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ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE RATNĀVALĪ*

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The Buddhist homily Ratnāvalī is one of the many works ascribed to Nāgārjuna, the author of the famous Kārikās which were called the Mūla-Madhyamaka-Kārikās (MMK) by subsequent generations.

An attempt will be made here to test the probability of this ascription by comparing the style of the *Ratnāvalī* with that of the *Kārikās* (III). A comparison of doctrines will also be initiated (IV), but a thorough discussion has to be postponed. Before comparing the two texts, the size and coherence of the *Kārikās* must be determined (II). And first of all something has to be said about the state of research and why we cannot take the authenticity of the *Ratnāvalī* for granted (I).

I

Research in this field has been greatly advanced by Christian Lindtner's Nagarjuniana, Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna, which appeared in 1982 (Copenhagen). In this book one can find useful editions, translations and/or summaries, all with interesting notes, of the Kārikās and the twelve other texts which are considered by Lindtner as genuine. The twelve other texts are

1) Šūnyatāsaptati,

2) Vigrahavyāvartanī,

3) Vaidalyaprakarana,

4) Vyavahārasiddhi,

Yuktisastikā,
Ratnāvalī,

6) Catuhstava,

9) Sūtrasamuccaya,

8) Prafityasamutpādahṛdayakārikā, 10) Bodhicittavivarana,

11) Suhrllekha and

12) Bodhisambhāra.

While most scholars working in this field agree that no more works should be included in this list, few are content with the list itself and the arguments for including a text. It is true that Lindtner appeals to such criteria as style, scope and doctrine¹, but what actually appears in the

- * The author wishes to thank Dr. Tillemans for correcting the English of this contribution.
- In Nagarjuniana (pp. 9-10) Lindtner reports that in a previous work he had started from a close study of the doctrine and style of MMK and that he had recognized as genuine

book as proof is the attribution of a text to Nāgārjuna by the first commentators and some hints as to its compatibility with "Nāgārjuna's philosophical system", the latter being in fact a hotch-potch of ideas gathered from all these works, with some emphasis on the *Ratnāvalī*.

Lindtner may be right in some or most of his claims concerning authenticity, but they must be established better. That he may not be right in all his claims is suggested in studies and reviews by Dietz, Dragonetti, Ruegg, Tola and Williams. In a review article on Nagarjuniana in the Journal of Indian Philosophy 12 (1984) 73-104, Paul Williams produced cogent arguments against the authenticity of the Bodhicittavivarana. In the Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens XXX (1986) 110-122, Carmen Dragonetti convincingly argued that the Pratītyasamutpādahrdayakārikā and the Bodhicittavivarana were not written by Nāgārjuna; in regard to the latter work she followed and endorsed the view of David Seyfort Ruegg in The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India (Wiesbaden 1981, pp. 104-105), as Williams had done earlier. The observations made by Sieglinde Dietz in "The author of the Suhrllekha" can raise or maintain some doubt in regard to the Suhrllekha. Recently, at the Vth International Seminar on Tibetan Studies, Narita, August 1989, in their paper "On the Zhib mo rnam par hthag pa zhes byahi rab tu byed pa", doubts were expressed by Fernando Tola and Carmen Dragonetti³ concerning the Vaidalyaprakarana.

It is obvious that criteria of style and doctrine (not of scope⁴) must be better employed to obtain more certainty about the relation between the $M\bar{u}la$ -madhyamaka-kārikās and the other works ascribed by the first commentators to Nāgārjuna. It is true that no absolute certainty can be

those among the remaining works which agreed with MMK in regard to a) style, b) scope, c) doctrine, and which in addition had been explicitly ascribed to Nāgārjuna by the testimony of 'trustworthy witnesses', viz. Bhavya, Candrakīrti, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. This previous work is said (p. 9, n. 5) to be unpublished and superseded by the present work.

- 2 In Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Philosophy, ed. by E. Steinkellner and H. Tauscher, Vienna 1983, 59-72.
- In JIPh 15 (1987) 2-5 they seem to be inclined to consider the Śūnyatāsaptati as authentic. Their fear that verses 40-42 of the Śūnyatāsaptati contain ideas not yet present in the Kārikās can perhaps be removed by pointing to XVII 32-32. This is not to say that there are no problems at all.
- 4 That all the texts of the list seem to be able (but see my remarks below) to be interpreted as part of the teaching of the way to a buddha's enlightenment is perhaps what Lindtner calls "scope". (Cf. P. Williams' review article mentioned above, p. 75: "... I confess that I am not totally clear what Lindtner means by 'scope".) If by "scope" was meant that all texts show the same topics, it would be rather counterproductive as a criterion.

gained by such a procedure; style and doctrine can be imitated, and an author can change his doctrine and, to some extent, his style. But there are limits to imitation and to versatility. In the absence of biographical data, we must be happy to find two or more works which show no great deviations and which allow us to construe some kind of development.⁵

II

First of all, we should attempt to determine the size and coherence of the $K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s^6$, the point of departure for the comparison.

