On Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's Way of Citing the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* in His Commentary

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The present paper aims to analyse the citation of the MMK-*kārikās* in Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's commentary found in both its introductory section and Chapter One.¹⁾

1. Commentary literature mentioned by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags

First, the question is what kind of commentaries Pa tshab Nyi ma grags had at hand when, during his stay in Kaśmīr, this commentary or study note was written down? Pa tshab Nyi ma grags introduced the following commentaries (3bL7–3bL9):

- 1) Buddhapālita was the first who composed [his own commentary], and commented [on the MMK] in the way of [unwanted] consequence (*prasaṅga*).
- 2) Akutobhayā is generally known to have been written by Nāgārjuna but others say, "it is not so."
- 3) Against the profound [commentary] of Buddhapālita, Bhavyakīrti composed the *Prajñāpradīpa* in which, refuting the former's [way of] *prasaṅga* or [unwanted] consequence, he commented [on the MMK] in the autonomous way (*svatantra*).
- 4) Later, having refuted the autonomous way [of Bhavyakīrti's commentary], Candrakīrti vindicated Buddhapālita's exposition and commented [on the MMK] in the way of [unwanted] consequence (*prasaṅga*).

Interesting here is that according to Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's understanding, Buddhapālita was the first commentator of the above four and he commented in the way of unwanted consequence (*prasaṅga*). Also, the authorship of Akutobhayā was already doubted at that time.

2. Analysis of the citation of the MMK-*kārikās*

Observing the introductory section (1bL1–5aR11) and Chapter One titled *Pratyayaparīkṣā* or Examination of Conditions རྒྱུན་བརྟག་པའི་ 5bL1 རབ་ཏུ་བྱེད་པ་ཡོད་ན་ (5aR11–17aR10), we understand that out of 14 MMK-*kārikās*, nine verses (2–5, 7–8, 11–13) in total are cited or par-

MMK 1.3

सदगुणोऽद्वैतार्थोऽद्वैतार्थः॥ गच्छन्त्येवमर्थं सत्त्विकम्॥ १३॥²⁾

དངོས་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ནི། རྟེན་ལ་སོགས་ལ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།

ཚུང་པ་ནི་ཅུ་པའི་ཀློན་བརྟན་པ་ལས་འཕྲོས་ཏེ་དབང་དེང་ས་པོ་རྩུ་གྱི་ 2bR3 རང་བཞིན་ནི། ཀློན་ལ་ཚུགས་ལ་ཡོད་ས་ཡིན།

བདག་གི་དངོས་པོ་ཡོད་ཅིང་ཅན། གཞན་གྱི་དངོས་པོ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིང་།

ཞེས་ཀྱིན་བཞི་བཀའ་པའི་སྒྲོ་ནས་ 2bR4 རང་བཞིན་མེད་པར་བསྐྱེད་པས།

In the above commentary it is clear that Pa tshab Nyi ma grags follows Klu'i rgyal

mtshan's translation གཞན་གྱི་དངོས་པོ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན། and not his later revised rendering of *Prajñā-nāma-mūlamadhyamakakārikā* or *Prasannapadā* (PsP). This shows that at the time of this manuscript, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags had probably not yet translated the PsP and instead he used the earlier translation of the MMK-*kārikā* by Klu'i rgyal mtshan. Pa tshab Nyi ma grags does not explicitly comment on the MMK 1.3 itself. In this introductory section, the context of citing MMK 1.3 (2bR2–3) is within the introduction to Nāgārjuna's works (2bL8). This explanation is similar to that found in the introductory section of Candrakīrti's commentary on the *Yuktiṣaṭikākārikā* where MMK 1.3 is also cited. (For the different order of the MMK-*kārikās* 1.2 and 1.3 found between the *Akutobhayā* (ABh) plus Piṅgala's *Zhōng-lùn* and Buddhapālita's commentary (BP), *Prajñāpradīpa* (PP), see Saito 2019.⁴⁾)

MMK 1.1

བདག་ལས་མ་ཡིན་གཞན་ལས་མིན། གནོས་ལས་མ་ཡིན་རྒྱ་མེད་མིན།

न स्वतो नापि परतो न द्वाभ्यां नाप्य् अहेतुतः।

དངོས་པོ་གང་དག་གང་ན་ཡང་། རྩེ་བ་ནས་ཡང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན། ༡་༡།

उत्पन्ना जातु विद्यन्ते भावाः स्व चन केचन।। १.१।।

"In any place, no things whatsoever ever arise, from themselves, from others, from both, or without cause." (MMK 1.1)

MMK 1.1 is not exactly cited but explained in detail. Explanations are divided in the following four sections (2.111.41–44):

རྒྱ་མེད་པར་རྩེ་བར་འདོད་པ་ནི་ [5bR8–5bR9]⁵⁾,

བདག་ལས་རྩེ་བར་འདོད་པ་ནི་ [5bR9–5bR11],

"The assertion of arising without cause,"

"The assertion of arising from themselves,"

