On Feelings of Shame (Lajjā) in the Eighteenth Chapter of the Mahāyānasūtrālāṁkārabhāṣya

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1. Introduction

Mahāyānasūtrālāṁkārabhāṣya (MSABh) attributed to Vasubandhu (ca. 400–480) is one of the most important treatises of the Yogācāra tradition. The significant eighteenth chapter (i.e., the Bodhipaksṣādhikarana) of MSABh includes fifteen topics. The beginning verses (kk.1–15) clearly explain the feelings of shame (lajjā), whereas kk.42–65 describe 37 practices conducive to enlightenment (saptatrimśatdharma).¹

Hayashima [1973] has provided synopses of the structure of MSABh’s eighteenth chapter. These demonstrate that it was strongly influenced by the seventeenth chapter (i.e., Bodhipaksṣyapaṭalā) of the Bodhisattvabhūmi (BBh) of the Mauli Bhūmi related to the Yogācārabhūmi (YBh).² Modern scholars have presumed that BBh have been composed before MSABh.³ In any case, their contents exhibit strong similarities. However, a few studies have conducted a detail comparative analysis between MSABh and BBh.

On the basis of previous studies, I would like to conduct a careful comparison between kk.1–2 of the eighteenth chapter of MSABh and the relevant sections of BBh regarding the nature of shame. This paper intends to clarify the definition of shame on the basis of MSABh. Therefore, two commentaries on MSABh are also considered to be useful sources.

2. Critical Comparison between the Feelings of Shame Described in BBh and MSABh

First, the following text from BBh explains the characteristics related to feelings of shame.

What does Bodhisattvas’ shames—vis-à-vis oneself and vis-à-vis others (kri-vyapatrāpya) in this passage? These two aspects of shames are briefly explained on the basis of its nature (svabhāva) and ground (adhiṣṭhāna). When [Bodhisattvas] realize that they should not display disgraceful be-
havior, a feeling of shame vis-à-vis oneself occurs. In addition, the feeling of shame vis-à-vis others originates from the fears of others and great esteem for others. 4)

Feelings of shame are defined as both shame vis-à-vis oneself and shame vis-à-vis others in BBh. In general, these two aspects of shame are mentioned in various Buddhist texts such as the Abidharmakośabhāṣya 5) but are most clearly defined in BBh and MSABh. The word lajjā describing the feelings of shame is one of the remarkable similarities between BBh and MSABh. In BBh, characteristics of shame are described from the viewpoints of its nature and ground. On the contrary, the characteristics of shame are explained in MSABh as follows.

Sixteen verses analyzing of the feelings of shame:
The concept of shame is free from the tendency of resistance; it is associated with non-conceptual intuition, and for the Bodhisattvas, it holds blameless objectives and inferior [objectives], thereby bringing maturity to living beings. (1)
This [verse] shows four characteristics of the Bodhisattva’s concept of shame through the perfection of its nature, association, objective, and activity. Blameless objective refers to universal vehicle (mahāyāna), and inferior [objectives] refer to inferior vehicles compared to the universal vehicle (śrāvakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna).
Therefore, Bodhisattvas are ashamed of themselves. How does the concept of shame bring maturity to living beings? [Bodhisattvas] esteem others by having feelings of shame. 6)

As just noted, characteristics of shame in MSABh are slightly different from the explanation given in BBh. One of the remarkable features in MSABh is that the characteristics of shame are interpreted from four viewpoints. The resemblance noted between BBh and MSABh generally refers to the nature of shameful feelings; we will examine this more deeply in the following passages from BBh.

Moreover, if Bodhisattvas do not perform their practices, they have a strong feeling of shame for themselves. In this case, their shamefulness vis-à-vis oneself and others is understood from the viewpoint of its nature.
In addition, the ground related to feelings of shame consists of four types. The first ground produces a feeling of shame when Boshisattvas do not perform the required practices. Similarly, the second ground produces a feeling of shame when Bodhisattvas practice what is not allowed. The third ground produces a feeling of shame when Bodhisattvas are confronted with something wrong in their own minds, whereas, the fourth ground produces a feeling of shame when they regret what he did on the basis of the bad thing following these ground. Therefore, we can understand the ground for feelings of shame. 7)
Feelings of shame are examined carefully from the viewpoints of nature and ground in these sections. By focusing on the ground for feelings of shame, four major patterns arise. In MSABh, k.1 bis–k.2 describe the catalysts for feelings of shame.