Of the twenty-seven chapters, the twenty-sixth and the twenty-seventh raise some doubts. XXVI never refers to the absence of a svabhāva of things, their śūnyatā, a subject that is discussed or mentioned in other chapters. It explains the twelvefold chain of dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda) of suffering. A conspicuous feature is the masculine gender in the explanation of several links of the chain. This points to a person which causes and undergoes suffering. Other Buddhist masters usually give emphasis to the absence of an agent or patient when explaining the twelvefold chain of dependent origination.

In many chapters of the Kārikās we find a similar use of the masculine gender, implying an agent or patient of activities (as to kartā, see especially II 19 and XXIV 17[cf.37]). Though this is only a preliminary

- Though one cannot sufficiently prove the authenticity of a work by only pointing to similar metric license and use of particles and compounds (there are too many texts belonging to the same group), observations to the contrary might raise or strengthen doubts. E.g. the 1207 anustubh lines of verse in the metrical works of ādi-Śańkara gathered in the Upadeśasāhasrī do not show vipulā forms with the exception of two mavipulās in XV 47a and XVIII 145c (and 3 ja-vipulās in V 5a, XVI 14a and XVIII 218a, which could be excused as originating from difficulties in placing philosophical concepts). If someone found another work ascribed to Śańkara and written in ślokas with regularly occurring vipulā pādas, it would be, though not totally impossible, highly improbable that the author was ādi-Śańkara.
- I am referring to Nāgārjuna: Mūlamadhyamakakārikāh, edited by J.W. de Jong, The Adyar Library Series vol. 109, The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Adyar, Madras 1977.
- In XXVI 1 we read that [a person] who is covered by ignorance (avidyānivītah) forms (abhisamskurute) samskārāh; in 6 that a [person] who is craving (trsyamānah) grasps (upādatte) the fourfold grasping (upādānam); in 7 that for the [person] who grasps (upadātā) [a new] existence (bhavah, in 8 explained as [a new stream of] five skandhāh) comes forth; in 10 that [a person] who is ignorant (avidvān) forms samskārāh, that he is an agent (kārakah), [but a person] who knows (vidvān) is not.

truth (it is dissolved in the progress of argumentation), most Buddhist masters would refrain from using it. E.g. who would say that seeing and the object of seeing would not be possible if the seer $(drast\bar{a})$ did not exist (III 6cd)?⁸

This might not only point to the background of a doctrine of a *pudgala* being undefinably related to the *skandhas* (not to a *pudgala* existing before them!), as I observed in an earlier paper⁹, but also to the acceptance of

