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Recovering the Prasannapadā*

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The Prasannapadā, composed by Candrakīrti in the first half of the seventh century subsequent to his writing of the Madhyamakāvatāra and its *bhāṣya*, soon became a major resource and reference work for his Mādhyamika contemporaries and their students. For approximately five and a half centuries the work circulated in the major Buddhist monastic institutions on the subcontinent, its text laboriously copied out, in various scripts, onto palm leaf and birch-bark, in the scriptoria of these

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centres. Although a written commentarial tradition on the Prasannapadā does not appear to have established itself in India,¹⁾ a strong tradition of oral exposition must have accompanied the work; it would have been to this tradition that many visiting scholars from Nepal and Tibet gravitated, both for basic instruction in the work and for refinement of their understanding of difficult points. Following the translation of the Prasannapadā into Tibetan at the end of the eleventh century by the brilliant *lo tsa ba* Pa tshab nyi ma grags and his Kashmirian *paṇḍita* mentor Mahāsumati,²⁾ the work gained a central position in the colleges of monasteries in Tibet, where the views presented in it were cited, elucidated, discussed, debated and commented upon for upwards of another eight centuries. In the days since the flight of the monastic intellectuals from Tibet, it has retained its status as a principal work in the seminaries of the Buddhist institutions that have been established in India and Nepal.³⁾

I extend my thanks to the conference organizers Prof. Gijyo Choi, Prof. Sung doo Ahn (both of Geumgang U.), Dr. Sung Yong Kang (at the time of the U. of Vienna, now at Seoul National U.), and Mr. Jackwan Shim, M.A. (Geumgang U.), and express my gratitude for their superb hospitality. Sincere thanks are due Prof. Ahn for suggesting and arranging for publication of this article in the present journal.

- 1) For the *Lakṣaṇāṭīkā as a possible later exception, see below.
- 2) The translation was later revised by Pa tshab and the *paṇḍit* Kanakavarman in Lhasa with the aid of a second Sanskrit manuscript.
- 3) While travelling in Tibet in 2006, I was informed that the Prasannapadā is again being taught in the colleges at Ngör, Sakya and other monasteries.

For present-day scholars of Madhyamaka, the Prasannapadā is one of the most important sources for understanding what has been termed the “middle period” of the Madhyamaka school.⁴⁾ Besides providing a seventh-century Buddhist scholar’s interpretation of the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (henceforth MMK), the school’s core verses, its initial chapter presents the defining (at least for a main branch of the later school) debate with Bhāviveka on the proper methodology to be employed when the Mādhyamika demonstrates the ultimate nature of things. A secondary yet not insignificant aim of this debate was the championing of a type of inference that fulfilled the prevailing logical requirements for inferences used in disputes but, importantly, would not compromise the Madhyamaka view. It was due to Candrakīrti’s rejection of the stipulation that the elements of inference be accepted by both of the contesting parties that we also find, in the context of this same debate with Bhāviveka, Dignāga, the most authoritative Buddhist logician of the day, taken to task. In a later discussion in the same chapter of the Prasannapadā some of Dignāga’s most fundamental epistemological views are also criticized and rejected, clearly because they do not fit Candrakīrti’s Madhyamaka agenda. These and further disagreements with a number of the tenets of other Buddhist schools, together with the explicit acknowledgement of a variety of doctrines and doctrinal points, as expressed in the Prasannapadā and in Candrakīrti’s

4) I rely here on D. Seyfort Ruegg’s periodization: for authors and works of the middle period, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981: 59–86.

other works, among these predominantly the *Madhyamakāvātāra*, provide us with snapshots of Candrakīrti's theoretical world; amassed and ordered, they allow us to gain an overview of his philosophy and to discern and infer the ideological developments that had taken place and were in the process of occurring in the general Madhyamaka intellectual environment.

The significance of the *Prasannapadā* for our comprehension of the "middle period" of the Madhyamaka school and for the subsequent development of the school both in India and in Tibet makes it imperative that our editions of the work correctly and faithfully present, to the extent that our methodologies and capabilities allow, the words, statements, and ultimately, the intent, of its composer. It is now common knowledge that de La Vallée Poussin's edition of the *Prasannapadā* (henceforth LVP), though a remarkable achievement given the limited manuscript material available in the early years of the last century, is imperfect, and that numerous passages in it have to be emended. We are fortunate to have at our disposal J.W. de Jong's meticulous "Textcritical Notes on the *Prasannapadā*," which supplies emendations for a great number of these passages. Since the 1978 publication of the "Textcritical Notes," however, more manuscripts of and related to the *Prasannapadā* have been discovered, allowing for further important textual improvement. I have already discussed some of the details of the *Prasannapadā* manuscripts in an article published in 2000,⁵⁾ but for the sake of those not directly involved with Indian Madhyamaka studies, and

because still more material has appeared in the meantime, I shall take this opportunity to review and update the manuscript situation.

