On the “Lost” (*Antarhita) Sūtras in theVyākyāyukti

In Relation to the Proof of the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Teachings

HORIUCHI Toshio

1. Introduction

In the Vyākyāyukti (VyY), Chapter 4, Vasubandhu defends the authority of the Mahāyāna as buddhavacana, or the Buddha’s word. Among the many arguments between Vasubandhu and the opponent (Śrāvakayānīka) delineated therein, we find an argument about the “lost” (hidden, *antarhita) sūtras or scriptures, in which Vasubandhu argues that not all the Buddha’s words are transmitted in the Śrāvakayāna tradition (as in the Mahāyāna tradition). This discussion, however, seems to be merely a criticism of the incompleteness of the Śrāvakayāna canon, and the role it plays in the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings appears unclear.

In this connection, it is to be noted that Honjō (1989) has made a great contribution to the study of the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings because he not only points out that the arguments about the authenticity of the Abhidharma śāstras as the Buddha’s word have similarity to the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings as the Buddha’s word, but has also provided plenty of information about the works dealing with this topic. Thanks to his study, the fact was revealed for the first time that the argument about the “lost” sūtras is found in a similar form in the Mahāvibhaṣā, VyY, Tarkajvalā (TJ), and Nyāyānusāra (NA). Subsequently, Ōtake (2003) pointed out that in the Ru dasheng lun 入大乘論 (hereafter RDL), the criticism of Ānanda, which constitutes the main part of the theory of the “lost” sūtras, is found in a form similar to the VyY.

In this paper, I shall take up the argument about the “lost” (*antarhita) sūtras in the VyY, focusing on the criticism of Ānanda, and elucidate the role this discussion plays in the course of the disputes in the VyY and in the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings as the Buddha’s word by comparing it with similar discus-
2. The “Lost” Sūtras in the VyY

The following argument is conducted between Vasubandhu and the opponent (i.e., Śrāvakāyānīka: Śr) in the first half of the VyY, Ch. 4 (D96b7ff., P113a8ff.): [Śr 1] The Mahāyāna (here, this Mahāyāna refers to the Prajñāpāramitāsūtra or *sarvadharmaniḥsvabhāva ["selflessness of all elements" theory]) is not buddhavacana because it contradicts the well-known buddhavacana. [V (= Vasubandhu) 1] In that case, the buddhavacanas well-known to you (i.e., Śrāvakāyānīka) cannot be buddhavacana because they [contain teachings that] are mutually contradictory. [Śr 2] There are *nītārtha sūtras (scriptures of definite meaning) in the Śrāvakāyāna by which such [seeming] contradictions are resolved (= among the contradictory teachings, one is nītārtha and the other is neyārtha [in which the meaning is not to be taken literally], and thus the [seeming] contradictions are resolved). On the other hand, there are no nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna [by which the contradictions between the sarvadharmaniḥsvabhāva theory and the other Mahāyāna teachings are resolved].

In reply to this criticism from the opponent (Śrāvakāyānīka), Vasubandhu, referring to the “lost” sūtras, answers as follows (VyY, D97bff., P114bff.): [V 2] You cannot assert that there are no nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna simply because they are not seen nowadays [since many sūtras have been “lost” (*antarhiita) in the Mahāyāna]. Likewise, many sūtras have been lost in the Śrāvakāyāna. Next, (1) Vasubandhu refers to the “lost” sūtras in the Śrāvakāyāna. (a) He first cites a verse listing the names of 14 sūtras which show that some of the Buddha’s teachings were lost1 (the core part of this section is a criticism of Ānanda to which I refer immediately below). (b) Then, he cites some passages from the above-mentioned 14 sūtras. (c) Further, he cites two more sūtras. (2) Vasubandhu refers to the diversity of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. Finally, (3) he mentions the loss of the original recitation (*mūlasamgiti-bhramśa).

After this, many arguments are given in the VyY, and at the beginning of the latter part of Ch. 4 (VyY, D105b6ff., P123bff.), Vasubandhu insists that there are nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna and cites some verses from the Samdhinirmocanasūtra (SNS) and ṿaṅkāvatārasūtra (LAS).
Among the above discussions, let me mention again Vasubandhu’s criticism of Ānanda (the first part of [V 2] (1) b), the outline of which is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of time preached by the Buddha</th>
<th>20 years (first half)</th>
<th>25 / 20+ years (second half)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of dharmaskandhas received by Ānanda</td>
<td>2,000 (received indirectly by senior monks; Tib.: gnyis ni dge slong dag las so//)</td>
<td>82,000 / 80,000+ (received from the Buddha after Ānanda become his attendant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 1: The criticism of Ānanda in the VyY (based on the *Uttarasūtra and *Ānandasūtra)

In summary, Vasubandhu criticizes Ānanda because he did not receive most of the Buddha’s word before he became the Buddha’s attendant. But there is a problem: this criticism of Ānanda was introduced in the context of defending the opponent’s charge that “there are no nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna” to prove that we cannot conclude that there are no nītārtha sūtras ([Sr 1] above). It is true, in this sense, that this argument simply seems to be a criticism of the Śrāvaka, and Vasubandhu seems to be admitting that there are no nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna. However, Vasubandhu certainly argues in the latter part of Ch. 4 of the VyY that there are nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna. Thus, the position of the discussion about the “lost” (*antarhita) sūtras ([V 2] above) seems to be curious in the context of the VyY, and the role this discussion plays in the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teaching as the Buddha’s word is unclear.

