TRANSLATION & TRANSMISSION

October 2-5, 2014 | Keystone, Colorado, USA

Workshop 1 | Room: Castle Peak | 4:30–6:30pm, October 4, 2014

Translating Poetic & Inspirational Materials

with Holly Gayley, Wulstan Fletcher, Andrew Quintman

Andrew Quintman's Presentation

Andrew Quintman
(Yale University)

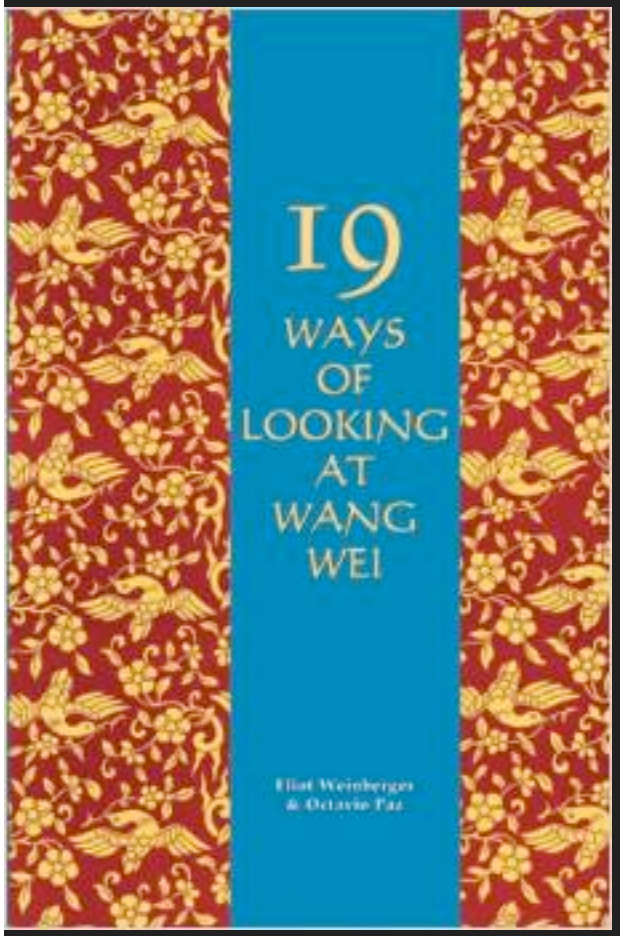
Andrew Quintman is assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Yale University, specializing in the Buddhist traditions of Tibet and the Himalaya. For seven years he served as the academic director of the School for International Training's Tibetan Studies program based in Kathmandu. He is the author of *The Yogin and the Madman: Reading the Biographical Corpus of the Great Tibetan Saint Milarepa* (Columbia University Press 2013), and co-editor of *Himalayan Passages: Tibetan and Newar Studies in Honor of Hubert Decleer* (Wisdom Publications 2014). His English translation of *The Life of Milarepa* (2010) was published in the Penguin Classics series. He currently serves as the co-chair of the Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group at the American Academy of Religion and is co-leading a 5-year AAR seminar on *Religion and the Literary in Tibet.*

Translating Poetic & Inspirational Materials

Reflections from Tsangnyön Heruka's

Catalogue of Songs Opening the Eyes of Faith That Dispels the Darkness of Ignorance

