Analysis of the Bhavasamkrântisûtra*

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I

The Bhavasamkrântisûtra (BhSS) is considered as an important text in the history of early Yogâcâra literature in spite of its shortness, which is preserved in Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan as follows:


The BhSS is composed of two parts—the prose section and the verse section—, but the latter is not simply a summary of the former as usual. The two sections seem to originate from the different sources each other.

In this paper, we will analyse some features of the two sections separately, and search the BhSS for the background of literary development.

II

As already pointed out, the 2nd verse of the latter section is quoted in the Tattvårtha chapter of the Bodhisattvabhûmi (BBh)⁴, and adopted word for word by Bhâvaviveka into the verse V–74 of his Madhyamakahrdayakarika (MHK)⁵. Furthermore, Śântarakṣita represents it in other words in the verse 869 of his Tattvasamgraha (TS)⁶ and Kamalaśîla quotes the 2nd verse of the BhSS in his commentary (TSP)⁷ on it. Such facts show that the 2nd verse has been regarded as a scriptual authority in order to prove the absolute
realities (dharmata=nirabhilapyata=nihsvabhavata) by both Yogācāras and Mādhyamikas as Bhāvaviveka declares.

Besides, the verses 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the BhSS resemble closely the latter half of the Bhavasamkrantisastra (BhSS) attributed to Nāgārjuna, of which commentary (BhST) is attributed to Maitreyanātha. Even though the authenticity of the authors is uncertain, this resemblance proves that the verse section of the BhSS stands in close relations with the Prajñāpāramitā tradition.

These facts mentioned above lead us to suppose that the verse section of the BhSS was produced under the influence of the Prajñāpāramitā literature just like the Byams sus kyi lehu (BSL). The terminal date of production can be put with certainty in c. 350 A.D. because the 2nd verse of the BhSS is quoted in the BBh translated by Dharmakṣema (曇無讖) who arrived at Guṣṭā in 412 A.D.

III

The prose section, on the other hand, is not under the strong influence of the Prajñāpāramitā literature, and it rather represents the Hinayānistic theme that deals with the continuity of mind (cittasamāntati) by means of the vijñāna which intermediate between worldly existences (bhavas). Though the theory of śānti and the Mahāyānistic doctrine also are alluded in the prose section, they seem to be a later interpolation. But it was before c. 350 A.D. that they had been inserted in it, when the present BhSS was produced by being mixed with the verse section.

The more developed form than the present prose section of the BhSS can be recognized in the Pitāputrasamāgamasūtra (PPSS) which is quoted at length in the Śikṣāsamuccaya (SS), where occurs almost the same passage as the section in question of the BhSS. Both the BhSS and the PPSS show the greater similarities and the smaller differences each other. We will pick up each good example among these similarities and differences for we cannot compare with each other in detail because of lack of space.

Ex. of similarity

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BhSS</th>
<th>PPSS</th>
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| bcom ldan ḡdas kyis bkah stsāl pa| rgyal  | bcom ldan ḡdas kyis bkah stsāl pa| rgyal
The original Sanskrit of the two is regarded as the same\textsuperscript{14}). A few differences are ones of translation\textsuperscript{15}).

Ex. of difference BhSS

\begin{verbatim}
rgyal po chen po de ltar rnam par sès pa
pa tha ma ḍag ciṅ skye bahi char gtogs
pahi rnam par sès pa daṅ po yaṅ na ni
lhaṅ naṅ du/ yaṅ na ni miṅ naṅ du/
yai na ni sens can dmyal bahi rnam su/
yai na ni dud ḍgroḥi rnam su/ yaṅ na
ni yi dags rnam su ḍbyun bar ḍgyur ro/
\end{verbatim}

Ex. of difference PPSS

\begin{verbatim}
rgyal po chen po de la rnam par sès pa
tha maḥi dbaṅ daṅ/ las dmigs pa de daṅ
rkyen gniś kyis skye bahi char gtogs pahi
rnam par sès pa daṅ po ḍbyun stet yaṅ
na ni sens can dmyal bar/ yaṅ na ni dud
ḥgroḥi skye gnas su/ yaṅ na ni giṅ rjeḥi
ḥjig rten du/ yaṅ na ni lha ma yin gyi
ris su/ yaṅ na ni miṅ naṅ du/ yaṅ na ni
lhaṅ naṅ du ḍbyun bar ḍgyur ro/
\end{verbatim}

It should be noted that the PPSS adopts the more Mahāyānistic doctrine of six \textit{gatis} while the BhSS follows the Hīnayānistic tradition of five \textit{gatis}.

From the comparison between the BhSS and the PPSS, we may infer the existence of the Ur-text of the BhSS from which the prose section of the BhSS had derived directly and the PPSS had branched off and developed further.