Now, let me elucidate the role that this argument about the “lost” sūtras plays in the VyY. (1) First, I shall examine this argument from a structural point of view. As mentioned above, Vasubandhu answered the criticism of the opponent (Śrāvaka) that “there are no nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna” by pointing out that not all the Buddha’s words are recited in the Śrāvakayāna. The neyārtha teaching (in which meaning is to be taken literally) was, in the VyY, the Prajñāpāramitāsūtra or the sarvavadharmaniḥsvabhāvatā teaching advocated in this sūtra. In this sense, the Prajñāpāramitāsūtra or its teaching seems to have been familiar to the Śrāvaka at that time. Nītārtha sūtras such as the SNS (and LAS), on the other hand, can be said to have been “lost” for the Śrāvaka since they were not known to the Śrāvaka. (In this connection, it is worth noting that Vasubandhu, when he cites the nītārtha sūtras, criti-
cizes the opponents for insisting that “there are no nītārtha sūtras in the Mahāyāna” because they are not erudite [thos pa nyung ba] [VyY, D105b, P123b].) Thus, the “lost” sūtras, including both the “lost” Śrāvakayānīka Āgamas and the Mahāyāna sūtras such as the SNS, are similar in the sense that both are unknown to the Śrāvaka (but were surely taught by the Buddha). We can thus understand the position of these “lost” sūtras in the VyY as follows: this argument about the lost sūtras indirectly refers to the un-“lost” nītārtha sūtras such as the SNS by illustrating that all the Buddha’s words were not transmitted in the Śrāvakayāna tradition. (2) Secondly, as I show in the following section, the criticism of Ānanda plays an important role in the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings and seems to be suitably placed in the discussion in the VyY.

3. The Criticism of Ānanda and the Proof of the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Teachings in the TJ and RDL

In this section, I shall take up the relevant discussions in the TJ, RDL, and NA and elucidate the role the criticism of Ānanda plays in the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings.

3.1. An outline of the corresponding discussions in the TJ is as follows (TJ, D166a2ff., P179b8ff.; the numbers below are provisional):4)

(1) The Mahāyāna also (i) enters into the Mahāyāna sūtras, (ii) is found in the 700 *śikṣāpada for the bodhisattva, and (iii) does not contradict the *dharmatā of the teaching of emptiness (*śunyatā). (2) Ānanda was not the reciter of the Mahāyāna: the Mahāyāna was recited by the original reciters such as *Samantabhadra, *Mañjuśrī, Guhyakādhipati, *Maitreya, and so forth. (3) Citation of 16 sūtras (beginning with the Uttarasūtra and Ānandasūtra, very similar to the VyY mentioned above).

As is obvious from the above outline, the argument about the “lost” sūtras is introduced in the context of the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teachings as the Buddha’s word in the TJ. The TJ, after maintaining that the reciters of the Mahāyāna teachings are different from the reciter of the Śrāvakayāna (Ānanda), introduces the argument about the “lost” sūtras in which criticism of Ānanda constitutes the core part.

3.2. An outline of the corresponding discussions, including the criticism of Ānanda,
in the RDL (T32: 36cff.) is as follows: 5)

(1) Citation of the Ānandasūtra. (2) Citation of the Uttarāsūtra: There are many dharmaskandhas (aggregates of the teaching) which were not received by Ānanda (cf. section 1 above). (3) Citation of the Śūramgamasamādhisūtra: Little are the amounts of the dharmaskandhas received by Ānanda and large are those not received by him. (4) Many sūtras also state that Ānanda did not have the capacity to receive the Buddha’s teaching. (5) Ānanda was not able to receive all the Buddha’s teaching. (6) [Objection] Ānanda is said to have been the foremost *bahusrūta (erudite). [Answer] Although he is said to have been the foremost *bahusrūta, this is among the Śrāvakas, and bodhisattvas are not taken into account.

As is shown by the above synopsis, the RDL criticizes Ānanda for not having received many teachings of the Buddha, and by doing so, the RDL situates the Mahāyāna sūtras as the Buddha’s word that was not received by Ānanda, the reciter of the Śrāvakayāna canon. In a word, the criticism of Ānanda is an argument which makes it possible for the Mahāyāna to be the Buddha’s word which was not received by him.