མགུར་གྱི་དཀར་ཆག་མ་རིག་མུན་སེལ་དད་པའི་མིག་འབྱེད།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OF
LOOKING
AT
WANG
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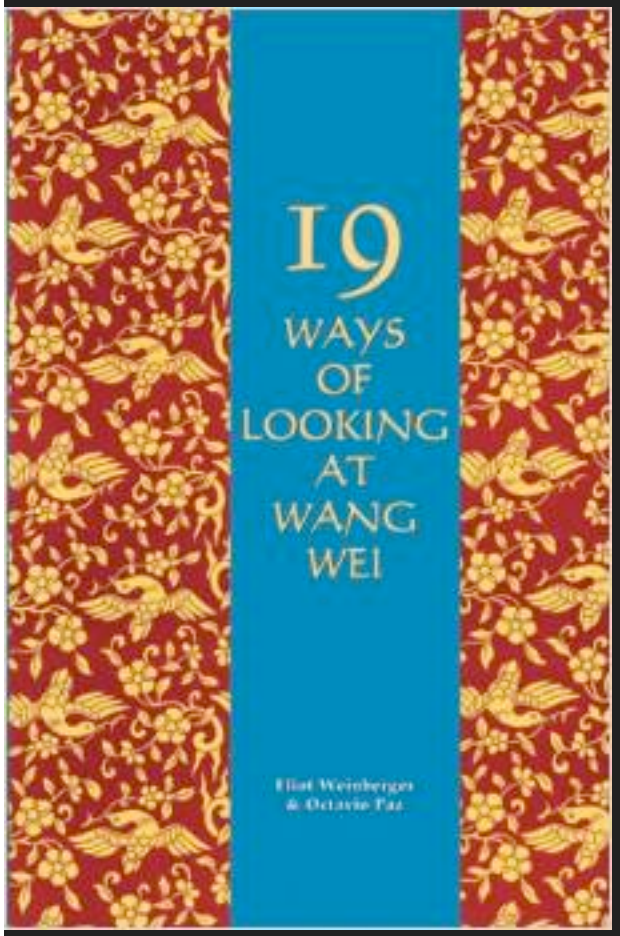
Eliot Weinberger
& Octavio Paz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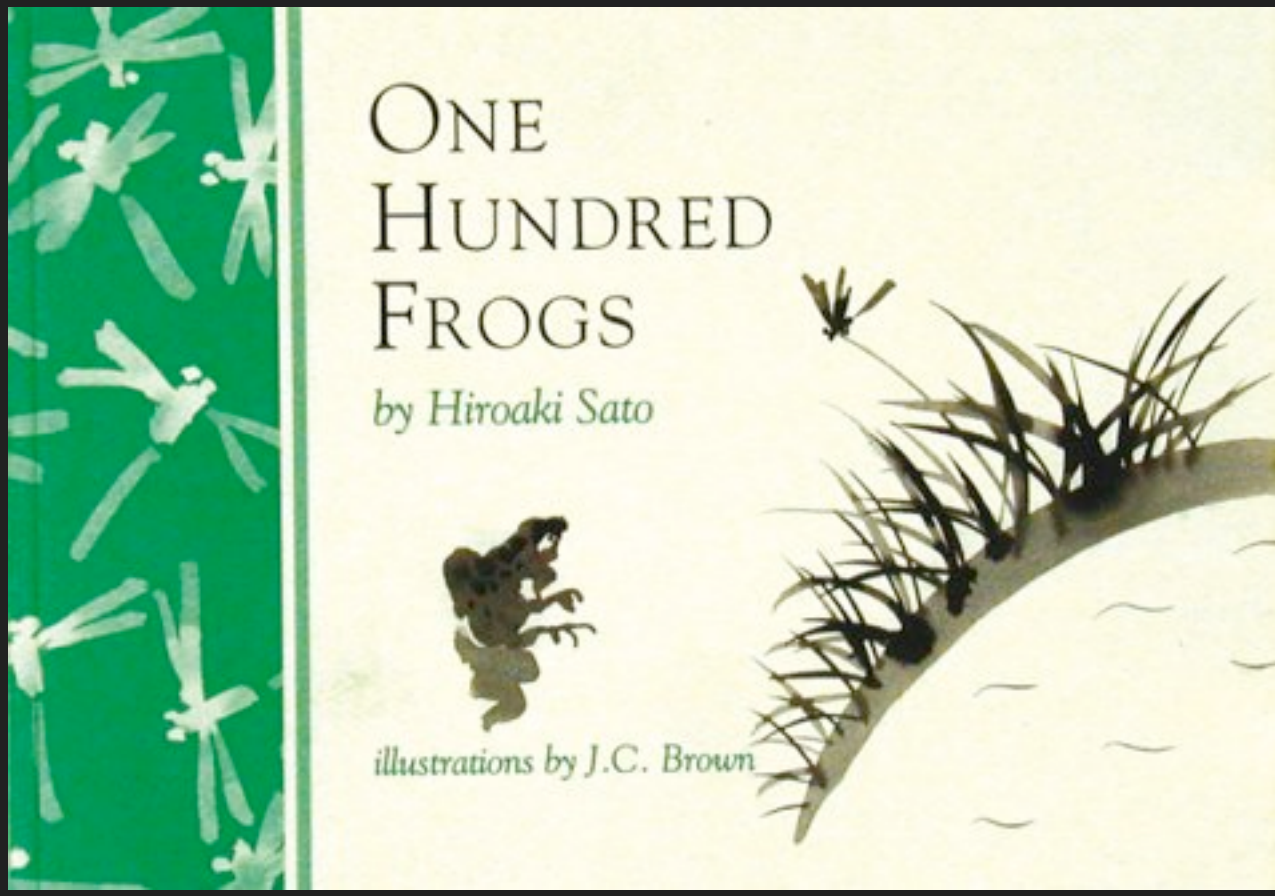