In my aforementioned article, I reported that fifteen manuscripts of the *Prasannapadā* had become available.⁶⁾ New discoveries have increased this number. De La Vallée Poussin, in comparison, had access to a mere three manuscripts: one paper manuscript which was and remains in the possession of the Société Asiatique in Paris, a second held by the Cambridge University Library in England, and one kept by the Asiatic Society in Calcutta. Only one of the manuscripts he used, the paper manuscript housed in the Cambridge University Library (henceforth Ms. L), attests readings which today warrants its being included among the six "better" manuscripts of the larger group of *Prasannapadā* manuscripts known today. The colophon of this manuscript indicates that it was copied in Nepal Śamvat 901, i.e., in 1781 C.E. It appears that de La Vallée Poussin began the work on his edition by transcribing the text of the paper manuscript held by the Société Asiatique in Paris, this manuscript being – in an age before photocopies, microfilms and digitized manuscripts – geographically the closest and thus probably the most easily accessible: he occasionally retains this

5) See MacDonald 2000: 166–168.

6) Even though the catalogue entries for the *Prasannapadā* given in Tsukamoto et al. appear to confirm the existence of sixteen Sanskrit manuscripts (1990: 237–239), I have determined that entries no. 5 and no. 6 refer to one and the same manuscript.

manuscript's readings in his edition even when one or both of the other manuscripts attest preferable readings.⁷⁾ He informs his readers that he was often able to improve upon the readings in all three manuscripts and to fill their lacunae by taking reference to the Tibetan translation of the Prasannapadā.

The fourth manuscript of the Prasannapadā to be discovered by a Western scholar remains the most valuable among the paper manuscripts known to date. This manuscript, now in the possession of the Keshar Library in Kathmandu, was located by the Italian scholar Giuseppe Tucci. It was upon a photocopy of this manuscript, originally made by or for Tucci, that de Jong relied to compile his "Textcritical Notes on the Prasannapadā." In my comments above I referred to the contribution the Prasannapadā makes to the "middle period" of the Madhyamaka school, but the fact that it preserves the only known complete Sanskrit text of Nāgārjuna's MMK additionally renders it of great importance for the "early period" of the school.⁸⁾ The Keshar Library manuscript (henceforth Ms. D) provided such a number of improved readings for the *kārikās* alone that in 1977 de Jong published a new edition of the MMK: this edition quickly came to be regarded as the standard text.

7) I thank Dr. Jundō Nagashima for initially sharing this observation with me.

8) For the early period, see Ruegg 1981: 4ff.

Further knowledge of and access to manuscripts of the Prasannapadā have in large part been made possible by the commitment and support of countries, institutions and individuals dedicated, already in the 1970s, to locating and preserving manuscripts on microfilm; to be mentioned are the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP),⁹⁾ the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions (IASWR)¹⁰⁾ and the microfilming project undertaken by the Japanese Buddhist priest H. Takaoka.¹¹⁾ The efforts of the microfilming teams brought seven more paper Sanskrit manuscripts of the Prasannapadā to light, rescuing more than one of these from certain oblivion. Even though only one of the seven (I refer to it as Ms. B) can be counted among the six "better" manuscripts established at present,¹²⁾ the others may eventually serve to contribute to our understanding of the history of Madhyamaka studies in the Kathmandu Valley. Another three paper manuscripts of the Prasannapadā that had been acquired by the Tokyo University Library and recorded in S. Matsunami's catalogue of the library's Sanskrit manuscripts were drawn to scholarly attention in 1985 by Prof. Akira

9) The NGMPP concluded in 2001 after filming approximately 180,000 manuscripts in Nepal (over 114,000 in Sanskrit, Nepālī and Nevāri). The material is now in the process of being catalogued by the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloging Project (NGMCP).

10) The IASWR Library is now kept at the University of Virginia.

11) See H. Takaoka, *A Microfilm Catalogue of the Buddhist Manuscripts in Nepal*, Nagoya: Buddhist Library, 1981.

12) This valuable manuscript was in the private collection of Āsa Kāji Vajracarya of Pathan, Nepal: it was filmed by the NGMPP in 1981 (reel no. E 1294/3; Takaoka reel no. R-KA 1).

Saito, who used these manuscripts, the two manuscripts filmed by the IASWR and Ms. D¹³⁾ to emend eight verses of the MMK. As Saito noted, one of the three Tokyo manuscripts (henceforth Ms. J) is clearly superior to the other two: this manuscript is now also included in the group of the “better” manuscripts of the Prasannapadā. Thus by the mid-1980s – even though at the time no single scholar was aware of all of them – a total of fourteen paper Sanskrit manuscripts of the Prasannapadā had been accounted for by various scholars and microfilming projects.