- The places in MMK where one can find an agent (or patient) of activities are: In chapter II (in the verses 6-11, 15-16, 18-20, 22-25) the terms gantā and agantā occur 33 times. III 5-6 mentions drastā 3 times, III 8 śrotā. In chapter VI a person who is rakta by rāga occurs (or is implied in the argument) in the verses 1, 2, 3, (4, 5), 6, 7, (8, 9), 10. Chapter VIII, in its arguments, depends upon a person who is kāraka in verses 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12 and kartā in 2, 3, 4, 8, 13. In IX 8 and 9 the terms drastā, śrotā and vedakah occur; this, however, is part of a refutation of the opinion that a pudgala exists prior to the skandhas. More important for our argument is IX 11. It intends to say that, though there is no person prior to the skandhas, there are also no skandhas prior to a person who possesses them, which is obviously not in accordance with the anātmavāda as taught by many Buddhist schools. In X 1 a kartā appears as a serious participant in the argument, so does ātmā in X 15 and 16, which is not to say that the argument wants to establish an ātmā (ātmā has just as little place on the level of the highest truth as the skandhas). In XI 7 a clear instance of presupposing an agent in an argument can be found: vedakah is as important as vedanā. Of some interest may be the usage of the masculine gender in XIII 5 (yuvā na jīryate ... jīrno na jīryate) or in XVI 6 (sopadāno na badhyate / badhyate nānupādānah) and 8 (baddho na mucyate tāvad abaddho naiva mucyate). More to the point are the verses XIV 1-2 which presuppose a drastā and a raktah, and by implication a person who is full of hatred, etc. and listens, etc. Most interesting for a comparison with chapter XXVI are the verses 28-33 of chapter XVII which employ the terms kartā (5 times) and bhoktā (2 times) in quite a serious manner in an argument; moreover, in 28ab a person who is covered by ignorance and bound by craving (avidyānivrto jantus trsnāsamyojanas ca sah) is indeed mentioned and need not be inferred from the masculine gender. Chapter XVIII starts with an anātmavāda as we are used to in other dogmatical texts, but this starting-point is relativized in v.6 where it is said that the Buddhas taught ātmā as well as anātmā and also neither ātmā nor anātmā (cf. v.8), which suggests that neither of these statements is really true (cf. XXIII 3) and all are mere expedients to lead people (gradually?) to the highest truth. In XXI 20 we read: ...mriyate yesu tesu skandhesu jāyate. XXII 3 contains a statement that is similar to IX 11, saying that there are no components of a person so long as they have not been grasped by a person (here: Tathāgata) and that there is no person without components. In XXII 10 the person who grasps (upādātā) appears on the same ontological level as the things grasped (upādānam); cf. grahītā in XXIII 15. In XXIV 3-4 and 29 the astau purusapudgalāh appear as (un-)real as the four noble truths. Finally, XXIV 17 and 37 are of importance; they register as a fault of the opponent that denying śūnyatā means denying not only cause and effect, but also an agent (kartā, kāraka).
- 9 "Zum Problem der Person in Nāgārjunas Mūla-Madhyamaka-Kārikās", in: W. Strolz and Sh. Ueda (eds.), Offenbarung als Heilserfahrung im Christentum, Hinduismus und Buddhismus. Freiburg Basel Wien (Herder) 1982, pp. 167-185.

natural thinking and language as a basis for reaching the highest truth, as especially the arguments in chapter II suggest.

These arguments have some relation to the "personal" explanation of the pratītyasamutpāda in chapter XXVI. I do not doubt, therefore, that chapter XXVI, though not containing any allusions to the eventual irreality of the origination of suffering and of the person which suffers, was written by the same author.

Accepting a person on a preliminary level of truth as having the same reality as the constituents (skandha) of a person seems to be the most individual characteristic we know of Nāgārjuna. A text attributed by tradition to Nāgārjuna showing this feature will very likely be authentic. Of course, it cannot occur everywhere. Chapters and works which fail to show this mark must not be discarded only for that reason.

However, the fact remains that chapter XXVI is thematically not coherent with the preceding chapters. It must therefore have been written some time before or after them. Lindtner who speaks of an anticlimax seems to suggest that it has been written after them. I am more inclined to consider it an early work of Nāgārjuna, a "student's essay" echoing some kind of pudgalavāda milieu in which Nāgārjuna probably grew up. It could have been appended to the other chapters of the Kārikās by other people, but also by himself, still considering it a good explanation of the prafītyasamutpāda on the lower level of truth.

While accepting chapter XXVI as authentic, I do not include the stanzas 4 (caksuh pratītya rūpam ca samanvāhāram eva ca / nāmarūpam pratītyaivam vijnānam sampravartate //) and 11 (avidyāyām niruddhāyām

- p. 27-28 n.81: "...at first, the final chapters XXVI-XXVII may seem a curious anticlimax. In my opinion the author appended them with a very specific purpose, namely in order to show the orthodoxy of his śūnyavāda: One can only understand the dvādaśānga and the warnings against drstis by means of śūnyatā." But apart from the fact that the text of these chapters itself does not justify Lindtner's remark about śūnyatā as the only means of understanding their contents, there is also the problem that in the texts supposed by Lindtner to be written by Nāgārjuna after the Kārikās, few traces can be found of arguments presupposing an agent or patient of activities. If these texts were written by Nāgārjuna, the insignificance of such traces would have to be explained by his losing the habit of using these arguments. But then it is difficult to maintain that the curious explanation of the pratītyasamutpāda in chapter XXVI was written later than the rest of the Kārikās.
- 11 The view that XXVI is an earlier work might be supported by the observation that XXVI does not refer to a condition of avidyā itself, while such a condition can be found in XVIII 5 (vikalpa, which is itself conditioned by prapañca) and XXIII 1 (samkalpa/viparyāsa, cf. Śūnyatāsaptati 10 and 62).

samskārānām asambhavah / avidyāyā nirodhas tu jñānasyāsyaiva bhāvanāt //). Both have been omitted in Kumārajīva's Chinese translation (T. 1564 f. 36b 20-c 8). The explanation given in stanza 4, though well known, does not make sense in this place, whereas stanzas 3 and 5 when read without interruption give a good understanding. Verse 11 would be the only place in the Kārikās where bhāvana of jñāna was commended (bhāvana of the fourth truth as mentioned in chapter XXIV is rather a reference to a traditionally accepted tenet). As there are no strong parallel passages in the Kārikās which suggest that the omission of verse 11 in the Chinese translation is due to neglect, it is better dismissed as not genuine.

