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A Textual Study of the *Lakṣaṇaṭīkā

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Introduction

The present study aims at introducing a collection of texts provisionally called the *Lakṣaṇaṭīkā* (*Lṭ). These texts are a new source of material on Madhyamaka treatises of Candrakīrti. The codex unicus, which consists of eighteen palm leaves, comprises the following:

1. Sanskrit notes on the *Prasannapadā* (Pras): 1b1–7a4
2. Tibetan notes on the *Pras*: 7a4–9b9
3. Sanskrit notes on the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (MABh): 10a1–14a7
4. Tibetan notes on the *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* (VP): 14a7–b3
5. Sanskrit notes on the *Catuḥśatakaṭīkā* (CŚṭ): 15a1–18b7
6. Unidentified Sanskrit notes: 18b7–8

The three complete Sanskrit notes each end by naming the treatise on which they comment, i.e., ‘*prasannapadā*’ (7a4), ‘*madhyamakāvatāra*’ (14a7), and ‘*catuḥśatakam*’ (18b7) respectively. The *Prasannapadā* (Pras) is Candrakīrti’s commentary on Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK). The *Madhyamakāvatāra* (MA) is Candrakīrti’s original treatise, whereas the *Catuḥśataka* (CŚ) is Āryadeva’s main treatise. As shown below, however, the last two notes deal with not only the *kārikās* of the *mūla* text but also with Candrakīrti’s commentary. Accordingly, I identify all three of these texts as Sanskrit notes on Candrakīrti’s commentaries. In the fragmentary section here labeled “unidentified Sanskrit notes” we come across the words ‘*vimśati*’ and ‘*yuktiśaṣṭika*’ (sic), which are almost certainly references to Nāgārjuna’s *Mahāyānavimśatikā* and *Yuktiśaṣṭikā* (YṢ) respectively¹. Like the unidentified Sanskrit notes, the two Tibetan sections are also brief. In the Tibetan notes on the *Pras*, only a small part of the first chapter is dealt with. The notes on the *VP*², a work attributed to Nāgārjuna³, are also short and fragmentary. As we can see from this summary of the contents, the *Lṭ can be regarded as a Madhyamaka work.

For the sake of introducing the text, the following basic questions will be

¹ See Yonezawa 2014b: 1239; Part II below (p. 374, 491–492).

² In the *VP*, the sixteen categories (*padārthas*) in *Nyāyasūtra* (NS) I.1 are examined and refuted. NS I.1 reads as follows: *pramāṇaprameyasamśayaprayojanadr̥ṣṭāntasiddhāntāvayavatarkanirṇayavādajalpa-vitaṇḍāhetvābhāsacchalajātiginirahasthānānām tattvajñānān niḥśreyasādhigamaḥ* (See Jha 1999: 37).

³ The attribution is doubted by Pind 2001.

addressed: (1) What are the contents of the *LT? (2) who compiled it? (3) when was it compiled? (4) where was it compiled? (5) how was it compiled? and (6) for what purpose was it compiled? I have already addressed some of these questions in earlier publications. Concerning question (1), partial editions have been published in a series of papers dating from 2004 to 2018 (Yonezawa 2004a, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2015, 2016a, 2017, and 2018a). Concerning questions (2), (3), and (4), I have elsewhere suggested that a Tibetan scholar by the name of Dharmakīrti compiled both the Sanskrit and Tibetan notes at Vikramaśīla Monastery in north-eastern India around the beginning of 12th century CE (see *dBu med* MS SG 2001 and Yonezawa 2014b). The present study not only examines this tentative biography in further detail, but it also attempts to answer the remaining questions.

The study consists of two main parts. Part I introduces the *LT. Chapter 1, addressing questions (2), (3), and (4), provides bibliographical details about Dharmakīrti. The tentative conclusion stated above is confirmed and expanded upon, and the additional question of who carried the MS to Tibet is addressed. Next, based on the *LT's textual features, I attempt to answer the question of how and why it was compiled (Chapter 2). Furthermore, proper names of sects/schools as well as individuals found in the *LT are enumerated in order to show its textual significance for Madhyamaka studies (Chapter 3). Finally, the answers to the questions addressed above are summarized as a conclusion (Chapter 4). Part II consists of critical editions of Sanskrit notes on the *Pras*, Tibetan notes on the *Pras*, Sanskrit notes on the *MABh*, Tibetan notes on the *VP*, Sanskrit notes on the *CŚT*, and unidentified Sanskrit notes in the *LT. In these editions, words and phrases from the *kārikā* texts and their *bhāṣyas* of the commented treatises are collated. These editions, revisions of those published in the above-mentioned papers, and the conclusions in Part I represent a new contribution to the field.