My own editorial work on the Prasannapadā, which initially focused on its first chapter,¹⁴⁾ commenced with the collecting of these fourteen paper manuscripts and the subsequent recording of enough of their variants to allow for a distinguishing of the relationships between the manuscripts. Once I had established a stemma for the manuscripts, I was able to discern that ten of them were direct or indirect copies of the other four. These ten manuscripts were then excluded from the collation and use of the paper manuscripts was restricted to the primary four.¹⁵⁾ Two years

13) Saito relied on de Jong’s photocopy of Tucci’s photocopy of Ms. D. Ms. D was filmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) in 1975 (reel no. C 19/8).

14) Publication of the edition and translation of the first chapter is forthcoming.

15) The four are Ms. B, Ms. D, Ms. J and Ms. L. At my suggestion, Dr. Ulrich Kragh also limited his use of the paper manuscripts to these four when he edited the seventeenth chapter of the Prasannapadā. See his comments on the manuscripts in Kragh 2006, pp. 35–40. See also the stemma as determined by me and confirmed by him in *ibid.*, p. 63; the one instance of contamination additionally noted by him is reflected in the stemma as depicted on p. 68.

after I had completed my edition of the first chapter, I was informed by Japanese colleagues of the existence of another paper manuscript of the Prasannapadā – thus the fifteenth paper manuscript – which had been located in the collections of the Ōtani University Library but had not yet been catalogued. On a visit to Japan in December 2005, I was requested to examine the photocopy of a couple of folios from the manuscript. Although the photocopy did not provide sufficient text for an exact determination of the manuscript’s place in the stemma, I was able to conclude that this manuscript is, from the text-critical point of view, an unimportant descendent (at least second generation, possibly a “great grandchild”) of Ms. J. It therefore does not need to be taken into consideration when editions of further chapters of the Prasannapadā are made.

Another manuscript of the Prasannapadā, presumed to be an unknown copy, was brought to my attention in August 2006 by Dr. Dragomir Dimitrov, then the Local Representative of the NGMCP and Director of the Nepal Research Centre in Kathmandu. He had discovered the record of the manuscript in the NGMCP database, where it had been wrongly entered, on the basis of the title on its index card, as “Vainayasūtra.” Upon receiving a scan of its first two folios from Dimitrov, and later the microfilm of the entire manuscript, I was able to determine that this manuscript is indeed a further paper manuscript of the Prasannapadā, and to revise the number of known paper manuscripts of the Prasannapadā to sixteen. A comparison of its variants with those of the

fourteen paper manuscripts collated for my edition of the first chapter has revealed, however, that it too is an unimportant descendent of Ms. J, clearly at least thrice removed. As interesting and intriguing as it is to learn of yet another manuscript belonging to the Kathmandu Valley group of Prasannapadā manuscripts, this manuscript may also be ignored by editors of further chapters of the work.

It ought to be mentioned, however, that should any other paper manuscripts of the Prasannapadā become available whose position in the stemma is less transparent than that of the two manuscripts just mentioned, they will have to be examined carefully, since even manuscripts copied from faulty exemplars or copied by inattentive scribes can preserve valuable readings if they belong to an independent manuscript line. A case in point is Ms. D, in which nearly every word and compound (at least in the first chapter) is marred by scribal error, but which nonetheless attests numerous correct readings not found in the other paper manuscripts.

In addition to the sixteen paper manuscripts, two palm-leaf manuscripts of the Prasannapadā are now known to exist. The first, on which I reported in my 2000 article, is a holding of the Bodleian Library in Oxford, England: I refer to it as "Ms. P."¹⁶ Ms. P was sold to the Bodleian Library in 1900 and, as I surmised in the earlier article, may

16) On the manuscript, see MacDonald 2000: 168; Kragh 2006: 36f.

have escaped de La Vallée Poussin's attention because he had concluded his manuscript search by that time.¹⁷ The manuscript is incomplete: nearly a third of its folios have been lost, with the result that several chapters of its text of the Prasannapadā are completely or partially missing;¹⁸ in addition, most folios have some damage to their upper or lower center sections, such that many folios have up to three lines of writing lacking in these sections. What remains of Ms. P is of great value, though, for it is much older than the paper manuscripts, with text that has been subjected to fewer generations of scribal oversight and interference. On the basis of its old Nevārī script, I have estimated that the manuscript was copied, probably from an exemplar also written in old Nevārī, in the late twelfth century or in the thirteenth century. Ms. P also attests much of the text of the MMK for the chapters of the Prasannapadā it preserves, and in many cases it supports the emendations made by de Jong in reliance on Ms. D. My investigation of Ms. P's MMK readings has allowed me to emend more than 20 *kārikās* of this fundamental work of the Madhyamaka school: for the emendations, see my "Revisiting the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā: Text-Critical Proposals and Problems." The improvements that Ms. P contributes to an important section of text of the Prasannapadā's first chapter were published in my 2003 article "Interpreting Prasannapadā 19.3-7: A Response to Clause Oetke." I shall return to some of the

17) *The Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library* was published in 1905.