གཞན་ལས་རྩེ་བར་ 6aL1འདོད་པ་ནི་ [5bR11/6aL1–6aL4],

འགྲུ་ལས་རྩེ་བར་འདོད་པ་ནི་ [6aL4–6aL5]

"The assertion of arising from others,"

"The assertion of arising from both [themselves and others],"

These four categories include partial words of the *kārikā* 1.1. This shows that Pa tshab Nyi ma grags commented in detail on all four ways of arising systematically. Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's citation of some phrases of the MMK-*kārikās* 2, 4–5, 7–8 and 11–13 makes it clear that these are located nearly at the end of the First Chapter, i.e., in folios 14bR11 to 17aL10. This fact shows that giving comments on each verse of the MMK was not intended to be the main topic of Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's work as far as the First Chapter is concerned.

3. Various topics of studies in Kaśmīr

Besides these several verses cited and discussed, as we saw in the above section, this commentary focuses also on presenting various argumentations of the Buddhist and Indian Philosophical thoughts. The distinction between Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika's ways of argumentation, in the latter of which Pa tshab Nyi ma grags takes a clear position (14aL4), is one of the most important topics dealt with in his commentary.⁶⁾ Yoshimizu recently analysed and updated Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's understanding and emphasized that this debate was not a past debate in the sixth- and seventh-century in India, but an ongoing issue at the time of Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, being a Prāsaṅgika translator.⁷⁾ In addition, logical issues such as of the proof of the absence of own-nature (**niḥsvabhāvatā*) (6aL8) and the "neither one nor many" argument (**ekāneka[virahita]*, 7bL11) in the form of **prasaṅga* are discussed in detail. Pa tshab Nyi ma grags studied those topics in accordance with those Indian scholars such as Śrīgupta, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla in the 8th century but defined them here in a new light of the Prāsaṅgika.⁸⁾ It seems most probable that in order to highlight Candrakīrti's approach to the Madhyamaka thought, what Pa tshab Nyi ma grags wrote in the First Chapter of his commentary shows those topics and contents of his study at Kaśmīr in late 11th century that he learned from Indian *paṇḍitas* like Mahāsumati.

4. Conclusion

First, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's citation of MMK 1.3 shows clearly that, while following the previous translation by Klu'i rgyal mtshan, he had not yet translated, or at least not yet completed his translation of the *Prasannapadā* when he wrote this commentary. This fact may also give evidence that he had then not yet revised the earlier translation of the MMK by Klu'i rgyal mtshan. Second, in Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's detailed explanation of the dedicatory verse, he cited almost all parts of the verse and specifically commented on each of the "eight negations". This is followed by the content of MMK 1.1 that was explained but Pa tshab Nyi ma grags did not cite the verse as a whole. Third, most of the cited phrases of the MMK-*kārikās* (2 and 4 onwards) are located at nearly the end of the First Chapter. This shows that the explanation of the MMK-*kārikās* was not intended by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags to be the main topic in his commentary on the First Chapter. While presenting various topics and contents of his study in Kaśmīr, he shows the intention to emphasize his

own position as a *Prāsaṅgika. Further analysis as well as translation work of this important commentary is likely to be fruitful and remains the task for future research.

Notes

- 1) For the Introductory remarks on Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's manuscript, see Kamarid 2019. 2) In following the Tibetan text of MMK translated by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags is cited from D no. 3824, P no. 5224. 3) Hereafter the Sanskrit text of MMK is cited from Ye 2011, 12 in which the verse in question is numbered MMK 1.2 in accordance with ABh and Pīṅgala's Zhōng-lùn. 4) Saito 2019, 15. 5) 5bR8: ཐུ་མེད་པར་སྐྱེ་བར་འདོད་པ་ནི་རྒྱུ་མཛུགས་ལ་ཅེར་བུ་པ་སྐྱེ་ཐུ་མེད་པར་སྐྱེ་ན་ཡུལ་དུ་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་ཅེས་པ་མེད་པར་གྲུག། "... [Those who] assert the arising without cause are the [*loka]jāyata or *nirgrantha. [However,] if [things] arose without cause, it would result that there would be no individual certainty about the place, time and aspects." 6) Kamarid (2019, 235). 7) Yoshimizu (2020, 1194). 8) See Yoshimizu (2020, 1194ff).

Abbreviations

ABh *Akutobhayā* by Nāgārjuna (?). D no. 3829, P no. 5229. **BP** *Buddhapālita-Mūlamadhyamakavṛtti*. D no. 3842, P no. 5242. **MMK** *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* by Nāgārjuna. See Ye 2011. **PP** *Prajñāpradīpa* by Bhāviveka. D no. 3853, P no. 5253. **PsP** *Prasannapadā* by Candrakīrti. D no. 3860, P no. 5260. See La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913.

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Key words *prasaṅga*, *Prāsaṅgika, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, MMK, *dBu ma rtsa ba shes rab kyi ṭi ka sGron ma gsal bar byed pa*

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