When resistances to the six transcendences increase and their remedies decrease, [Bodhisattvas’] feelings of shame are intolerable. (k.1 bis)

This verse shows that Bodhisattvas’ feelings of shame originated from an increase in the resistance to transcendences and a decrease in the remedies, which provoke feelings of shame.\(^8\)

In this verse, Vasubandhu explains two types of shame, which are associated with the six transcendences. In addition, Sūtrālāṃkāravṛttībhāṣya (SAVBh) gives a detailed explanation on resisting to the six transcendences and their remedies.

Because of increasing resistances to the six transcendences and their decreasing remedies, Bodhisattvas have a strong feeling of shames. The resistances to the six transcendences refer to the range of thoughts/actions from avarice to evil understanding. After increasing any one of them, Bodhisattvas feel an intolerable shame. Therefore, this is called a feeling of shame associated with an increase. The remedies to avarice and other types of resistance refer to a range of behaviors from almsgiving to the perfection of wisdom. When the remedies decrease, which indicates that they admit to being at fault, Bodhisattvas also feel an intolerable shame. Therefore, this is referred to as decreasing a remedy.\(^9\)

According to SAVBh, arising feelings of shame prohibit the practice of the resistances to the six transcendences and encourage the practice of the six transcendences. The phrase “the required practices” in BBh corresponds exactly to the practice of the six transcendences in MSABh. Moreover, the phrase “what is not allowed” in BBh corresponds to the practice of resistances to the six transcendences. Therefore, the explanation for feelings of shame is more specific in MSABh than that in BBh, according to SAVBh. The explanation from MSABh is stated in the following discussion:

The sage (Bodhisattvas) feels shameful for being lazy while practicing the six transcendences along with being energetic in his actions related to addictions. (2)

These are feelings of shame resulting from non-engagement and engagement: non-engagement in the practice of the transcendences and engagement in activities that are attuned to addictions such as not guarding the doors of senses.\(^10\)

Two aspects of shame are elucidated in k.2 of MSABh, which include being lazy while practicing of the six transcendences and performing actions relating to addictions. Both these aspects provoke feelings of shame in Bodhisattvas. SAVBh begins analyzing these
aspects as follows:

As mentioned before, because of laziness while practicing the six transcendences, if Bodhisattvas do not practice the way to enlightenment, these strong-willed persons feel shameful. This feeling of shame arises from non-engagement.

By means of afflictions arising from lust, hatred, and other "negative" feelings, "doors" that follow their affictions, that is, from the eyes to the mind, have affect the five attached objectives. In other words, when Bodhisattvas engage in activities that are attuned to addictions, they feel shameful. This feeling of shame arises from engagement.  

According to SAVBh, laziness in the practice of the six transcendences refers to non-engagement in these practices. The result is a feeling of shame related to the five attached objectives. Concerning the relationship between BBh and MSABh, the phrase "something wrong in their own minds" from BBh corresponds to laziness in the practice of the six transcendences, as described in MSABh. Similarly, the phrase "the bad thing following these ground," as stated in BBh, corresponds to the five attached objectives described in MSABh. Furthermore, Mahāyānasūtrālakāraṇī (MSAT) adds the following information.

Bodhisattvas who do not practice the way to enlightenment are, strong-willed persons who feel shameful. At a certain time, Bodhisattvas practice the six transcendences, but the wise (arhat) are lazy to practice the six transcendences. They do not practice the way to enlightenment, In this case, if the wise (arhat) do not practice the six transcendences, Bodhisattvas feel shameful.

According to MSAT, Bodhisattvas feel shameful because the wise (arhat) are lazy to the six transcendences. Thus, the relationship between feelings of shame and the six transcendences emphasizes upon the superiority of the universal vehicle noted MSABh but not in BBh. Why does MSABh explain the importance of the six transcendences associated with feelings of shame? Two commentaries on MSABh define the meanings of shame with the MSAT explaining why shame is the first topic in the eighteenth chapter of MSABh as follows.