18) See MacDonald 2007: 27.

readings in this section shortly.

Before moving on to comment on the second palm-leaf manuscript of the Prasannapadā, let me briefly refer to three other manuscript finds relevant to Madhyamaka studies. The first is a manuscript of 18 folios that contains a commentary cum notes on the Prasannapadā: it was first discovered by Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana in Zha lu ri phug monastery, Tibet, and is now kept in the Tibet Museum in Lhasa.¹⁹⁾ This work, which has been assigned the provisional Sanskrit title *Lakṣaṇaṭīkā (henceforth *Lṭī), was initially made known to scholars by Dr. Yoshiyasu Yonezawa in early 1999, in an article published in the Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies and, later that same year, via a lecture held at the XIIth International Association of Buddhist Studies conference in Lausanne, Switzerland. In 2004 Yonezawa published a revised and extended version of his 1999 transliteration of the *Lṭī on the first chapter of the Prasannapadā, together with an edition of the *Lṭī for the first chapter. He has, to date, published three more installments of his continuous transliteration and edition of the text.²⁰⁾ Yonezawa presumes that the supposedly Tibetan scribe (his name is given in Sanskrit as Dharmakīrti and in Tibetan as “gnur Chos grags”) who is mentioned in the colophons of the copies of the Vīgrahavyāvartanī and the Vinayasūtra, two of the three other texts found together with the *Lṭī, was also the scribe, and

19) See Yonezawa 2001: 1 and n. 1: 2004: 116.

20) See Yonezawa 2005a, 2006 and 2007.

possibly the author, of the *Lṭī.²¹⁾ The work is written in the form of explanatory glosses on specific words and phrases employed in the Prasannapadā, and, far from being a systematic scholarly commentary, it appears to reflect notes made by the scribe or by a student during a collective class or while receiving individual instruction on the Prasannapadā. In a few cases, the notes expose a wrong understanding of the meaning of a phrase or passage, indicating either a lack of attention on the scribe's/student's part or mistaken understanding on the teacher's. The manuscript is nevertheless of great value, for its citations of the text of the Prasannapadā preserve early, possibly twelfth century, readings.²²⁾ In one instance, its citation of a word within its paraphrase of part of a pivotal Prasannapadā sentence preserves the sole correct reading of the word: early scribal error or interference has left *all* of the manuscripts of the Prasannapadā with a defective reading. Discoveries like this demonstrate that even manuscripts containing sketchy “student notes” can reveal themselves to be unique and rich depositories of original readings.

The second and third manuscript finds that have sent a wave of excitement through the Madhyamaka studies cosmos are those of two incomplete palm-leaf manuscripts, both copied by the same scribe, which together comprise fourteen folios containing partial Sanskrit text

21) See Yonezawa 2004: 117f.; for further details, see Yonezawa 2001: 3–8, 26–28.

22) See Yonezawa 2001: 5–8.

for two important works, namely, Nāgārjuna's MMK and Buddhapālita's commentary on the same. The MMK manuscript, which consists of three folios, represents the only known independently transmitted Sanskrit version of the MMK. Except for the very few, sometimes slightly modified, citations of Buddhapālita's statements in the Prasannapadā, the text of his commentary has until now been available only in Tibetan translation. The manuscripts were first made known to the larger scholarly community in 2005 by Mr. Shaoyong Ye, M.A., of Peking University, Beijing, in a presentation at the XIVth International Association of Buddhist Studies conference held in London, England. On this occasion, Mr. Ye distributed a 63-page hand-out with script charts and a transcription of both manuscripts; his transcription of the three folios of the MMK and the first part of his transcription of the eleven folios of Buddhapālita's commentary have since been revised and were published in 2007 under the title "The *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and Buddhapālita's Commentary (I): Romanized Texts Based on the Newly Identified Sanskrit Manuscripts from Tibet." Mr. Ye estimates that the features of the script employed point to the manuscripts having been written in the seventh century, a dating which, if correct, relegates them to the century in which the Prasannapadā was composed.²³ The three MMK folios preserve partial text for chapters 9–12 and 17–22; the other eleven folios preserve partial text for chapters 2, 7–10, 13, 14 and 20 of Buddhapālita's commentary. The available *kārikā* readings in the MMK

