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## Introduction for English Readers

The original Sanskrit text *Advayasamatāvijayamahākālparāja* (ASVM) , being published here for the first time, was previously preserved in the China Ethnic Library and numbered as 76 in Wang Sen's catalogue. The present trilingual version of the ASVM and the related study are based on the microfilms held by the Research Institute of Sanskrit Manuscripts and Buddhist Literature of Peking University.

The ASVM was first mentioned as the explanatory tantra (Ākhyāna Tantra) of the *Guhyasamājatantra* (GS) in Amogha (不空)'s work written in the 8th century during the Tang dynasty. The famous master Bu ston who made the Tibetan translation of the ASVM also agreed with the affiliation of the ASVM to the GS. However, Bu ston neglected the importance of the ASVM probably because the Sanskrit original was not complete. Present-day Scholars have different views on the affiliation of the ASVM. Alex Wayman denied any relationship between the ASVM and the GS, but Japanese scholars, Sakai and Okuyama, insisted that the ASVM belongs to the textual corpus of the so-called Ārya School of the GS. Through the comparison of the two texts, ie. the ASVM and GS, it can be ascertained that the ASVM is an explanatory tantra of the GS. Nevertheless, we still observe the similarities between the ASVM and the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha* (STTS) . Considering its complexity, our hypothesis is the ASVM might be composed under the influence of two kinds of texts, one is represented by the GS, the other is by the STTS. Thus the ASVM is of special significance for studying the development of the tantras from the earlier to the later period.

With regard to the manuscript of the ASVM, it had been first recorded by Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana in his renowned catalogue and was later photographed by Giuseppe Tucci in Zhwa lu Riphug. The microfilmed manuscript I used consists of 25 folios. Most of the folios contain seven lines of writing, but folio 25 is an exception and has only three lines on the recto and verso sides. No colophon or date can be found in the manuscript. The material of the manuscript is palm leaf, and its script is the so-called hook-topped Nepalese script. As for the six sides of the first three folios only two contain writing. First, the recto of the first folio has two lines in Tibetan writing

that represent some introductory notes on the Tibetan translation of the ASVM. Second, on the verso of the second folio there are three lines in Sanskrit containing a passage of a commentary on the second chapter of the GS. The third folio is blank. Thus it is certain that the three folios do not belong to the manuscript. Consequently, the folio indicated by the Sanskrit numeral as 2 is definitely the second folio, which means that the first folio is missing.

The Chinese translation of the ASVM was made by Dānapāla in the Song dynasty at the beginning of the 11th century. Then in the 14th century, as is mentioned above, Bu ston completed the Tibetan translation of the ASVM. On the basis of various philological evidences, we can ascertain that the Sanskrit manuscript on which the Tibetan translation was based is the very same one as number 76 of the China Ethnic Library, namely, the manuscript I am dealing with.

The manuscript is the only one extant of the ASVM. It has not been deciphered and researched thoroughly by anyone until now. Considering the condition of the manuscript and its relationship with the Tibetan translation, the editing method should be special. Our aim is to edit the text so as to provide basic material for future study. Unfortunately our materials to be utilized are extremely limited. The Tibetan translation is often influenced by the scribal errors and illegibility of the manuscript. The Chinese version is based on a Sanskrit text which has some differences from the manuscript, though it can offer some help in restoring the original Sanskrit text and correcting scribal errors. Moreover, the manuscript includes a lot of metrical, grammatical and syntactic aberrations. We should take into account the possibility that the author of the ASVM introduced various kinds of grammatical distortions in order to give priority to the meter. When restorations or corrections are proposed, they must be in conformity with the internal requirements of the Sanskrit text, especially metrical rule.

As an explanatory tantra of the GS, the ASVM has the same goal as the GS, that is, the attainment of Buddhahood in this present life by realizing that one's body, speech and mind are essentially one with the body, speech and mind of the Buddha. But the practices explained in the ASVM are somewhat different from that of the GS. They are more like a synthesis of the practices explained in the STTS, the GS and other tantras. Though the descriptions of the practical order of four steps (*catu-*

*raṅgasādhana*) can be found in the ASVM, they are not in accordance with those of the GS. Moreover, the explanation of empowerment (*abhiṣeka*) does not correspond to common explanations. It seems that it has its own special system of practices, which deserves further research.

The practices of the Yoga of six steps (*ṣaḍaṅgayoga*) are not mentioned in the ASVM. However, the practices of Samādhi and Dhyāna are particularly emphasized in the ASVM. Thus the maṇḍala, as a meditating tool, is given much emphasis in the ASVM. It is noteworthy that the maṇḍala of the ASVM is very complicated. Some maṇḍalas present the features of the Guhyasamāja-maṇḍala. But some are similar to the maṇḍala of the STTS. With regard to the relationship of the maṇḍala of the ASVM, we give a detailed analysis in the fifth chapter.

The bold accounts of sex and the disgusting explanations concerning the consumption of excrement and human beings which can be seen in the GS also appear in the ASVM. As some scholars propose, these immoral teachings and practices are the special characteristics of Anuttarayoga Tantra. It is one of the viewpoints of the Anuttarayoga Tantra that a practitioner can achieve non-differentiation or non-distinction through equalizing disgusting things with pure things.

Even though the ASVM had been ignored by the master Bu ston, its special value for research should be realized now. Not only the text and the manuscript, but also the translations are worth of being studied. Therefore, I hereby offer the first trilingual version. My aim is to offer a basis for further study to scholars.

In conclusion, I would like to thank first my supervisor Professor Duan Qing who gave the precious photocopy of the manuscript to me and kindly guided me in writing my thesis. I acknowledge my gratitude to Professor Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Munich and Professor Harunaga Isaacson, Hamburg, for reading my text and improving it by providing a lot of useful comments. I am also very grateful to my teachers in Beijing and my colleagues in Munich who helped me and gave me suggestions for completing my thesis.