ONE
HUNDRED
FROGS
by Hiroaki Sato
illustrations by J.C. Brown

A translated text should be the site where a different culture emerges, where a reader gets a glimpse of a culture other, and resistency, a translation strategy based on an aesthetic of discontinuity, can best preserve that difference, that otherness.

Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*

Do *mgur* have formal properties?

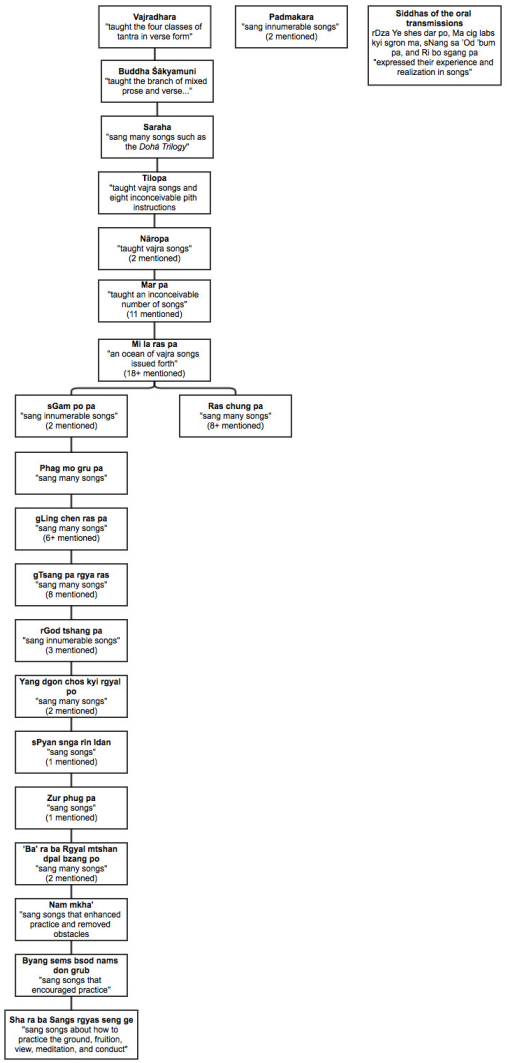
Do those properties change according to context?

How are those properties understood to make *mgur* effective for both composer/singer and listener/reader?

What are the sources for these views?

Opening the Eyes of Faith

Written 1503, printed 1508



25 “authors”
55+ songs/song titles

Transmission lineages of
’Ba’ ra Stod ’Brug
Dwags po snyan brgyud

“Having eliminated these activities, those of superior capacity listen to the meaning of the ground, fruition, and view, while those of intermediate capacity, who are involved in practicing meditation and conduct of the path, listen to the prosody of the lyrics. Those of inferior capacity stare at the mouth of the singer, slack-jawed and tongue drooping, they listen to the changing notes of the lyrics. You should listen in the manner of both superior and medium capacities.” (2b)

“First, when the song begins with the opening support (*mgo ’dren*), it should be elevated and majestic. In the middle, the words that express its subject matter should be clear and unadorned; the metaphors and their meaning should be well matched and easy to understand; the tone should be charming and the melody complete; and the voice should be powerful and magnificent. When the song concludes it should be gentle with an easy end. Moreover, the beginning of the song is elevated and majestic like the upper body of a lion. Its middle part is magnificent and firm like a golden vajra. The end of the song is long with an easy end, like the tail of a tiger.” (3b)