23) See Ye 2007a, p. 117f.

manuscript and as embedded in Buddhapālita's commentary support some of the emendations that I have made for the MMK on the basis of Ms. P's readings, and permit the emendation of other *kārikās*, most of which are damaged or belong to folios now missing in Ms. P. In a separate article also published in 2007, entitled "A Re-examination of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* on the Basis of the Newly Identified Sanskrit Manuscripts from Tibet," Mr. Ye introduced nine new emendations for the MMK, and also discussed several other discrepant readings that seem to indicate the early existence of alternate versions of specific *kārikās*.²⁴

As will be abundantly clear by now, the *Lṭ and the manuscripts just described substantially increase the textual resources on which we are able to draw to improve the text of the Prasannapadā and its text of the MMK. The final discovery to which I want to refer is the second palm-leaf manuscript of the Prasannapadā, mentioned above. Dr. Yonezawa announced its existence in the second installment of his transliteration and critical edition of the *Lṭ and in a Japanese article devoted to a

24) Many of these divergent readings are reflected in the Tibetan translation of the same verses in the Akutobhaya, in Buddhapālita's commentary and in Bhāviveka's Prajñā pradīpa, all of which were translated by Jñānagarbha and Klu'i rgyal mtshan in the eighth century; they are not, however, mirrored in the independent version of the MMK in the Tanjur. The independent MMK, which had originally been translated by Jñānagarbha and Klu'i rgyal mtshan in conformity with Bhāviveka's interpretation of it, was revised by Pa tshab nyi ma grags to accord with his translation of the MMK in the Prasannapadā (which he had translated in correspondence with Candrakīrti's interpretation of it). See Saito 1986.

section of the first chapter of the Prasannapadā, both published in 2005.²⁵⁾ I depend on these articles as well as on Mr. Koji Matsumoto's unpublished Taishō University B.A. thesis, which considers its readings for approximately the first third of the first chapter of the Prasannapadā, for nearly all of the information regarding the manuscript presented here.²⁶⁾ Yonezawa was permitted to make a hand-copy of the text of the manuscript, which was at that time preserved in the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet. At present, use of his hand-copy is restricted to scholars of the Taishō University Study Group, and one hopes that a facsimile edition of the manuscript or a report on its readings and/or variants will be published in the near future. According to Yonezawa, nearly the entire Prasannapadā is contained in the manuscript's eighty-three folios; only four leaves, viz., folios 10, 16, 43 and 86 are missing. He notes, however, that the right edge of some leaves is defective, such that 7–8 *akṣaras* (per line?) are lacking on them. Yonezawa tentatively describes the script as Nepālī.²⁷⁾ The manuscript's text ends at the equivalent for LVP 593,5 and thus a colophon is not available; owing to uncertainty regarding the script, no date has been assigned to the manuscript in dependence on it.

A number of MMK readings as couched in the second palm-leaf manuscript (henceforth Ms. Q) that were kindly passed on to me by

25) See Yonezawa 2005a and 2005b.

26) I am indebted to Mr. Matsumoto's kind generosity for the copy of his thesis he presented me in December 2005 on the occasion of his successful B.A. defense.

27) See Yonezawa 2005a: 160, where under "Script" he gives "Nepālī(?)."

Yonezawa support emendations that I made to the MMK on the basis of Ms. P. In a couple of cases, Ms. Q supplied the only correct reading for a *kārikā*.²⁸⁾ Thanks to Yonezawa's and Matsumoto's work, it can also be established that for the first third of the first chapter of the Prasannapadā, Ms. Q bears, as might be expected, many of the improved readings attested by Ms. P that I have already noted in previous articles and in my edition of the first chapter. Ms. Q additionally contains text for words, phrases and sentences that are hard to decipher or missing in Ms. P's damaged sections; in some instances Ms. P provides text where it is lacking on account of damage in Ms. Q. On occasion, Ms. Q bears a correct reading where Ms. P has a variant, and vice-versa. The two manuscripts together supply most of the text for the section available for investigation, and one can only hope that this is also the case for the rest of the Prasannapadā.

