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Prolegomena to an English Translation of the *Sūtrasamuccaya*

by *Bhikkhu Pāsādika*

The different versions and editions of the *Sūtrasamuccaya* (hereafter abbreviated as SS), as well as relevant commentaries, have been mentioned by A. Pezzali¹ and, recently, by D. Seyfort Ruegg². Regarding the problem of the authorship of the SS, A. Pezzali has recorded important comments by a number of scholars, and remarks that the *Sūtrasamuccaya* is most often attributed to Nāgārjuna.³ In the same context, Ruegg sums up:

On the basis of what Śāntideva has written in verses v. 105-6 of the Bodhicaryāvatāra Buston and Tāranātha have ascribed to him a work entitled *Sūtrasamuccaya*. The passage in question is not altogether clear, however, and Nāgārjuna, the author of the well-known *Sūtrasamuccaya*, is also mentioned in it. At all events, no work entitled *Sūtrasamuccaya* attributable to Śāntideva is known to exist; and it has therefore been concluded that the above-mentioned ascription is erroneous.⁴

Apropos Pezzali's monograph on Śāntideva¹, J. W. de Jong wrote a long article entitled "La Légende de Śāntideva,"⁵ in which he also reviews Pezzali's work and completes her bibliographic information by enumerating what Japanese scholars published on the SS between 1965 and 1972.⁶ In the same place he also discusses the question of attributing one *Sūtrasamuccaya* to Śāntideva. He mentions, in the section of Mahāyāna śāstras, the list of Dpal-brtsegs, which includes, *inter alia*, a *Mdo-sde snatshogs-kyi mdo btus-pa/Viśvasūtrasamuccaya* and the SS attributed to Nāgārjuna. Both these works consist of five sections (*bam-po*). Although the *Viśvasūtrasamuccaya* is not extant, de Jong says that "la possibilité n'est pas exclue que cet ouvrage soit identi-

que au Sūtrasamuccaya que les commentateurs indiens du Bodhicaryāvatāra et les historiens tibétains attribuent à Śāntideva." Before mentioning two points that may be of some relevance to further discussion of the problem in hand, I should first like to say a few words about modern translations and the quotations in our text.

In the quarterly "*Linh-So'n*" - *publication d'études bouddhologiques*,⁷ the Ven. Thích Huyền-Vi has nearly finished translating the SS from the Chinese version into both French and Vietnamese, and in the same journal I have attempted an English translation of the same text from the Tibetan.⁸ Eight quotations from the SS have already been translated into English by J. Hopkins in his *Meditation on Emptiness*.⁹ He translates *samuccaya* as "compendium," an appropriate rendering signifying an independent genre of Buddhist literature started by Indian ācāryas and perpetuated and further developed by Tibetan masters.¹⁰ With reference to the SS, however, I have preferred to translate *samuccaya* as "anthology"¹¹ because, unlike, e.g., Śāntideva in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, the compiler of the SS very rarely paraphrases scriptural authority. His own words are limited to a minimum of stereotyped words introducing each quotation. The fact that the SS is just a collection of citations, mostly from Mahāyāna discourses, seems to corroborate the Tibetan belief that the SS is the first example of a *samuccaya* work, whereas the authorship of the SS, as will be seen below, does not appear to be less problematic than before.

In the introduction to his edition of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, P.L. Vaidya refers to the quotations in the SS¹² thus: "... Nāgārjuna wrote a *Sūtrasamuccaya* ... containing extracts from about 60 sūtras." Vaidya evidently took his information from A. C. Banerjee's article in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, March 1941.¹³ The Chinese text of the SS is a bit shorter than the Tibetan version, in which are found several citations wanting in the Chinese. Contrary to what Vaidya claimed, the Tibetan text quotes from 69 scriptures, or even 71, if one separates out three of them, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, the *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā*, and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, from the "*Prajñāpāramitā*" given in the text. The sum total of quotations from these 71 scriptures is 174, some of them being no longer than two or three short sentences, others, especially in the 5th section, being fairly long.