The last chapter of the Kārikās, XXVII, also raises doubts about its authenticity. Its aim is overcoming opinions (drsti) about the eternity or annihilation of a person, etc. Only in one stanza(29)¹² is the doctrine of the śūnyatā of all things mentioned, namely as (a better) alternative introduced by atha $v\bar{a}$ – for overcoming such opinions. This stanza and the last one(30)¹³ remind us of XIII 8.¹⁴ But the preceding stanzas try to overcome opinions by pointing to a kind of middle way between the eternity and the annihilation of a person, the infinity and finiteness of the world. It cannot be described by one of the four positions (catuskoti), but seems to allow the use of the term samtati (stanza 16) / samtāna (22). This middle way is near to the middle way preached in Samyuttanikāya (PTS I p. 17). If we knew only the preceding 28 stanzas, the main thesis of D.J. Kalupahana's book, Nāgārjuna. The Philosophy of the Middle Way¹⁵, viz. that Nāgārjuna only refers to an old message of the Buddha and initiates no new developments, would be no great problem. 16 But we have enough other passages which show that Nagarjuna has developed a new way to try and reach what the Buddha meant. Even the reference in XV 7 to the above mentioned passage in the Samyuttanikāya is no proof of Kalupahana's contention, because by being quoted in such a context it acquires a new meaning.

¹² XXVII 29 atha vā sarvabhāvānām śūnyatvāc chāśvatādayah / kva kasya katamāh kasmāt sambhavisyanti drstayah //.

¹³ XXVII 30 sarvadrstiprahānāya yaḥ saddharmam adeśayat / anukampām upādāya tam namasyāmi Gautamam //.

¹⁴ XIII 8 śūnyatā sarvadrstīnām proktā nihsaranam jinaih / yesām tu śūnyatādrstis tān asādhyān babhāṣire //.

¹⁵ SUNY Series in Buddhist Studies, State University of New York Press, Albany 1986.

¹⁶ Cf. Eli Franco's review of the book, Mahāyāna Buddhism — An Unfortunate Misunderstanding?, Berliner Indologische Studien Band 4/5 (1989) 39-47.

Stanzas 29-30 may be a later addition. Without them chapter XXVII, like chapter XXVI, does not belong to the series of similar treatises which constitute the main body of the Kārikās. Nevertheless XXVII 1-28 seem to have been written by the same author, as some arguments alluding to the interdependence of ātmā/upādātā and upādānam (XXVII 4-8, 26; remember what was said in connection with chapter XXVI) and a comparison with chapter XXV suggest. Regarding this comparison, the same opinions as those which were dealt with in XXVII occur in XXV, but they now follow upon a critical review of ideas hypostatizing nirvāna. In both chapters the catuskoti is employed. But in XXV the negation of the four positions seems to be much stronger, leaving no room for a compromise, as e.g. the idea of a samtāna.¹⁷ As stanzas 22-24¹⁸ show, chapter XXV has only one solution for overcoming the old questions about eternity and annihilation, infinity and finiteness, namely to regard all things as śūnya. This is not introduced as an alternative as it was in XXVII 29. Moreover, XXV 24 shows that not only opinions about eternity, etc., known from the ancient texts, should be overcome, but all ideas and doctrines whatsoever (and maybe even all diversity offered to the senses, as the parallel in V 8 suggests by using drastavya instead of upalambha¹⁹).

Stanzas IV 8-9 also present a problem.²⁰ They cannot, in my opinion, be understood so long as one does not know the contents of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*. This would imply that the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* had been composed prior to the *Kārikās*, which is not very probable. We may therefore assume that these stanzas are a later addition. Note that the chapter needs no further elaboration when in 7 it has been said: *sarvesām eva bhāvānām*