Of interest is the fact that Ms. Q attests text for a few phrases and sentences not to be found in Ms. P but that do occur in the Tibetan translation. Prior to learning of the existence of these readings in Ms. Q, I had been unable to determine if the Tibetan translators had actually read these phrases and sentences in their Sanskrit manuscript(s) or if they had independently added them to their translation, justifying them as minor but helpful syntactical additions and supplementary explanatory material. In most of the cases the extra material is by no

28) See MacDonald 2007.

means vital to the text – at least to the text as written for Candrakīrti's intended audience. Ms. Q's attestation of the material now confirms that the translators must have encountered the words and phrases in at least one of the manuscripts at their disposal. I am not, however, at this point entirely convinced that all of this material stems from Candrakīrti's hand, and more such instances will have to be located and analyzed for one to arrive at a more definite conclusion. While, for instance, it is possible that the words *katham kṛtvā yasmād evaṃ tenoktam* in the passage in Ms. Q²⁹ corresponding to LVP 19.8–20.2, viz. *athāpy avāśyaṃ svato 'numānavirodhadoṣa udbhāvanīyaḥ || so 'py udbhāvita evācā-ryabuddhapālita | katham kṛtvā yasmād evaṃ tenoktam na svata utpadyante bhāvās tadutpādavaiarthyaḥ iti vacanāt* (text in bold not in LVP),³⁰ may have dropped out of Ms. P (or a manuscript before it) owing to an eyeskip from the *ka* of *katham* to the *na* of *na svata*,³¹ the extra phrases make for a certain redundancy, especially since the following *vacanāt* indicates that Buddhapālita has *stated* the contradiction with an inference. The *kiṃ kāraṇam* that appears in Ms. Q after the next sentence – and the loss of which from Ms. P would be difficult to explain paleographically – likewise seems unnecessary given that the following

29) I rely on Mr. Matsumoto's text and notes for Ms. Q's readings. All manuscript readings presented in my discussion above and in the notes are diplomatic readings.

30) The Tibetan reflects Ms. Q's *katham kṛtvā yasmād evaṃ tenoktam* with *ji ltar zhe na | gang gi phyir des ni 'di skad du bshad pa yin te* (P 7b3–4; D 7a1). LVP includes a tentative *katham iti cet*, reconstructed from the Tibetan's *ji ltar zhe na*.

31) An eyeskip involving 11 akṣaras would be unusual for Ms. P's scribe: the reading of *na* for *ka* would also be unusual, though not impossible.

sentence begins with *tathā hi*.³²

A more definite example for what appears to be deliberate interference with the text exists for a section of a sentence that follows a quotation from the Madhyamakāvātāra (see LVP 36.10): in Ms. P we read... *ityā-dinā parata utpattipratishedho 'vaśeyaḥ*, whereas Ms. Q attests... *ityā-dinā parata utpattipratishedho mādhyamakāvātārād aveśaḥ*.³³ The suspicion that the name of the text here is most probably an interpolation is supported by an earlier passage also containing a quotation from the Madhyamakāvātāra (see LVP 13.9), which in Ms. P is followed by the words *ityādināvaśeyā* but in Ms. Q is followed by *ityādinā madhyamakāvātārādīdvāreṇāvaseyā*.³⁴ That the Prasannapadā manuscript relied on by the author of the *LT, like Ms. P, did not name the source of the quotation is obvious from the fact that the *LT's author cites *ityādinā* (*LT: *ityādineti*) and then glosses it with a compound identifying the source, i.e., *madhyamakāvātāragranthena*.³⁵ This lack of explicit reference to the Madhyamakāvātāra in both Ms. P and the manuscript

32) Ms. Q attests at the equivalent for LVP 20.2–3 *atra hi tad ity anena svātmanā vidyamānatvasya parāmarśaḥ | kiṃ kāraṇam | tathā hi ...*. LVP includes a tentative *kasmād iti cet*, which has been reconstructed from the Tibetan. The Tibetan reflects *kiṃ kāraṇam* with *ci' i phyir zhe na* (P 7b5; D 7a2).

33) The Tibetan reads *zhes bya ba la sogs pas gzhan las skye ba dgag pa dbu ma la 'jug pa las nges par bya 'o* (P 13a5; D 12a2). LVP adds *madhyamakāvātārāt* in square brackets after *ityādinā* (see LVP 36, n. 5: "D'après le tibétain").

34) The Tibetan reflects *madhyamakāvātārādīdvāreṇa* with *dbu ma la 'jug pa la sogs pa'i sgo nas* (P 6a2; D 5b1).

35) See Yonezawa 2004: 121.

relied on by the *LT' s author merely indicates that Candrakīrti expected his contemporaries to be intimately acquainted with his earlier work and thus able to identify citations from it. Many later students of the Prasannapadā would not have been as familiar with the contents of the Madhyamakāvatāra, and so its title was added, either in Ms. Q or in an earlier manuscript in its line, in the latter case possibly as marginalia that was later incorporated directly into the text. I expect that the same thing has occurred in the other passage above where Ms. Q identifies the Madhyamakāvatāra as the source of the citation but Ms. P does not. In my 2000 article I noted that I had been able to discern intentional change to the *text of the MMK* in Ms. P; that is, I had noticed that someone had consciously tampered with the *kārikā* readings, without doubt convinced that he was “correcting” them. At least the last two examples given above concerning the identification of the citation lead one to postulate that *the text of Candrakīrti’s commentary* as presented by Ms. Q has similarly been subjected to intended change, in its case, however, for the sake of “easier reading.”