In the following, I give a list of the SS quotations in the sequence of their sources' first occurrence in the text:

Work	Quotations
(1) <i>Saddharmapunḍarīka</i>	4
(2) <i>Nirṇayarājasūtra</i>	1
(3) <i>Avadāna</i>	1
(4) <i>Bodhisattvapīṭaka</i>	8
(5) <i>Bhagavajjñānavaiṇyasyasūtra</i>	2
(6) <i>Candragarbhaparivarta</i>	6
(7) <i>Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra</i>	6
(8) <i>Bhadrakalpikasūtra</i>	2
(9) <i>Samyuktāgama</i>	3
(10) <i>Ekottarikāgama</i>	1
(11) <i>Tathāgataguhyasūtra</i>	5
(12) <i>Vimatisamudghātasūtra</i>	1
(13) <i>Śraddhābalādhānasūtra</i>	5
(14) <i>Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā</i>	2
(15) <i>Tathāgataguṇa- jñānācintyaviṣ- ayāvatāranirdeśasūtra</i>	2
(16) <i>Śiṃhasutejo'vadāna</i>	1
(17) <i>Prasenajitparipṛcchā</i>	2
(18) <i>Prasāntaviniścayaṇṇāpātihāryasūtra</i>	3
(19) <i>Ajātaśatruparivarta (= sūtra)</i>	5
(20) <i>Ratnarāśīsūtra</i>	6
(21) <i>Kāśyapaparivarta</i>	2
(22) <i>Pitāputrasamāgamanasūtra</i>	3
(23) <i>Dharmasaṃgītisūtra</i>	2
(24) <i>Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra</i>	2
(25) <i>Upāyakaṇṇasālyasūtra</i>	1
(26) <i>Prajñāpāramitā</i>	10
(27) <i>Vīradattagrhapatiparipṛcchā</i>	3
(28) <i>Ratnameghasūtra</i>	4
(29) <i>Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchā</i>	2
(30) <i>Maitreyasīmaṇṇādasūtra</i>	2
(31) <i>Mañjuśrīvikṛdītasūtra</i>	1
(32) <i>Candrapradīpa (= Samādhirāja, Candraprabhāparivarta) sūtra</i>	5
(33) <i>Niyatānīyatāvatāramudrāsūtra</i>	2

(34) <i>Mañjuśrīvikurvāṇaparivarta</i>	3
(35) <i>Sāgaramatīparipṛcchāsūtra</i>	4
(36) <i>Ugraparipṛcchāsūtra</i>	1
(37) <i>Pravrajyāntarāyasūtra</i>	1
(38) <i>Udayanavatsarājaparipṛcchā</i>	1
(39) <i>Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra</i>	2
(40) <i>Arthaviniścayasūtra</i>	1
(41) <i>Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa</i>	7
(42) <i>Satyakaparivarta</i>	2
(43) <i>Vicikitsāsudhvaṃsasūtra</i> [perhaps identical with (12)]	1
(44) <i>Sūryagarbhaparivarta</i>	1
(45) <i>Ākāśagarbhaparivarta</i>	1
(46) <i>Kṣitigarbhasūtra</i>	3
(47) <i>Adhyāśayaśaṃcodanasūtra</i>	3
(48) <i>Brahmaparipṛcchā</i>	5
(49) <i>Anavataptasūtra</i>	1
(50) <i>Puṣpakūḷasūtra</i>	1
(51) <i>Mahākaruṇā(puṇḍarīka)sūtra</i>	2
(52) <i>Tathāgatabimbaparivarta</i>	1
(53) <i>Anupūrvasamudgatasūtra</i>	1
(54) <i>Tathāgatotpattisaṃbhavasūtra</i>	1
(55) <i>Lokottaraparivarta</i>	1
(56) <i>Laṅkāvatārasūtra</i>	4
(57) <i>Mahāsaṃnipātaparivarta</i>	1
(58) <i>Avaiṃśatācakasūtra</i>	1
(59) <i>Śrīmālāśiṃhanāḍasūtra</i>	2
(60) <i>Bhadramāyākārasūtra</i>	1
(61) <i>Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra</i>	3
(62) <i>Brahmaviśeṣacintīparipṛcchā</i>	1
(63) <i>Saptaśatikā(prajñāpāramitā)</i>	2
(64) <i>Ratnasamṇicayanīrdeśasūtra</i>	3
(65) <i>Trīśatikā(prajñāpāramitā)</i>	2
(66) <i>Ratnadattamāṇavasūtra</i>	1
(67) <i>Tathāgatakośasūtra</i>	1
(68) <i>Māradamanaparivarta(=sūtra)</i>	2
(69) <i>Daśabhūmikasūtra</i> (acc. to the Chinese, identical with <i>Buddhāvataṃsaka</i>)	1