After referring to the immeasurables, the feelings of shame are explained. What is the connection between [the immeasurables and feelings of the shame]? Feelings of shame enable [Bodhisattvas] to attain success in their own benefits as well as others same as [the immeasurables]. Because [Bodhisattvas] practice the path associated with these aims, topics regarding the way of enlightenment are included after [the seventeenth chapter]. Bodhisattvas should grasp the characteristics of the entire path of learning and scholarship with regard to its objectives, form, nature, and distinction. It should be understood that the theme for the way to enlightenment includes all topics from the analysis of feelings of shame to the analysis of selflessness.
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In this section, the immeasurables correspond to four attributes—compassion, equanimity, joy, and love—from the previous chapter titled "Worship, service, and the immeasurable." In the seventeenth chapter of MSABh, Bodhisattvas attain perfection in their own aims by means of worship and service to the Buddha; in addition, they attain perfection in their practices for the benefit of others by means of the four immeasurables. Moreover, SAVBh and MSAṬ describe a similar viewpoint on the relationship between the feelings of shame and six transcendences.

Sixteen verses on the analysis of the feelings of shame:
After referring to worship, service, and the immeasurables, why does the text chapter include the topics such as shame and courage? Based on achieving their own aims by means of worship, service, and assistance to others through the immeasurables, Bodhisattvas attain success in the perfection of all benefits and enter into the ultimate stage. For practicing the path of learning and scholarship, after the analysis of immeasurables and the likes, the analysis of shame explains the theme of the way to enlightenment. In addition, understanding its objectives, form, nature and distinction leads Bodhisattvas to the path of learning and scholarship. In this case, from the first topic of shame to the last topic of selflessness, all topics should understood as the way to enlightenment.

Both MSAṬ and SAVBh define the way to enlightenment as the path of learning and scholarship to complete the practices for others' benefit. Adding to the result, both texts consider that the eighteenth chapter of MSABh (the way to enlightenment), which comprises fifteen analyses ranging from the shame to selflessness. All fifteen analyses explain the virtues of practices that should be performed by Bodhisattvas. In other words, Bodhisattvas are people holding these virtues. Therefore, the relationship between feelings of shame and the six transcendences is emphasized in MSABh.

3. Conclusion

On the basis of the results of this comparison, the analysis of shame provided in MSABh was influenced by the relevant parts of BBh. The first topic of MSABh, including the viewpoints on nature and ground from BBh, refers to the relationship between feelings of shame and the six transcendences. However, in terms of emphasizing the six transcendences, the explanation of shame from MSABh is slightly different from that in BBh, with MSABh describing shame in greater detail. For example, laziness in practicing the six transcendences brings a feeling of shame for not fulfilling Bodhisattvas' aims. The energy for practicing the resistances to the resistances brings a feeling of shame for actions not benefitting
Bodhisattvas. In addition, feelings of shame may derive from activities that are attuned to addictions. Moreover, according to MSABh and SAVBh, reference to the relationship between feelings of shame and the six transcendences shows the connection between the eighteenth chapter and the previous seventeenth chapter. In other words, all topics in the eighteenth chapter of MSABh refer to the way of enlightenment, and Bodhisattvas should practice this path of learning and scholarship to perfect their own aims as well as others’ aims. Both commentaries on MSABh consider that the eighteenth chapter of MSABh enhances the glory of the universal vehicle (mahāyāna) in terms of practicing the six transcendences and supporting the perfection of others’ aims. Similarly, MSABh’s analysis of feelings of shame is an important text illustrating the superiority of the universal vehicle.