It is, of course, of relevance that the Tibetan translation of the Prasannapadā supports, indeed mirrors, the readings found in Ms. Q that do not appear in Ms. P. Even though this support of Ms. Q by the Tibetan translation, as seen from the discussion above, by no means necessarily confirms Ms. Q’s readings in these cases as correct or original, the agreement between the two nevertheless suggests that a manuscript related to Ms. Q (or possibly even Ms. Q itself?) was one of the two

Sanskrit manuscripts reported by Pa tshab nyi ma grags to have been used for the translation of the Prasannapadā.

A text with evidence of tampering requires a careful editor, especially because the additions or changes are often worked into the text so as to appear organic to it. There are other readings in the limited section of Ms. Q available for comparison, some in passages crucial for our understanding of the specific discussion in the Prasannapadā that, as before, find support in the Tibetan translation, but are attested differently in Ms. P. I cannot go into detail here and must refer readers to my 2003 article for the explanation of the passage,³⁶⁾ but a prime example involves two compounds found in an important citation from the Prajñāpradīpa in the first chapter of the Prasannapadā (see LVP 16.11–18.4) in which the Sāṅkhya opponents critique the thesis in Buddhapālita’s consequence which demonstrates that things do not arise from themselves (Buddhapālita’s consequence is given by Candrakīrti as: *na svata utpadyante bhāvās tadutpādavaiyarthiyād atiprasaṅgadoṣāc ca*). The Sāṅkhyas in the Prasannapadā demand to know whether Buddhapālita’s thesis denies that a thing arising from itself arises as something having the nature of an effect (*kāryātmakaḥ*) or whether it denies that it arises as something having the nature of a cause (*kāraṇātmakaḥ*), adding that regardless of the alternative the thesis will be subject to a logical fault. The crucial compounds *kāryātmakaḥ* and *kāraṇātmakaḥ*,

36) See MacDonald 2003: 159ff.

each appearing twice in the paragraph, are attested in each case as nominative forms by Ms. P.³⁷ De La Vallée Poussin emended these two compounds to *kāryātmakāt* and *kāraṇātmakāt* because the Tibetan attests equivalents for ablative forms, viz., *'bras bu'i bdag nyid las* and *rgyu'i bdag nyid las*, but, as I demonstrated in my 2003 article, Ms. P's readings have to be retained for logical reasons. In his 2005 article on LVP 19.3–6, Yonezawa announced that Ms. Q reads not *kāryātmakaḥ* and *kāraṇātmakaḥ*, but rather *kāryātmanaḥ* and *kāraṇātmanaḥ*, and points out that these readings correspond to the ablatives in the Tibetan; he therefore considers Ms. Q's readings to be correct, and suggests that they be adopted.³⁸

As appealing as it might be to accept Ms. Q's ablatives, and indeed as tempting as it might be to want to explain Ms. P's readings as resulting from the interpretation of *na akṣaras* as *ka akṣaras*, Ms. Q's readings cannot be accepted for two reasons. First, as I reported in my 2003 discussion of the passage, the Sāṅkhya citation in the Tibetan translation of the Prasannapadā, like all the other citations in the translation of the first chapter of the Prasannapadā, does not represent a translation of the Prasannapadā Sanskrit, and has rather been copied in directly from the translated source text; that is, the Sāṅkhya argument in the Tibetan translation of the Prasannapadā is a copy of the Sāṅkhya argument in

37) The main paper manuscripts read as Ms. P does.

38) Yonezawa 2005b: 72, n. 25.

the Tibetan translation of the Prajñāpradīpa. The Prasannapadā Tibetan's *'bras bu'i bdag nyid las* and *rgyu'i bdag nyid las* are merely reproductions of the same words in the Prajñāpradīpa Tibetan and thus are not trustworthy witnesses for the Prasannapadā Sanskrit. Second, the Prasannapadā Tibetan's reflection of a specific Sanskrit word in the final sentence of the Sāṅkhya critique reveals that in this instance the translators rejected the translated Prajñāpradīpa's reading and translated the word directly from the Prasannapadā Sanskrit; awareness of this fact in turn adverts to a logical inconsistency in the argumentation of the critique in the Prasannapadā Tibetan. Obviously, the conflation of the copied-in Tibetan text from the Prajñāpradīpa and the direct translation of the Prasannapadā Sanskrit's word is responsible for the flawed argumentation in the Prasannapadā Tibetan. The pivotal word in the Prasannapadā Sanskrit's final sentence of the critique, which is found in Ms. P and in Ms. Q, is genitive *vidyamānasya*. It was rendered into Tibetan by the Prasannapadā translators as *yod pa*; the translated Prajñāpradīpa attests *yod pa... las*, and must be reflecting an original Prajñāpradīpa Sanskrit ablative, possibly *vidyamānāt*. Were the ablative forms *kāryātmanaḥ* and *kāraṇātmanaḥ* as found in Ms. Q earlier in the passage the correct Prasannapadā readings, Ms. P and Ms. Q would logically have to attest an ablative form here too in the final sentence, and not a genitive.