From the viewpoint of textual history it is rather bewildering that four quotations from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, one of them dealing with tathāgatagarbha, and also two short passages from the *Śrīmālāsīṃhanādasūtra* are included in the SS. As general editor, S. Bagchi writes in his introduction to Vaidya's *Laṅkāvatāra* edition that this sūtra "was brought into existence after the compilation of the Āgama-literature. The consideration of these facts paves the way for giving rise to the tentative suggestion that the *Laṅkāvatāra* was compiled about the beginning of the Christian era or probably before it."¹¹ Unfortunately, so far there does not seem to have been adduced any evidence to substantiate such a suggestion, and many scholars cannot imagine Nāgārjuna's having known the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.¹⁵

Judging by the frequency of quotations found in the SS, three scriptures must have been the compiler's favourites: a) *Prajñāpāramitā* texts, b) the *Bodhisattva-piṭaka*, and c) the *Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa*. In quotations from these texts, but also in a number of other passages of our anthology, we find the tenets of the Mādhyamikas, which clearly are our compiler's preference, in spite of one citation about tathāgatagarbha.

The Chinese version of one SS quotation from the *Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa* (in the following abbreviated Vkn) is of special interest.¹⁶ This quotation is taken from what corresponds to the 12th chapter of the Tibetan text of the Vkn.¹⁷ Twice in chapter 12, the Tibetan gives an additional title to the Vkn, which can be reconstructed, after *Mahāvvyutpatti* 798, as *Yamakavyatyastāhāra* or *Yamakavyatyastābhīrḥāra*.¹⁸ According to É. Lamotte, none of the Chinese versions that have come down to us has anything corresponding to the additional title of the sūtra in Tibetan¹⁹—which I can confirm as far as Kumārajīva's translation is concerned. In the Chinese version of the SS, on the other hand, this passage from the last chapter of Vkn is accompanied by something at least resembling the additional title of the Tibetan: *P'u shê chung chung wên i tz'ũ p'ieh chih mên* 普攝種種文義差別之門 which may tentatively be translated as "The Presentation (*āhāra*) of a Comprehensive Collection of All Sorts of [Twin (*yamaka*)] Phrases and of the Distinction of their Meanings" (*vyatyasta* = "reversed, opposites" that have to be distinguished).

According to *Taishō* 32, No. 1635, p. 49, the translator of the SS is Dharmarakṣa (Fa-hu 法護). Lamotte mentions two Dharmarakṣas,²⁰ a) of the Chin Dynasty (晉), and b) of the Sung Dynasty (宋). The former translated the Vkn, in 303 A.D. (this translation is lost), and the latter the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* in the first half of the 11th century A.D. Having drawn on the available Chinese catalogues, Lamotte lists all Chinese translations of the Vkn, lost or extant;²¹ in that list, only one Dharmarakṣa figures, i.e., the Indian master who translated the Vkn in 303. The latest Chinese translation of this text is Hsüan-tsang's. It is, of course, tempting to identify the translator of the SS with the translator of the Vkn translated in 303, for all quotations from the Vkn occurring in that SS contain a considerable number of textual divergencies, archaisms (e.g., *brahmacarya*: Dharmarakṣa translates *fan hsing* 梵行, Kumārajīva *tao hsing* 道行), and, in other citations, a predilection for transliterated Sanskrit words. As for the Chinese, at least, one can assume fragments of an unknown Vkn translation. If the SS was translated by Dharmarakṣa during the Chin Dynasty, our anthology cannot, in fact, be ascribed to Śāntideva; the *Laṅkāvatāra* quotations in the SS, however, guard against any real confidence where the authorship of the SS is concerned.

To delve into the problem of fixing approximate dates for (a) the *Laṅkāvatāra*, particularly in respect of a nucleus or root-text of the sūtra, and (b) the *Śrīmālāsīghanādasūtra*, is a desideratum and would help us draw conclusions about the authorship of the SS.