(Notes)
2) See Hayashima [1973: 3–7].
3) See Arai and Hakamaya [1993: 36–38], Odani [1984: 40].
4) tatra katmad bodhisattvānāṃ hri-vyapatrāpyam, tat samāsato dvividham veditavyam. svabhāvatā cādhishṭhānataś ca, avadya-samudācāre ātmana evāpratirūpataṁ viditvā bodhisattvasya lajjā hiḥriḥ tatra eva paresām bhayagauravāl lajjā vyapatrāpyam. (BBh, ed. Unrai Wogihara, p.250 8–12)
5) See Saitō et al. [2011: 77–82].
6) lajjā vipākṣahīnā jñānena gata ca A1 nirvikalpena/ hiṃsānavadyavīṣayā sattvānāṃ pācikā dhīre/18-1// etena svabhāvasahābā, yālambanakarmaśampadā caturvidham lakṣaṇaṃ bodhisattvaA120a. lajjāyāḥ saṃdarsitam/ hiṃsānavadyavīṣayā/ śrāvakapratyekabuddhānāṃ yānām/ tad dhi hiṃnām ca mahāyānānavadyam ca/ tena ca bodhisattvato lajjijate/ A2 (MSABh, ed. Sylvain Lévi, Tome I p.132 5–8)
7) sā puṇar lajjā bodhisattvasya prakṛtyaiva tvīrā bhavati. prāg evābhayasā, evam svabhāvato bodhisattvasya hri-vyapatrāpyam veditavyam. adhiṣṭhānāṃ puṇaḥ saṃsātah caturvidham. bodhisattva- karanīyasyanuṣṭhāne yā lajjā, idam prathamam adhiṣṭhānam, tathā bodhisattvākaranīyasyanuṣṭhāne yā lajjā, idam dvitiyam adhiṣṭhānam, tathā bodhisattvasya’ ātmanah pracīchanna-pāpatāyām yā lajjā, idam tṛitiyam adhiṣṭhānam, tathā bodhisattvasya svā-kaukṛtye samutpanne sa-pratisaraṇe ānusāṅgike yā lajjā. idam caturtham adhiṣṭhānam, evam adhiṣṭhānato veditavyam. (BBh, ed. Unrai Wogihara, p.250 12–22)
8) saṃnām pāramitānāṃ vipākṣa-vṛddhyā bodhisattvānāṃ/ pratipākṣaḥनitaś cāpy ativa sampadyate lajjā//18-1"// atra bodhisattvānāṃ vṛddhyā pariḥāṇitaś ca lajjotpādah, pāramitāvipākṣa-vṛddhyā tatpā- tipākṣaparihānyā cātyartham lajjotpādānt/ (MSABh, ed. Sylvain Lévi, Tome I p.132 11 & Tome II p.225 fn.2)
9) pha rol phyin drug mi mthun 'phel // de yi ngyen po 'grib pa la // byang chub sems (P.7) dpa’ rnams dag ni // mi bzad nge tsha skyed par (P. : pa) byed // (D.:// ; P.: / ) (18-1*) ces bya ba
'dis 'phel ba dang 'grib pa la ngo tsha ba bstsn to // pha rol (D.5) tu phyn pa rnam s kyi mi mthun pa'i phyogs ni ser sna nas 'chal pa'i shes rab kyi bar (P.8) du ste / de dag 'phel zhing rgyas par 'gyur ba byang chub smsa pa' shin tu ngo tsha ba skyes te / des ni 'phel ba la ngo tsha ba'o // ser sna la sog pa'i gnyen po ni sbyin ba' pa rol tu phyn pa nas (D.6) shes rab kyi pha (P.98b1) rol tu phyn pa'i bar drug ste / de dag 'grib shing nyes par 'gyur na byang chub smsa dpa' rams shin tu ngo tsha bar 'gyur te / 'dis ni 'grib pa la ngo tsha ba'o // (Mdo sde rgyan gyi 'grel bshad (SAVBh) D.Tsi 82b4–82b6; P.Tsi 98a6–98b1)

10 \[isman p\[aramtanam \[inevaha\[asyato bhavati lajj\[a/ kle\[anuk\[uladhar\[maprayoga\[a caiva dhir\[anam//18//2// iyam aprayagaprayogalajja, \[aramtabhvanay\[m aprayogena/ kle\[anukulesu dharmesv ind\[iy\[uktadvat\[rat\[hd\[isa ca praya\[gona lajjotp\[danat// (MSAbh, ed. Sylvain L\'evi, p.132 11–14)

11 'di itar pha (P.4) rol tu phyn pa rams bsgom zhing goms par bya ba la / le lo'i dbang du byas nas bsgom (P.: sgom) pa la mi sbyor na / brtan pa byang chub smsa dpa' rams ngo tsha bar byed de / 'di ni mi sbyor ba la (D.2) ngo tsha ba'o // 'dod (P.5) chags dze sdang la sog pa'i nyon mongs pa rams skye ba dang rjes su mthun pa'i chos mig gi dbang po nas yid kyi dbang po'i dbang po'i sgo mi sdom zhing 'dod pa Inga'i yul la 'jug pa sbyor na byang (P.6) chub smsa dpa' rams ngo tsha ba ste / 'di ni sbyor ba'i ngo tsha ba'o // (Mdo sde rgyan gyi 'grel bshad (SAVBh) D.Tsi 83a1–83a2; P.Tsi 98b3–98b6)