\textbf{IV}

Having analysed the two sections of the BhSS separately, we are going here to describe roughly the background of literary development of the whole present text. First of all, let us assume the existence of text $x$ that state the Hīnayānistic doctrine of the continuity of mind. It developed into the Ur-text of the BhSS having a slight influence of the \textit{Prajñāpāramitā} literature. After
that the verse section of the BhSS originated from another source had been combined with the Ur-text of the BhSS by such a groupe who inserted the BŚL in the Prjñaparamita literature and probably belonged to the so-called Yogācāra. It was at the time that occured the whole present text of the BhSS.

Here we might be able to adduce a circumstantial evidence to prove that the present text of the BhSS would have belonged to the Yogācāra rather than to the Madhyamika. The most part of the BhSS is quoted in the Madhyamaka-vatāraṇabhaṣya (MABh)\textsuperscript{16} of Candrakīrti in order to refuse the alayavijñāna of Yogācāra. Though it is difficult to explain the reason why Candrakīrti would be better pleased to take the BhSS than the PPSS, he would perhaps expected the more efficacious refutation by means of employing the BhSS as the scriptural authority, which belonged to the just opposite of him  \textit{i.e.} the Yogācāra. It was also to the Yogācāra tradition that the Chinese translators of the BhSS had belonged.

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* This paper is an abstract from my article: “The Bhavasamkrantisūtra—Introduction and Translation (in Japanese)” contributed to the Journal of Buddhist Studies, No. 8, Komazawa Univ. (unpublished), which consult for some detils.

1) To my regret, it is not available for me. Suggestion is due to Dutt’s note on his edition of the Bodhisattvacintamani, p. 32, and S. Hanayama, Bibliography on Buddhism, p. 647, No. 11590. See below, P. S.

2) According to the colophon, the translation is said to have been revised and settled by the authorized new equivalent (skad gsar chad). As shown below, the Tibetan translation of BhSS is a little different from that of the parallel passage in PPSS translated by the same translators of BhSS. The difference seems to result from the fact that the one has passed through the skad gsar chad while the other has not done. See below, n. 15.

3) This section is consist of 7 verses.
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4) See BBh, Wogihara ed., p. 48 and Dutt ed., pp. 32–33. Cf. Sāgaramegha’s commentary on BBh, P. ed., No. 5548, Ri, 83b³–84a³, where he interprets the verse by the tri-svabhāva theory.


6) Compare below the verse 869 of TS with the 2nd verse of BhSS. “yasya yasya hi śabdasya yo yo viṣaya ucyate/ sa sa saṃvidyate nāvā vastūnāṃ sā hi dharmatā// 869”: “yena yena hi nāmnā vai yo yo dharīmo ’bhilapyaṭe/ na sa saṃ-vidyate tatra dharmānāṃ sā hi dharmatā//” (2nd v. of BhSS)

7) See TSP, Shastri ed., p. 15 and p. 339. Shastri traces the quotation to the Laṅkāvatārasastra, v. X–500 (=v. III–82), but it is not the same though the former is quite similar to the latter.

8) “de la shun lugs gni ga (=both Yogācāra and Mādhyamika) la grags paḥi luṅ yon yod de!” (TJ, op. cit., 243b³).

9) Compare the verses with BhsŚ, P. ed., No. 5240, Tsa. 171a⁷–b³ and BhST, ibid., 177a⁷–178b¹. Suggestion is due to Dr. Y. Ejima. Cf. N. Aiyaswami Sastrī: Bhava Saṃkrāntī Sūtra and Bhavasamkrānti Śastra, Adyar, 1938, which is not available for me. Information on it is given by R. Yamada: Bongobutten no shobunken, p. 123.

10) Cf. my article: “A Consideration on the Byams ṣus kyi leḥu from the historical point of view”, JIBS, XXIV–1, pp. 499–489.


13) For the detailed comparison, see my article mentioned above n. 1. The comparison is done by both the Tibetan translations because the Sanskrit of BhSS is not available for me.

14) According to ŠŚ, op. cit., p. 252, ll. 10–12, the original Sanskrit is as follows: “bhagavān āha/ evam evam maḥārāja bālo ’srutavān prthajanaś caṅkṣā rūpāṇī dṛṣṭvā saumanasaya-sthānīyānī abhinivēṣit/ so ’bhiniśṭaḥ sann anunīyate ’nunī- yataḥ saṃrajaṭye//”.

15) Ex., both ’kun tu chags par ḡgyur’ (BhSS) and ‘yoṅs su chags par ḡgyur’ (PPSS) are equivalent for ‘saṃrajaṭye’ though the former (BhSS) passes through the skad gsar chad is more suitable to Mvyut. No. 2206.


I express my gratitude to the British Library, Lending Division, which gave me a copy of Ayyaswami Sastrī (n. 1) in Nov. 7, 1977 in compliance with my request. As seen through the subtitle, it is not a original Sanskrit but a restoration from the Tibetan version and the other materials such as ŠŚ (>PPSS), TSP, etc. I want to have another chance of mentioning to his restoration.

(Oct. 4, 1977)