3.3 The “lost” sūtras in the NA (T29: 604c11-605a23) 6)

Sahghabhadra’s (衆賢) Nyāyānusāra (NA) cites 12 sūtras common to the VyY in the context of defending the 98 anusaya, or the “impressed tendency” theory, as the Buddha’s word. As the NA is considered to postdate the VyY, 7) what is to be noted here is that the NA does not cite the *Uttarasūtra and *Ānandasūtra and the relevant criticism of Ānanda as found in the VyY.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have elucidated the position of the argument about the “lost” (*antarhita) sūtras in the VyY by investigating the context of the VyY itself. At the same time, I have pointed out that the criticism of Ānanda in the VyY plays an important role in the proof of the authenticity of the Mahāyāna teaching as the Buddha’s word by taking account of the corresponding arguments in the TJ and RDL.

Abbreviations

NA: Sanghabhadra, Nyāyānusāra, T29.1562; RDL (Ru dasheng lun 入大乘論): T32.1634; SA: Samyuktagama; T: Taishō canon; TJ: Tarkajvāla, D No. 3856, P No.
On the “Lost” (*Antarhita) Sūtras in the Vyākhāyukti (T. Horiuchi)

(Notes) 1) The original Sanskrit names of the 16 sūtras which show that some of the Buddha’s teachings have been lost are variously posited (cf. Peter Skilling, “Vasubandhu and the Vyākhāyukti Literature,” Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies 23-2 [2000], 297-350; Peter Verhagen, “Studies in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Hermeneutics (4): The Vyākhāyukti by Vasubandhu,” Journal Asiaticque 293-2 [2005], 559-602). However, as has been done by Honjo (“Shakkiron daiyonshō — Seshin no daijō bussetsuron,” Kōbe joshi daigaku kiyō bungakubu-hen 23-1 [1990], 57-70), by consulting studies of the NA and TJ, some of the corresponding names of the sūtras in the VyY become clear. Here, I shall add some information about some of the names of the 16 sūtras. 1: *Uttara; 2: *Ānanda; 3: *Bhadā; 4: *Duhkhaskandha; 5: *Bhumija; 6: *Udāyin; 7: Śūnyatā; 8: Chu las skyes; 9: *Pūrṇa; 10: *Gopaka; 11: Chu shing; 12. *Parinirvāṇa; 13: *Rāṣṭrapāla; 14: ’Gro ba; 15: Tūṣrī(ṃbhāva); 16: Vihāra. The Tibetan rendering of the name of the 5th sūtra in the VyY is Sa ston (gyi mdo). As this sūtra corresponds to SA 343 (T2: 94a) 浮彌経, SN 12.24, 25 (Vol. II, 32-41) Bhumija, this Sa ston is assumed to be a translation of *Bhumī (ja), and the corresponding name in the TJ also supports this assumption (TJ, D167a4, P181a2: sa pa’i mdo). On the other hand, in the NA we find the name 他経, but this passage in the NA should be emended from Tājing 他経 (*Anyasūtra) to Dijīng 地経 (*Bhumī(ja)sūtra; cf. Kōrai daizōkyō [Tōyō shuppansa, 1974], vol. 30: 688b13: 地経). As for the names of sūtras 9, 15, and 16, see Horiuchi (“Shakkiron ni okeru onmotsukyo no riron,” Tōhōgaku 112 [2006b], 77-65 (L)). 2) Cf. Horiuchi, op cit. 3) Cf. José Ignacio Cabezón, “Vasubandhu’s Vyākhāyukti on the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Sūtras” (in J. Timm, ed., Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia [Albany: SUNY Press, 1992], 221-243), 240, n. 25: “From this it seems that this is a subject that Vasubandhu felt was important to treat in its own right, so that despite the fact that he had much easier rebuttal to the Śrāvaka objection available at this point...” 4) This section of the TJ has been partly translated and examined by Ejima Ekyō (Kū to chūgan [Shunjūsha, 2003], 439-447), etc., while part of the NA has been translated by Akanuma Chizen (Kokuyaku issaikyō [Indo senjutsu-bu], Bidon-bu 29 [1934]). But it was Honjō Yoshifumi (“Abidatsuma bussetsuron to daijō bussetsuron — hosshō, onmotsukyo, mitchi,” IBK 38-1 [1989], (59)-(64)) who found that the VyY contains discussions similar to the TJ and NA. 5) Cf. U Hakuju, Hōshōron kenkyū (Iwanami Shoten, 1959); Ōtake Susumu, “Nyū daijō ron no in’yō Agon,” IBK 52-1 (2003), (130)-(133). 6) Akanuma, op. cit., 172-174. 7) Cf. Horiuchi (“Jūnbunkyō kō — Yugagyōha ni okeru sūtra, avadāna, vaipulya, upadesa kaishaku,” Bukkyō bunka kenkyū ronshū 10 [2006a], 3-28).

(Key Words) Vyākhāyukti, Tarkajvālā, Nyāyānusāra, 入大乗論, buddhavacana

(Graduate Student, Tokyo University)