12 bst\[en (P.: bstn) rnam \[a pha rol phyin pa drug / bst\[en pa la ni le lo (P.158a1) las ngo tsha bar \[gyur (D.7) ro (18-2ab) zhes bya ba ni byang chub smsa dpa' gang gi tshe bsten par 'os pa pha rol tu phyin pa nams (P.: rnam) le lo byed cing sten par mi byed / pha rol tu phyin pa rams la rab tu mi sbyor na des na (P.2) ngo tsha bar 'gyur ro // (Thug pa chen po'i mdo sde'i rgyan gyi rgya cher bshad pa (MSA\[) D.Bi 140a6–140a7; P.Bi 157b8–158a2)

13 tshad med pa'i 'og tu ngo tsha ba'i skabs te // (P.:/) (D.3) 'di'i 'brel pa gang yin zhe na / 'di itar rang (P.4) dang gzhan la phan pa la zhugs pa de sgrub (P.: sgrub) pa'i don du de dang rjes su mthun pa'i lam sgom par byed pas / (P.:/) de'i 'og tu byang chub kyi phyogs dang mthun pa'i skabs so / (P.:/) byang chub kyi smsa dpa' rams kyi bslab (P.5) pa'i dngigs pa rnam pa (D.4) 'di ni ngo bo nyid dang / khyad par gyi sgo nas bslab pa'i lam gyi rnam pa thams cad yin pas ngo tsha ba'i skabs nas bzung ste / gang zag la bdag med pa'i skabs kyi bar thams cad ni (P.6) byang chub kyi phyogs dang mthun pa'i skabs yin par rig par bya'o // (Thug pa chen po'i mdo sde'i rgyan gyi rgya cher bshad pa (MSA\[) D.Bi 140a2–140a4; P.Bi 157b3–157b6)

14 ngo tsha ba rnam par dbye ba'i tshigs su bcad pa bcu drug ste zhes bya ba la / mchod pa dang bsnyen pa dang tshang med pa'i skabs bshad pa'i 'og tu ngo tsha ba dang (D.5) brtan pa la (P.5) sog pa'i skabs bshad par 'brel pa ci yod ce na / 'di itar mchod pa dang bsnyen pas bdag la phan par bya ba'i phyir zhugs / tshad med pas gzhan la phan par bya ba'i phyir (P.: om, phyir) zhugs pa des bdag dang gzhan gyi don rdzogs (P.6) shing mthar phyin par bya ba'i phyir de dang rjes su mthun pa'i (D.6) lam bsgom dgos pa na tshad med pa la sog pa'i 'og tu ngo tsha shes pa la sog pa byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos rams bshad par 'brel to // de yang (P.7) bslab pa'i dngigs pa dang / rnam pa dang / rang bzhin dang / khyad par rams kyis byang chub smsa dpa' rams kyi rjes (D.7) su mthun

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pa’i bslab pa’i lam bstn te / de la dang po ngo tsha shes pa nas brtams nas (P.8) gang zag la bdag med pa’i skabs kyi bar du thams cad kyang byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos yin par rig par bya’o //
(Mdo sde rgyan gyi ’grel bshad (SAVBh) D.Tsi 81b4–81b7; P.Tsi 97a4–97a8)

〈Abbreviations〉
MSABh Mahāyānasūtraśālāmkārabhāṣya. See MSA.
MSAṬ Mahāyānasūtraśālāmkāraṭīkā (Asvabhāva) (Tib.), D. No.4029, P. No.5530.
SAVBh Sūtraśālāmkāraravṛttibhāṣya (Sthiramati) (Tib.). D. No.4034, P. No.5531.

〈References〉

〈Key words〉 Mahāyānasūtraśālāmkāra, Bodhisattvabhūmi, Vasubandhu, lajjā, hri-vyapatrāpya
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