Before concluding, let me touch on the structure of the SS. Already in the Pāli canon we come across the term *anupubbikathā*,²² which the P.T.S. dictionary renders as "a gradual instruction, graduated sermon, regulated exposition of the ever higher values of four subjects (*dāna-kathā*, *sīla*°, *sagga*°, *magga*°)" Although the SS is an anthology consisting of quotations from various sūtras, the compiler has, to some extent, made an original contribution to Buddhist literature (actually befitting Nāgārjuna, the great systematizer of early Mahāyāna thought, if he should really be the compiler) by expanding the terse, formulaic *anupubbikathā* into a Mahāyāna/*ekayāna* system of exposition indicating the gradual journey to final emancipation and Buddhahood. The compiler of the SS has indirectly out-

lined the doctrine of the “three scopes,” pertaining to the persons of small, medium, and great scope (*adhamapuruṣa/skyes-bu-chung-ngu*; *madhyama*° / *skyes-bu-bring*; *mahā*° / *skyes-bu-chen-po*), which later on plays an important role in the *lam-rim* literature of the Tibetans. That the SS served Tibetan writers of *lam-rim* treatises as a model is confirmed by the fact that, e.g., sGam-po-pa cites in his *Dvags-po Thar-rgyan* (“The Jewel Ornament of Liberation”)¹⁰ quite a few passages already occurring in the SS.²³ The climax in the development of the *samuccaya/lam-rim* literature is, no doubt, Tsong-kha-pa’s *Lam-rim chen-mo*. Geshe Lobsang Tengya has written a note entitled “The Themes of the Sūtrasamuccaya (mDo-kun-las-btus-pa) and the Corresponding Passages in the Lam-rim chen-mo—a Juxtaposition,” in which he lists the themes of the SS that constitute its structure and, by juxtaposing the respective folio Nos., indicates where these themes are dealt with in the *Lam-rim chen-mo*.²¹

The themes of the SS are as follows:

- (1) The utmost rareness of a Buddha’s appearance
- (2) The utmost rareness of being born a human
- (3) The rareness of obtaining an auspicious rebirth
- (4) The rareness of having trust
- (5) The rareness of aspiring after Buddhahood
- (6) The rareness of great compassion
- (7) The rareness of forsaking obstructive conditions
- (8) The rareness of really serious Dharma-practice on the part of householders
 - (a) The Dharma-practice of householder-bodhisattvas
 - (b) Wrong practice, the evil of taking life, etc.
 - (c) Further wrong practice on the part of laymen—attachment to life, riches, etc.
 - (d) Spiritual friends as prerequisites for really serious Dharma-practice
- (9) The utmost rareness of beings who are truly and resolutely intent on the tathāgatas’ complete nirvāṇa
- (10) The utmost rareness of beings who are resolutely intent on the *ekayāna*
- (11) The utmost rareness of beings who progress in the direction of a Buddha’s and bodhisattva’s sublime and exalted position

This structure does not appear to be altogether systematic,

and will need further research by consulting the commentator on the SS, Ratnākaraśānti.²⁵

NOTES

1. Cf. A. Pezzali, *Śāntideva—mystique bouddhiste des VII^e et VIII^e siècles* (Firenze: Vallecchi Editore, 1968), p. 80ff.

2. Cf. D. Seyfort Rugg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981), pp. 29, 84, 113, 114, 124.

3. *Ibid.*, 80.

4. *Ibid.*, 84. In this quoted passage, three Nos. referring to footnotes have been omitted. A forthcoming monograph on Nāgārjuna by Chr. Lindtner (Denmark) most probably deals with the problem of the authorship of the SS.

5. Cf. J. W. de Jong, *Buddhist Studies* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1979), pp. 119–140.

6. *Ibid.*, 140.

7. No. 2 (1978) ff., published by Institut de recherche bouddhique Linh-So'n, Joinville-le-Pont (Paris).

8. These serialized translations, though published in the "Linh-So'n" Quarterly, still have to be regarded as drafts and will only appear in book form after careful revision.

