknowledges that a Vinaya text recited by Yaśas was translated into Chinese by Zhu Fonian in 383 (pp. 15 and 197), two years before Zhao’s ordination, and that the final decades of the fourth century witnessed a growing demand for a complete corpus of monastic regulations among the Buddhist communities in China while the

monastic regulations were mainly in oral transmission (pp. 195–200). In view of such circumstances, if Zhao had been a well-known *paṇḍaka*, he would not have been accepted as a fellow monk by his contemporary monastics, who must have had a basic knowledge of the monastic code although it was not yet complete in written form. Nor could he have been so highly revered by Xi Hui, “a powerful aristocratic clan in the South with a history of Buddhist devotion” (p. 59 n. 120).

Palumbo is conversant with ancient Chinese literature. He points out that two phrases in Dao'an's preface to the *Zengyi ahan jing* come from the *Analec*s (Lun yu 論語), a major Confucian text (p. 41 n. 78 and p. 44 n. 88). A sentence in this preface is recognized as an allusion to the *Book of Odes* (p. 43 n. 86). Identifying a phrase in the *Fenbie gongde lun* as an almost literal quotation from Mao Heng's preface to the *Book of Odes*, Palumbo infers “the presence of a well-bred Chinese scholar among the authors of the *Fenbie gongde lun*” (p. 248). Besides, he observes that in this commentary “the verses of the *pravāraṇa* stanza” in the *Ekottarika-āgama* are transformed in such a way that the verses appear to rhyme in Early Middle Chinese (pp. 248–49). Accordingly, this commentary is attributed partly to “Zhao Zheng, Fu Jian's poet laureate and close attendant” (p. 257).

There are more cases where Palumbo shows his sophisticated insight into the authorship of the *Fenbie gongde lun*, for instance when he cogently argues that the phrase “not falling to the ground” 未墜於地, a quotation from the *Analec*s, associates the description of how Confucius taught the ancient doctrines with the commentary's account of how a monk spreads the Buddha's teaching. Moreover, he points out the significant fact that this phrase was cited by Dao'an in no less than six of his prefaces. This indicates that Dao'an, a key figure in the translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, may have participated in composing the commentary on this text (pp. 250–51). Corroborated by careful studies, this book demonstrates that in addition to Dao'an and Zhao Zheng, Dharmananda and Zhu Fonian were also authors of the *Fenbie gongde lun* (pp. 195–257). In other words, “the *Fenbie gongde lun* is the work of the original translation team” (p. 257) that translated the *Ekottarika-āgama*.

Dao'an's preface to the *Zengyi ahan jing* states that no lapse of memory happened to the upper part (in twenty-six scrolls) of this translation while the summary verses (*uddāna*) were missing from the lower part (in fifteen scrolls). Palumbo reasons rightly: “In those cases where the *uddānas* were ‘omitted’, Dharmananda may in fact have been unable to recite at least part of the *sūtras* in the relevant *vargas*; but then, how would the gaps be filled?” (p. 276). He proposes the following scenario:

The entire translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama* would transform into much more of a collective undertaking, and other members of the group—Zhu Fonian, Dao'an, the other foreign masters—could step in on occasion to supply the missing portions. Versions of individual *sūtras* that were known within the group might even have been chosen to replace those that Dharmananda had initially recited. (p. 276)

This is tantamount to saying that the extant *Zengyi ahan jing* is a collective fabrication rather than a translation from an original text, the *Ekottarika-āgama*. The *Zengyi ahan jing* produced by Dao'an's team is even referred to as “this contrivance” (p. 278). Such an opinion is apparently incompatible with Palumbo's earlier depiction of Dao'an and Zhao Zheng as mainly concerned with faithfulness to the Indic original (pp. 92–93, as quoted above). The foregoing scenario is only speculation with lack of evidence. This idea of how the Chinese version of the *Ekottarika-āgama* was produced seems to be a projection of Palumbo's conviction that the commentary on this text was co-authored by the same people engaged in the translation of the text.

Palumbo successfully elucidates the close relationship between the *Zengyi ahan jing* and the *Fenbie gongde lun*, the commentary to this translation. He emphasizes the mention of “foreign masters” in the commentary and sees it as a clue to the sectarian position of the commentary and, by extension, of the *Ekottarika-āgama*. He considers that “the foreign masters and their disciples are mentioned as those among whom the scripture has been transmitted” (p. 185) in the following sentence:

外國法師徒相傳，以口授相付，不聽載文。

The masters and disciples of the Law in the foreign countries (*waiguo fashitu* 外國法師徒), in transmitting [the *Ekottarika-āgama*], have imparted it orally; they do not permit it to be recorded in a written text. (p. 186)

As Grohmann (2014: 3 [see Gao, Mingdao]) points out, the beginning of this sentence is mistranslated. The idiom *shitu xiangchuan* 師徒相傳 means “to be transmitted from master to disciple,” and is still in popular use in modern Chinese. Palumbo seems unaware of this idiom and misunderstands *waiguo fashitu* as a phrase meaning “the masters and disciples of the Law in the foreign countries.” Grohmann suggests that the above sentence be translated as: “It is a rule in foreign lands that [texts] are transmitted orally from master to disciple; to put them down in writing is not allowed.” Therefore, this sentence states how Buddhist texts in general were transmitted in foreign lands, but Palumbo reads too much into it: in *waiguo fa shitu xiangchuan* he recognizes *waiguo fashi* as “the masters of the Law in the foreign countries,” and inserts “[the *Ekottarika-āgama*]” as the specific text transmitted by such foreign masters. On the basis of this misinterpretation, he argues: “the ‘foreign masters’ are revealed as the transmitters of the *Ekottarika-āgama*” (p. 188).