- 17 Cf. XXI 15-21, where the idea of a samtāna/samtati as a middle way between eternity and anihilation is rejected.
- 18 XXV 22 sūnyesu sarvadharmesu kim anantam kim antavat / kim anantam antavac ca nānantam nāntavac ca kim // 23 kim tad eva kim anyat kim šāśvatam kim aśāśvatam / aśāśvatam śāśvatam ca kim vā nobhayam apy atha // 24 sarvopalambhopaśamah prapañcopaśamah śivah / na kvacit kasyacit kaścid dharmo buddhena deśitah //.
- 19 V 8 astitvam ye tu paśyanti nāstitvam alpabuddhayah / bhāvānām te na paśyanti drastavyopaśamam śivam //.
- 20 IV 8 vigrahe yah parīhāram krie śūnyatayā vadet / sarvam tasyāparihrtam samam sādhyena jāyate // 9 vyākhyāne ya upālambham krie śūnyatayā vadet / sarvam tasyānupālabdham samam sādhyena jāyate //.

rūpenaiva samah kramah //.²¹ Moreover, the main terms of the stanzas IV 8-9 (except śūnyatā), viz. vigraha, parihāra [m.c. parīhāra], [a-]parihrta, upālambha, [an]-upālabdha, sādhya (in a logical sense)²², never recur in the Kārikās. So, even if it were beyond any doubt that Nāgārjuna had written the Vigrahavyāvartanī and therefore himself could have added these stanzas, it would be better not to accept them as a part of the Kārikās. The change in terminology is too considerable.

Some more stanzas contained in the *Prasannapadā*, but absent in other commentaries or/and in the Chinese translation, could be considered spurious (cf. Lindtner p. 25 n.79; also for variants of undisputed stanzas²³). At the moment I only want to eliminate XXIII 20, which seems to have been composed by Candrakīrti.

Thus I arrive at 442 stanzas, not counting the two introductory stanzas which are absent in de Jong's edition and may or may not be genuine. The 442 stanzas are my basis for a stylistic and doctrinal comparison with the Ratnāvalī.

Note that acceptance of chapters XXVI and XXVII implies that we can no longer eliminate a work as genuine simply because it does not mention or only incidentally mentions śūnyatā or arguments for śūnyatā.

III

Let us now look at the style of the *Ratnāvalī*. The stylistic comparison has been limited to the Sanskrit fragments of the *Ratnāvalī* as they appear in Michael Hahn's edition and later emendations.²⁴ They constitute 60% of the 500 stanzas of the Chinese and Tibetan translations which have been equally, but not always convincingly, divided into 5 chapters of 100 stanzas

- 21 I owe this observation to Dr. Felix Erb.
- 22 asādhya in a "medical" sense occurs in XIII 8.
- 23 Lindtner's most important observation (according to his own words) that saṃsāraḥ in Candrakīrti's reading of XXVII 19d seems to be a gloss and that previous commentators read śāśvataḥ is not confirmed by Kumārajīva's translation which has an equivalent of saṃsāraḥ.
- Nāgārjuna's Ratnāvalī, Vol.1, The Basic Texts (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Bonn (Indica et Tibetica Bd.1) 1982. "Das älteste Manuskript von Nāgārjunas Ratnāvalī", Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik Heft 13/14 (1987) 77-100. "On the 'Paracanonical' Tradition of the Tibetan Version of Nāgārjuna's Ratnāvalī", Annual Memoirs of the Otani University Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute, vol.6 (1988) 93-108.

each. I shall examine metrics and the use of particles and compounds in an elementary way, one which in future might be refined.

First metrics. The Kārikās and the Ratnāvalī are both written in anustubh metre²⁵, and both regularly have some kind of vipulā. In the Ratnāvalī, as Hahn has already established²⁶, we have 29 instances of navipulā (v v, i.e. the fifth, sixth and seventh syllables of pāda a or c are short), 22 of bha-vipulā (v v, i.e. the fifth syllable is long, the sixth and seventh are short), 29 of ma-vipulā (v v, i.e. the fifth, sixth and seventh syllables are long, the third being short), and 7 of ra-vipulā (v v v). All vipulās together constitute 14.4% of a total of 605 lines (a line = two pādas), the na-vipulā and ma-vipulā contributing with 4.8% each, the bha-vipulā with 3.6%, and the ra-vipulā with 1.2%.