9. J. Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, Part 2 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1973), pp. 742–750, 759–760.

10. Cf. *inter alia*, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* or *Bhāvanākramasūtrasamuccaya* (*bsGom-pa'i rim-pa mdo-kun-las-btut-pa*), Peking ed. 5329, vol. 102, p. 65.5.8ff. Thanks are due to Mr. P. Skilling for having drawn my attention to the latter text. Cf. also sGam-po-pa's *Dvags-po Thar-rgyan*—Engl. tr. by H. V. Guenther, *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* (Berkeley: Shambala Publications, 1971) or Tsong-kha-pa's *Lam-rim chen-mo*—partial Engl. tr. by A. Wayman, *Calming the Mind and Discerning the Real* (New York: first ed., 1978; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979).

11. So does Rugg, p. 29.

12. P. L. Vaidya, edition of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* of Śāntideva (Darbhanga: Buddhist Sanskrit Texts No. 11—Mithila Institute, 1961), VII.

13. A. C. Banerjee, *The Sūtrasamuccaya* in the "Indian Historical Quarterly," Vol. XVII, No. 1 (March 1941), pp. 121–126. Banerjee had consulted the sNar-thang edition of the SS which, as far as the sūtra titles are concerned, seems to be considerably less accurate than the other editions. Moreover, for his restoration of Sanskrit titles Banerjee did not have at his disposal the bulk of more recent aids of Tibeto-Sanskrit lexicography. Therefore, the publication of a new list of SS quotations seems to be called for, though, as a matter of fact, I cannot pretend that my restoration of sūtra titles is altogether free from conjecture. Tentative restorations are mentioned as such together with relevant references in the footnotes to my English translation of the SS. I am

much obliged to Dr. H. Braun for sending me xeroxes of Banerjee's SS article and of Japanese contributions on the same work in *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū*. Cf. also P. V. Bapat, *Vimuktimārga Dhutagaṇa-nirdeśa* (Bombay/Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1964), XV and Appendix II, pp. 111–116. Referring to Banerjee's article, Bapat points out a long interpolation, due to scribal inadvertence, in the *Vimuktimārga*, corresponding to seven rather long quotations in the SS.

14. Cf. P. L. Vaidya, edition of the *Saddharmalaṅkāvatārasūtram* (Darbhanga: Buddhist Sanskrit Texts No. 3—Mithila Institute, 1963), XV. S. Bagchi actually follows a surmise of D. T. Suzuki; cf. D. T. Suzuki, *The Lankavatara Sutra* (English tr.) (London: 1932; Boulder: Prajñā Press, 1978), XLII (The Date of the Laṅkā).

15. After a reading of the present paper, in the ensuing short discussion Prof. Ruegg suggested that, instead of the author of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, we speak of "a" Nāgārjuna as being the author of the SS, so as to be free from qualms regarding the *Laṅkā* quotations. [Cf. in this context Ruegg's article, "Le Dharmadhātustava de Nāgārjuna," in *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1971), p. 448 ff.] On the other hand, Dr. Chr. Lindtner mentioned that he found evidence that the early Madhyamaka masters did already know an Urtext of the *Laṅkā*. Cf., e.g. Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*, XIII, v. 25—V. Bhattacharya's ed., p. 197.

16. *Taishō* 32, No. 1635, p. 72.

17. Cf. É. Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti* (Louvain: 1962), p. 388.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 392.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 388, note 33.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 94. Ruegg also mentions the Dharmarakṣa of the Chin Dynasty (*op. cit.*, 29, footnote 67), who is given as having translated into Chinese the *Daśabhūmikavibhāṣā*, which also is ascribed to Nāgārjuna. "This could mean," he says, following Lamotte, "that a work by Nāgārjuna reached China by the year 265, long before Kumārajīva."

21. Lamotte, pp. 2–14.

22. Cf. Vin I.15, 18; II. 156, 192; D I.110; II.41; M I.379; J I.8, etc.

23. Cf. "Linh-So'n"—*publication d'études bouddhologiques*, No. 10 (March, 1980), p. 45; No. 12 (September, 1980), p. 38ff.

24. Cf. "Linh-So'n", No. 4 (August, 1978), pp. 24–26.

25. Ruegg, p. 124.