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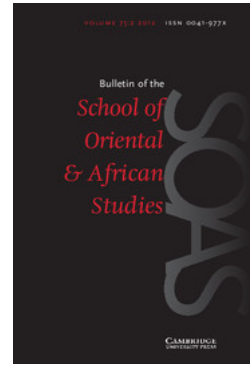
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TIBETAN *STES*, *STES-TE*, ETC. AND SOME OF THEIR SANSKRIT CORRESPONDENCES

By WALTER SIMON

As is generally known, the correspondence Tibetan *stes-dbañ-gis*—Sanskrit *daivāt* or *daivena* was proposed by Johannes Nobel and translated by him as ‘durch Schicksalsfüging’ (by dispensation of fate). He did so in his edition of the Tibetan version *Udrāyaṇa*,¹ offering the correspondence as a conjecture for *naivam*.² The equation has been taken over by Professor Lokesh Chandra into his *Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary*,³ though failing to refer to it there as a conjecture. While I do not wish to contest in any way Nobel’s conjecture, I thought it useful to adduce certain other correspondences, most of which were found when trying—unsuccessfully so far⁴—to corroborate the conjecture by quotations from actual texts.

I venture to offer this attempt as a small tribute to the distinguished Indian scholar whose work we are celebrating in this issue.

I. Sumatiratna

A translation of a substantial portion of the entry *stes* in Sumatiratna’s *Tibetan-Mongolian dictionary*⁵ has been included by J. E. Bosson in a note to stanza 61⁶ of his edition of the Tibetan and Mongolian versions of Sa-skya Paṇḍita’s *Subhāṣitaratnanidhī* (*Legs-par bśad-paḥi rin-po-ch’ehi gter*). He supports thereby his translation of *stes-dbañ-gis* as ‘by good fortune’, which is in fact the most common meaning of this compound. But before dealing with it (under V), I wish to consider the single word *stes* and a few other combinations.

II. *stes* in *re stes*

Two examples for *stes* in combination with *re* ‘how’ have been adduced from the Tibetan translation of the *Lalitavistara*, translated as ‘how excellent!’⁷ In the Sanskrit original the correspondence *śobhanam syāt* forms the main clause, preceded in the case of the two examples by a conditional clause and translated by Foucaux as ‘ce serait bien’.⁸

III. *stes* followed by *te* or *ho* (*so*) (sometimes preceded by *ma*); *stes* in combination with *la*

As an example without a Sanskrit text I wish to adduce a passage from the Tibetan version of the *Abhiñīskramaṇa-sūtra*, the *mñon-par hbyun-baḥi*

¹ *Udrāyaṇa, König von Roruka, eine buddhistische Erzählung*, 2 parts, Wiesbaden, 1951. See pt. 1 (*Tibet. Text u. Übersetzung*), 110, n. 6, and pt. 2 (*Wörterbuch*), 30.

² *Divyāvadāna* (ed. E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neil), Cambridge, 1886, 585, l. 7.

³ Pt. 5 (New Delhi, 1968), 972.

⁴ *daivāt* followed by *kathañcit* occurs in *Divyāvadāna*, loc. cit., 592, l. 10. The text has, however, not been translated into Tibetan.

⁵ I, 884 of the *Bod-hor-gyi brda-yig* (Corpus Scriptorum Mongolorum, 6), Ulanbatur, 1959.

⁶ See p. 314 of his *Treasury of aphoristic jewels* (Uralic and Altaic Series, 92), Bloomington, 1969. The Tibetan text of the stanza appears on p. 51, Bosson’s translation of both versions on p. 213. It should be noted that Sumatiratna’s equivalent for *stes dbaṅ, stabs legs* (good mode), occurs in fact as a textual variant of *stes dbaṅ* in stanza 61.

⁷ See ‘Tibetan *re* in its wider context’, *BSOAS*, xxxi, 3, 1968, 559.

⁸ See *Le Lalita vistara, traduit du sanskrit en français par Ph. Ed. Foucaux* (Annales du Musée Guimet, 6), pt. 1, Paris, 1884, 228 and 229.

mdo, where *stes-so* is followed by a sentence with *stes-te*, and in both cases the combinations are preceded by *ma*. The death of a son is deplored as 'most unfortunate': (*Ti*(betan) *T(ripitaka)*, XXXIX, 25e, 1-2) '*E-ma-ḥo Raṅs-byed-kyi bu lHag-spyod śi-ba de ni te-por ma stes-so/ 'e-ma-ḥo Raṅs-byed-kyi bu lHag-spyod śi-ba de ni śin-tu te-por ma stes-te/ c'os ḥdul-ba ḥdi ma t'os-so*.

In the second chapter of the *Divyāvadāna*, the *Pūrṇāvadāna* (Cowell and Neil, 29, 7-9 and 15-16), we find *ma stes-te* 'unfortunately' twice for *daivayogāt* (= *daivāt* 'disposition of fate'), thus showing the Tibetan version to be more in sympathy than the Sanskrit original with the prospective recipients of clothes and sugar who call on Pūrṇa on days when the more expensive relevant shops are closed (*Ti. T.*, XLI, 114a, 5-6 and b, 1-2).