In the Kārikās we find 45 instances of na-vipulā²⁷, 17 of bha-vipulā²⁸, 40 of ma-vipulā of which 35 have a clear caesura after the fifth syllable²⁹ while 5 do not³⁰, and 48 of ra-vipulā of which 44 have a clear caesura after the fourth syllable³¹ while 4 do not³². On a total of 884 lines³³ this is a percentage of 5.1 na-vipulā, 1.9 bha-vipulā, 4.5 ma-vipulā, and 5.4 ra-vipulā. There are three vipulā forms not occurring in the extant Sanskrit

- With the exception of the last stanza in the *Ratnāvalī*, which is composed in the *Śārdūlavikrīdita* metre.
- In Hahn's edition p. 11-13. Some statements must be adapted in the light of his observations in StII 13/14, 1987. There (pp. 97-98) he shows that there are no sa-vipulās in the Ratnāvalī. Moreover, there are only 29 instances of ma-vipulā, because (pp. 85 and 97) he suggests, with good reasons, the reading prasannāh kupitāh svasthā in V 80a, which is a pathyā pāda, instead of kupitāh prasannāh svasthā. The latter reading contains a long third syllable which is hardly acceptable, and is without a caesura after the 5th syllable, which, in view of I 20c (alobhamohadvesaś ca) and 24a (dhyānāpramānārūpyais tu), is less problematic.
- 27 I 1a,4a,5c,7a,13a,14a; II 3a,3c,4a,5a,13c,24c; IV 6a,8c; VII 6a,13c,31c; X 6c; XI 3a,4a; XII 1a,2a,4c; XIII 2c; XV 7c; XVI 2a; XVII 4a,23a; XVIII 1a,1c: XX 10c,23c; XXI 2c,3a; XXII 3c,8c; XXIV 13a,25a,26c,28a; XXV 18a: XXVI 2a,7a,8a; XXVII 4a.
- 28 I 6a,10c; III 4a; IV 6c; V 7c; VII 6c,7c,10c,16a; XVIII 6a,10a; XXI 19a; XXII 14c; XXIII 12a; XXIV 27a; XXV 17a,24a.
- 29 I 3a; III 3c; V 6a,7a; VII 14a,27a,30a; IX 2c,9a,10c; X 15a; XII 5c,7c; XIV 2c7c,8c; XVII 1c,8a,10a; XX 6c; XXI 17c; XXII 1a; XXIII 16a; XXIV 13c,21c; XXV 10c,11a,11c,12a,13a,14a, 14c,21a; XXVI 5c,10a.
- 30 III 7c; VII 21a; XX 6a,16a; XXVII 6c.
- 31 II 4c,9a,10a,12c,16a,17a; III 2a; IV 3c; V 3a; VII 22c, 26a; X 4a,4c,13c; XV 5a; XVI 7c,8c; XVII 14a,14c,15a,19c; XVIII 8c; XIX 1a,1c,2a,2c,3c; XXII 1c,16a,16c; XXIV 7a,11c,15a, 22a; XXV 15a,16a,16c,22c,23c; XXVI 12c; XXVII 17c,18a,26c,27c.
- 32 I 3c,12c; V 3c; XII 7a.
- 33 Corresponding to the 442 verses which were left after the discussion above, without the two introductory stanzas which may or may not be genuine.

text of the *Ratnāvalī*, viz. 6 instances of *ja-vipulā* ($\upsilon - \upsilon$, which is the normal characteristic of the syllables 5, 6 and 7 in *pādas b* and d)³⁴, 3 instances of *sa-vipulā* ($\upsilon \upsilon -$)³⁵ and 1 instance of a *ta-vipulā* ($- \upsilon \cup$).³⁶

The total number of vipulā forms in the Kārikās is 160, which is 18% of a total of 884 lines. The 14.4% in the Ratnāvalī does not diverge significantly from this figure, though the higher number of ra-vipulā in the Kārikās and the occurrence of other vipulā forms should be kept in mind. The percentage of vipulā forms in the Ratnāvalī is close to that in Mātrceta's Śatapañcāśatka and to Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā³⁷, and not far from that in the Kārikās. It may be noteworthy that the 303 lines of the Sanskrit fragments of Āryadeva's Catuhśataka as edited by Karen Lang (Copenhagen 1986) contain only a percentage of 2.3 % vipulā (7 on a total of 303 lines), and only ma-vipulā.³⁸ Āryadeva, so it seems, may be safely eliminated as a possible author of the Ratnāvalī, while the traditional attribution to the author of the Kārikās remains possible.

The attribution becomes a little doubtful when we compare the use of particles and compounds in the *Kārikās* and in the *Ratnāvalī*. In all chapters the *Kārikās* have a much higher frequency of particles and a lower frequency of compounds than the *Ratnāvalī*.