Reflection on the different perspectives taken for the respective argumentation of the Sāṅkhya critique in the Prajñāpradīpa and

Prasannapadā, together with consideration of the fact that acceptance of the ablative forms *kāryātmanaḥ* and *kāraṇātmanaḥ* ruins the logical consistency of the Sāṅkhya argument in the Prasannapadā Sanskrit (as did adoption of equivalents for Sanskrit ablatives the Prasannapadā Tibetan), brings one to the indisputable conclusion that Ms. P's nominative forms *kāryātmakaḥ* and *kāraṇātmakaḥ* are the sole acceptable readings for the Prasannapadā. The Prasannapadā diverges from the Prajñāpradīpa for the compounds in question because Candrakīrti modified the Sanskrit text of the Sāṅkhya critique as it was presented by Bhāviveka. He changed the Prajñāpradīpa's ablative form in the final sentence to the genitive *vidyamānasya* and further modified the ablative forms appearing earlier in the critique to the nominative forms *kāryātmakaḥ* and *kāraṇātmakaḥ*. The nominatives *kāryātmakaḥ* and *kāraṇātmakaḥ* are required by the logical structure of the Sāṅkhya argument as it is presented by Candrakīrti. The presumed original ablative forms of the Prajñāpradīpa Sanskrit, which are indeed reflected in 'bras bu'i bdag nyid las and rgyu'i bdag nyid las of the Tibetan translation of the Prajñāpradīpa and in the identical words of the (copied-in) Prajñāpradīpa citation in the Tibetan translation of the Prasannapadā, have been modified to Sanskrit nominatives by Candrakīrti to suit his purposes.³⁹ The only logically correct readings for these two compounds in the Prasannapadā are those attested by Ms. P.

40) Note, however, Ms. Q's readings for 24.25 and 22.13 in MacDonald 2007: 39 and 42.

Why, then, does Ms. Q attest *kāryātmanaḥ* instead of the correct form *kāryātmakaḥ*, and *kāraṇātmanaḥ* instead of *kāraṇātmakaḥ*? Evidently, an individual involved at some stage in the transmission lineage of Ms. Q simplified the *lectio difficilior* *kāryātmakaḥ* and *kāraṇātmakaḥ*, possibly because the sentence read with the ablatives is – at least on a superficial reading – immediately pleasing and easy to understand, or because it was noticed that the Sāṅkhya argument in the Prajñāpradīpa contained ablatives. A similar simplification has been introduced in Ms. Q for the logically correct reading *codanayā* attested by Ms. P, at the equivalent for LVP 13.7: Ms. Q, like the *Lṭ (whose author has completely misunderstood the argumentation!), attests the faulty reading *codanāyām*. I have noticed that in the first third of the first chapter at least one other word attested in Ms. P has been simplified in Ms. Q, in this case because the simpler reading is, upon initial perusal, the “expected” reading.

The above observations are of significance because they indicate that at least for these important readings Ms. P has preserved the correct text while Ms. Q's text has been changed. However, only as more of Ms. Q's text becomes available will it be possible to determine which of the two – if either – is ultimately the superior manuscript. Without doubt, both of these palm-leaf manuscripts of the Prasannapadā are valuable, for both preserve relatively old readings and both provide improvements for the text of our editions of the Prasannapadā. Since each manuscript exhibits damage, both will naturally be necessary for the editing of further chapters. But as explained, both also display at least some

evidence of interference: some of Ms. P's *kārikās* have been subjected to change, and some passages in Ms. Q's commentary have been fiddled with, in two cases to the extent that the logical structure of the passages has been disturbed and the subtlety of Candrakīrti's thought has been lost. I am not yet in a position to judge whether any of Ms. Q's *kārikās* have been tampered with,⁴⁰ and though I have not yet noticed instances of intended change in the commentary in Ms. P, I will be surprised if there are not some. It having become apparent that the scholars and scribes of past centuries have left the marks of their deliberations on the text of the *Prasannapadā* and its embedded MMK, readings have to be selected with circumspection. While all of the new manuscript material provides us with previously unimagined riches for editorial analysis, it also in some respects makes the situation slightly more complicated. Indeed, the story of the *Prasannapadā* is by no means over.

39) For further details, see MacDonald 2003: 166f.

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