Dharmananda’s background is regarded as crucial for discussing the sectarian affiliation of the *Ekottarika-āgama* translated as the *Zengyi ahan jing*. Palumbo associates Dharmananda with the “foreign masters” thus:

This circumstance, along with . . . the fact that farther on “that man” expounds with authority on the very history and transmission of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, seemingly speaking on behalf of the “foreign masters,” suggests that the writing of the commentary was attended by someone having direct knowledge of the source text. . . . that person was Dharmananda. (pp. 189–90)

In a similar vein, he remarks: “The commentary rests to a large extent on the indications of a foreign informant . . . reporting the views of the foreign masters (*waiguo shi* 外國師) among whom this collection had been transmitted. This person . . . could hardly have been anyone else but Dharmananda” (p. 256). These comments are based on the aforementioned misinterpretation of the commentary, *Fenbie gongde lun*. Throughout this commentary, however, we can only find one occurrence of the phrase *wai-guo shi*, which was quoted by Palumbo (p. 185), who admits that the context reveals no specific information of the “foreign master/s.” This single occurrence would not suffice to establish any relevance of the “foreign masters” to the collection, the *Ekottarika-āgama*, or to its reciter/translator, Dharmananda.

Moreover, Palumbo endorses Mori Sodō’s suggestion that the “foreign masters” mentioned once in the *Fenbie gongde lun* should be seen as identical with the group mentioned repeatedly under the same or similar labels in the **Mahā-Vibhāṣā*, the *bahirdeśaka* (foreigners) or *pāścātya* (Westerners). On this basis he contends that “the position of the ‘foreign masters’ is that of Dharmananda as the transmitter of the *Ekottarika-āgama*” and argues that “Dharmananda could certainly have been one of” the *bahirdeśakas*, which he regards as the Western communities that shared the same *Abhidharma* texts with the Sarvāstivāda of Kashmir but disagreed with the latter on the interpretation of these texts (pp. 314–15). Again, this view is built on the shaky ground related to the foregoing misunderstanding of the *Fenbie gongde lun*.

In line with this Sarvāstivāda theory, Palumbo notes: “A sizable number of narrative elements in both the *Zengyi ahan jing* and its commentary point towards the overlapping pool of stories in the *Divyāvadāna* and in the Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya” (p. 302). Then he illustrates this point with four examples and concludes, “it is a distinct possibility that all these narrative elements were originally elaborated in the Indo-Bactrian Buddhist culture of Dharmananda—in a ‘proto-Mūlasarvāstivāda’ milieu of sorts” (p. 305). Things are, however, more complicated. And strangely, while talking about “a cluster of texts significantly bending on the Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda side, with the notable exception of two passages in the *Mahāvastu*” (p. 305), he makes no mention of the sectarian affiliation of the *Mahāvastu*, which actually belongs to a branch of the Mahāsāṃghikas (Jones 1949: xi). Charles Willemen (2003: 18–21; 2008: 45–50) has pointed out that the Mūlasarvāstivādins or Sautrāntikas were considerably affected by the Mahāsāṃghikas. I have also demonstrated that the seeming affinity between several legends in the *Zengyi ahan jing* and those in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* is likely to have resulted from Mahāsāṃghika influence on the Mūlasarvāstivādins (Kuan 2013: 611–17, 621–25).

Apart from the mistranslation of a sentence in the Chinese commentary mentioned above, there are other such cases in this book. Many Chinese characters/words have multiple meanings depending on context. Palumbo renders *Acheng zhi yi* 阿城之役 as “the slave from Acheng” (p. 39, p. 42), but it

means “the battle of Acheng.” (Phrases such as *Huatielu zhi yi* 滑鐵盧之役 are still commonly used to mean “the Battle of Waterloo,” etc.) *Shi* 士 appears many times in this book, where it is typically rendered as “knight.” There are indeed contexts in which *shi* 士 does mean “soldier” or “officer,” similar to “knight” in English, but in the sources referred to in this book, it mostly means “man.” While *dao shi* 道士 is rendered as “Knights of the Path” (p. 44), it actually means the same as *dao ren* 道人, which Palumbo translates as “a man of the Path” (p. 70). Here *shi* 士 and *ren* 人 are synonyms. These two words are also synonymous in Dao’an’s phrase *yan xiu zhi shi, jiang hai zhi ren* 巖岫之士、江海之人, which is rendered as “knights of the peaks and crags or people by the sea and rivers” (pp. 39, 41). (Here Dao’an was obviously inspired by a phrase referring to hermits in the Daoist text *Zhuangzi* 莊子: “江海之士、避世之人.”) *Qing xin shi nü* 清信士女 is rendered by Palumbo as “knights and women of pure faith” (p. 196), but it means “men and women of pure faith.” However, *xue shi* 學士, literally “learned man,” is rightly translated as “scholar” (p. 43). Generally speaking, translations of Chinese sources are accurate in this book.

This book is a remarkable achievement in the field of the history of Chinese Buddhist translations. It contains important findings based on painstaking research into various difficult texts, and also involves many conjectures, which nevertheless deserve our consideration. This volume is an invaluable resource for those who are interested in Buddhism during the fourth century across India, Central Asia, and China.

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