If we limit ourselves to the particles ca, eva, api, iti, hi, $v\bar{a}$, punah and tu, which have some frequency in the extant Sanskrit stanzas of the $Ratn\bar{a}val\bar{\iota}$, we observe that in the $K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s$

³⁴ XIII 1a,2a,6c; XVI 1a; XXII 13c; XXV 5c. The fact that ja-vipulā, and also sa-vipulā and ta-vipulā, occur may rather point to a conflict between terminology and metrics than to indifference towards metrical conventions. There are two examples which show that, when it was possible, the author of the MMK adapted a term in order to avoid bad metre. The first is XXIII 7c, where one would expect (cf. XXIII 1) vastu rāgasya dvesasya, but the author, to avoid a ma-vipulā with a long third syllable, wrote a pathyā, vastu rāgasya dosasya, which, in view of the Prakrit background of Buddhist transmission, would have hardly led to misunderstandings among his readers. The second is the use of ahetuka, instead of ahetuka, where it is required by metre. IV 2cd reads: ahetukam na cāsty arthah kaścid āhetukah kva cit; the second āhetuka is necessary, the first evidently assimilates. On the other hand, ahetuka in XII 1b, dvābhyām krtam ahetukam, or in XXVII 12d, sambhūto vāpy ahetukah, must not be changed into āhetuka. Being aware of this one can be sure that in XII 9d we have to read duhkham āhetukam (de Jong's edition: ahetukam) kutah (cf. XX 6 and 8). The same applies to the Ratnāvalī, where the metrical standard of the work as a whole gives Hahn the right to correct Tucci's reading hetur ahetuko 'rthatah (in I 47b) to hetur āhetuko 'rthatah.

³⁵ II 8a,15a; XVII 28c.

³⁶ IX 9c.

³⁷ M.Hahn, edition p. 13.

³⁸ Catuhśataka II 9c, 25c, VII 15a, VIII 13a, X 15a, XIV 19c, 21c.

ca occurs 364 times, which is about 41 times pe	r 100 lines.
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eva	145	16.4
api	83	9.4
iti	66	7.5
hi	66	7.5
vā	46	5.2
punah	36	4.1
tu	23	2.6

All these particles together occur 829 times, which is about 94 times per 100 lines. Noticing that in the *Kārikā*s also other particles have some frequency (atha [not counted in its function of introducing a subordinate clause] 16 times, tāvat [not counted as a relative of yāvat] 13, nāma [always together with katham] 9), we may expect two of these particles (including this kind of atha and tāvat, and nāma) in almost every stanza.

In the extant stanzas of the Ratnāvalī the average occurrence of these particles is nearly half of this: at least one of them may be expected in every stanza (336 particles, without five atha and two tāvat of the said type, in 607 lines³⁹ of verse, which is about 55.4 per 100 lines). There are, however, passages — especially in chapter V which abounds with traditional contents — where none of these particles can be found, while at other places two or more are contained in a stanza. To show the distribution over the chapters, I give the figures for each chapter in the Ratnāvalī (with the total number of lines of the extant stanzas):

	I (158)	II (96)	IV (200)	V (153)	
ca	41	25	44	16	126
eva	10	12	13	6	41
api	19	9	39	7	74
api iti	23	6	7	7	43
hi	1	2	2	2	7
vā	5	2	4	4	15
punah	6		1	1	8
tu	6	3	7	6	22
	111	59	117	49	336

^{39 605} lines of anustubh metre and 2 lines of Śārdūlavikrīdita in V 100 (2 times 19 syllables instead of 16).

If we take the particle ca as an example, it has a frequency of about 26 per 100 lines in the first chapter, 26 in the second, 22 in the fourth and 10.5 in the fifth. All the particles together have a percentage of 70.3 in the first chapter, 61.5 in the second, 58.5 in the fourth and 32 in the fifth.

The occurrence of particles seems to have some relation to the non-occurrence of compounds. To examine this I counted all pādas in the Kārikās and the Ratnāvalī which have no compounds. Words which have a meaning of their own, such as tathāgata, bodhisattva or manoratha, were not considered to represent a style loaded with compounds, nor were words with such prefixes as a-, su-, etc. or such suffixes as -vat. The result is that in the Kārikās about 79% of all pādas do not contain a compound, while in the Ratnāvalī the percentage is about 51.5. The distribution within the Ratnāvalī is: in chapter I 56.6% of the extant pādas do not have a compound, in ch.II 56.3%, in ch.IV 53% and in ch.V 40.6%.

In the $Ratn\bar{a}val\bar{\iota}$ there is not only a lower frequency of $p\bar{a}das$ without compounds, there are also regularly lines where the caesura between the $p\bar{a}das\ a$ and b or $p\bar{a}das\ c$ and d is formed by a juncture between two stems of a compound.⁴⁰ This never happens in the $K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s$.

The most interesting result of the stylistic comparison is not the deviation of chapter V, which may be explained as due to its dogmatical contents⁴¹, but two other facts.