In the 25th chapter (loc. cit., 443, 7-8), we find *stes-te* translating *śobhanam* when reading about the hunter Halaka who in pursuit of the Kinnari Manoharā recalls having 'fortunately' (*stes-te*) received from his Nāga the 'unfailing sling' which will enable him to catch her: *śobhano 'yaṃ mayāmoghaḥ pāśo nāgāl labdho Manoharāyāḥ kinnarāyāḥ kṣepsyāmi*, *Ti. T.*, XLI, 198d, 2: *bdag-gi klu-las don yod-paḥi žags-pa t'ob-pa stes-te de miḥam-ciḥi bu-mo Yid-ḥp'rog-ma-la gdab-po snyam-nas. . .*

For *stes-la* ('luckily') Sumatiratna offers an example in the entry mentioned under I (though without a Sanskrit passage): *nyes-can stes-la śor-ra-re* ('May the guilty-one not have a lucky escape!').

For an example of *stes-nas* see under IV.

IV. *ji-žig-ltar* followed by *stes (-nas)*

An example from the Tibetan version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*—F. Weller in his *Index*⁹ lists in fact two—may serve to illustrate the addition of *stes (-nas)* to stress the good fortune of the event. *ji-žig-ltar* renders Sanskrit *katham*, *kathamcid* or *kathamcidapi* 'somehow'. In the verse concerned,¹⁰ Finot¹¹ translates *tathā kathamcid api* (= *de-bžin ji-žig-ltar stes-nas*) as 'je ne sais comment'.

For the translation of *ji-žig-ltar* by *stes dbaṅ* see under V.

V. *stes-dbaṅ*

As mentioned under I, J. E. Bosson translated *stes-dbaṅ-gis* as 'by good fortune' in a stanza of Sa-skya Paṇḍita's *Subhāṣitaratnanidhi*, which is preferable to Nobel's 'by dispensation of fate'.¹² I shall adduce two further examples to confirm this meaning, though in both cases we have no supporting Sanskrit text. The first (*Ti. T.*, XLIII, 222a, 8) relates the story of a son who, after the death of both his parents, on a walk meets his landlord who turns out 'by good fortune' to be his future benefactor: *dus gžan-žig-na deḥi p'a-ma gnyis dus-la bab-nas/ de p'an-ts'un ḥk'yam-pa-na stes-dbaṅ-gis k'yim-bdag deḥi k'yim-du p'yin-pa. . .* The second example (*Ti. T.*, XLIII, 199e, 1-2) reports that a woman has become pregnant whose husband had for a long time been praying for a son: *deḥi ts'e-na/ ḥbrog-gnas-na k'yim-bdag ciq ḥdug-pa de-la bu*

⁹ F. Weller, *Tibetisch-Sanskritischer Index zum Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil.-hist. Kl. 46, 3 and 47, 3), Berlin, 1952-5, 118 and 170.

¹⁰ III, 27 (Finot) = III, 28 (Weller).

¹¹ L. Finot, *La marche à la lumière*, Paris, 1920, III, 27, p. 41.

¹² This was in fact an improvement on Schiefner's 'power of fate', included in Jäschke's dictionary (p. 222b).

med-nas de yun-rin-po-nas kye-ma bdag-la bu yod-par gyur-cig ces smon-nas stas (instead of *stes*) *dbañ-gis deñi c'un-ma-la sems-can zugs-par gyur-to*. . . .

An interesting example of *stes dbañ-gis* occurs in the Tibetan version of the *Suvarnavarnāvadāna* which was edited, together with its Sanskrit original by Tissa Rajapatirana in his (unpublished) thesis (Canberra, 1974), ch. 91, translation p. 80. We find there our compound, not like *stes-te* in IV as an addition to *ji-zig-ltar*, but as its equivalent: the caravan leader Karṇa, his ship destroyed in the great ocean, together with a child somehow found a plank. . . . Tibetan: *ded-dpon rNa-can yañ rgya-mts'o c'en-por gru zig-pa dañ / stes-dbañ-gis byis-pa zig dañ lhan-cig spañ-leb-la hjus-te*. . . . Sanskrit: *Karṇasca sārthavāho mahāsamudrād bhagnayānapātraḥ kathañcit phalakam āsādyā*. . . .

In a similar way Sumatiratna in the entry *ji-zig-ltar* of his dictionary (I, 695) notes *ji-zig-ltar-te stes dbañ* understanding the *te* as *ni* and translating it as *inu*: *jambar niḡen metu inu jol-un ike*.

In conclusion I should like to point out that *śobhanam* appears to be the most common correspondence to *stes* and its compounds. As its occurrence in the *Divyāvadāna* has shown me, it is often translated¹³ by *ma nyes-so*, *ma noñs-so*, or by *legs* and *bzañ-po*, and sometimes it is completely ignored.

¹³ Leaving out cases like *mk'o* (*Div.* 511, 14/15 and 511, 15/16) and *ruñ-ba* (*Div.* 437, 29/438, 1).