“First, supplications and praises form the song’s opening support. In the middle, stories and their rationale form the song’s liturgical framework, an outline together with introductions show how a song is put together, and time markers together with sections keep it to the proper length. Prayers of auspiciousness and aspiration form the song’s conclusion.” (3b)

“These songs that were sung by *siddhas* of the past may here be understood in the following way. They are a breeze that dispels the drowsiness and torpor of meditators. They are iron hooks that rein in scattered and agitated mind, bringing forth experience and realization. They remove obstacles for those who suffer. They enhance well-being for those who are happy. They are heart-advice that encourages the faithful to practice dharma. They are the intended meaning of the victors of the three times. They are lamps that dispel the darkness of ignorance. They are rivers that purify the latencies of the two obscurations. They are bonfires that consume the firewood of a belief in a self….” (7b)

“Concerning the sayings of the lamas of the past … they are provisions when wandering in charnel grounds and holy places, necessities when roaming savage lands and mountain retreats, offerings when meeting lamas, gifts when encountering dharma brothers, offering articles when visiting temples and stūpas, goods when traveling around the countryside, ferry-fees when crossing rivers, offering gifts for requests to kings, an axe for chipping away alms from the wealthy and a file for scraping away alms from the poor. Even when meeting bandits we reply in song, and on such occasions the advice should be an exhortation to practice virtue.” (8b)

Tsangnyon Heruka's *Catalogue* influenced:

1. *Comforting the Minds of the Fortunate* སྐལ་བཟང་ཡིད་ཀྱི་ངལ་སོ་ appended to the *Ocean of Kagyu Songs* (mid-16th century)

2. *Collected Songs* of Drukpa Kagyu yogin Ngag dbang tshe ring (1717-1794) from Ladakh

Precedents and Parallels

Catalogue of Vajra Songs (རྡོ་རྗེ་གླུའི་དཀར་ཆ)
by Longchenpa (1308-1364)

Analysis of Dohā and Vajra Songs (དོ་ཧ་དོ་རྗེའི་གླུའི་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་)
by Karma Chakmé (1613-1678)

Precedents and Parallels

Treasury of Explanations, A Wish-Fulfilling Jewel
(བ་ཁད་མཛོད་ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་བུ་)
by Dondam Mawé Sengé (15th c)

Typology of songs (mostly གླུ་):

- the six modes of singing
- four essential points
- four results
- sixteen functions

Don grub rgyal's *History of Mgur*

1. Songs of prayer having meditated in retreat and reflected on the lama's kindness
རྗེ་ཁོད་བསྒོམ་ཤིང་བླ་མའི་བཀའ་དྲིན་དྲན་ཏེ་ལ་གསོལ་བ་བདེབས་པའི་མགུར་

2. Songs about the ways in which experience and realization arise having meditated on the lama's instructions
བླ་མའི་གདམས་ངག་བསྒོམ་ནས་ཉམས་རྟོགས་འཕྲུངས་ཚུལ་གྱི་མགུར་

3. Songs that encourage fortunate individuals to practice dharma
སྐལ་ལྡན་གྱི་རྣམས་ཆོས་ལ་བསྐུལ་བའི་མགུར་

4. Songs of instruction in the form of encouragement to oneself and advice to others
རང་ལ་བསྐུལ་མ་དང་གཞན་ལ་བསྩལ་བྱའི་ཚུལ་དུ་གདམས་པའི་མགུར་

5. Songs that teach the dharma in accordance with whatever one’s patrons, disciples, and followers request
རང་གི་ཡོན་བདག་དང་བུ་སློབ་ཉ་མ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཞུས་པ་བཞིན་གང་ལ་གང་མཐུན་ཚེ་ཆོས་གསུང་བའི་མགུར་

6. Songs that chastise the wrongdoing of monks who do not abide by proper ethical conduct
སྡོང་པ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ལ་མི་གནས་པའི་སེར་མོ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མཚང་འབྱེད་པའི་མགུར་

7. Songs that function as a form of communication to one’s lama and disciples
རང་གི་བླ་མ་དང་སློབ་མ་ལ་སྤྲིངས་ཡིག་གི་ཚུལ་དུ་སྩར་བའི་མགུར་

1. Seek out sources for Tibetan self-reflection about the forms of poetry and inspirational literature

2. Determine the trajectories of these ideas over time

3. Identify innovators and work out their networks of influence