First, the other chapters, though dealing with different themes, hardly deviate from each other in regard to *pādas* without compounds (ch.I about 56.6%, ch.II 56.3%, ch.IV 53%), and show no great divergence as to particles (ch.I 70.3%, ch.II 61.5%, ch.IV 58.5%). They could have been written by the same author.

Second, their percentages, even without chapter V, still show considerable distance from the percentages of the *Kārikās*, the percentage of particles being about 64.8 (when 5 atha and 2 tāvat occurring in chapters II and IV are included) against about 100 in the *Kārikās*⁴², and

- 40 I 9ab, 12cd, 27cd, 36ab, 42cd; II 39ab, 55ab; IV 11ab, 20ab, 35cd, 49ab+cd, 61ab, 80ab, 84cd, 92ab; V 13ab+cd, 23cd, 35cd, 48cd, 49cd, 50cd, 54cd, 83ab. Problematic is I 8cd (mithyāpaiśunyapārusya-a+baddhavādesu samyamah).
- 41 That such passages tend to employ compounds and be without particles can also be observed in *Ratnāvalī* I 8-18, referring to the *karmavibhanga* tradition (cf. MN no. 135); these verses contain only three particles (27.3%) and 14 pādas without compounds (31.8%).
- 42 Some comfort may be derived from the observation that the combination eva-ca is, in both texts, sometimes used for the last syllables in pādas b and d (Kārikās II 19, VII 16, IX 3, IX 12, XI 7, XV 6, XVIII 4,8, XXI 10, XXIV 6,40; Ratnāvalī I 38, II 10,11,11, IV 48, V 97). This could have been done by everyone (cf. e.g. Buddhacarita XII

the percentage of $p\bar{a}das$ without compounds being about 55 against 79 in the $K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s$. Also remember that in the $Ratn\bar{a}val\bar{\iota}$ there are caesuras between $p\bar{a}das$ a and b or c and d at the juncture of stems in a compound, something which cannot be found in the $K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s$. In this respect $\bar{A}ryadeva$'s $Catuh\acute{s}ataka$, with about 62% of particles and 80% of $p\bar{a}das$ without compounds and only two instances of such a caesura within a compound (XIII 25ab and cd), is nearer to the $K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s$.

Concluding these remarks on style we might state: The observations are not so strong as to force us to deny authenticity to the *Ratnāvalī*, but if it was composed by Nāgārjuna, it is difficult to imagine that it was written in the same period as the *Kārikā*s.

IV

An initial attempt at comparing doctrines may be appended to these remarks on style. First some remarks will be made on how this should not be done. Then I shall confine myself to one item which has emerged from the discussion of the size and coherence of the *Kārikās*: The presupposition of a person.

How should it not be done? We have to start with the observation that large parts of both texts show no terminological or thematical affinities. Of course they are Buddhist texts revering the Buddha/the Buddhas and presupposing traditional Buddhist teaching. But this they have in common with thousands of other texts. We could try to limit the range of texts by acknowledging that both are Mahāyāna texts. This, however, is not true for them to the same extent. The Kārikās, never using the term Mahāyāna,

11d,17b,18d,33d,38b,40d,49b,70d), but it may be remarkable that there is only one instance of this in the extant Sanskrit text of Āryadeva's $Catuh\acute{s}ataka$, XI 15d. Incidentally, its occurrence in $p\bar{a}da\ b$ of XXVI 4 is no reason to accept this stanza as authentic. Eva-ca also occurs at other places than at the end of a $p\bar{a}da\ (K\bar{a}rik\bar{a}s\ VII\ 25,\ XX\ 8,\ XXVII\ 10;\ Ratn\bar{a}val\bar{\iota}$ II 5,33).

It may also be mentioned that both texts contain ca-eva at several places, and, thanks to chapter XXI of the Kārikās, in a similar proportion (Kārikās III 6, XI 5,7, XXI 5,8,8,9,9,10,10, 11,11,11, XXIV 17,40, XXV 15; Ratnāvalī I 34,38,47, II 10,27,29, IV 46,67). There are also a few combinations with atha in both texts, but without much similarity (Kārikās atha-vā XXI 14, XXVII 29; ca-api-atha IX 1,10,11; api-atha XV 23; atha-api X 11, XXVII 21; Ratnāvalī atha-vā II 6, IV 71; ca-api I 56,68, II 32; atha-vā-api II 14, IV 68).

show only at one place⁴³ that they know of the ideal of reaching buddhahood by the special behaviour of a bodhisattva. But they never propagate this ideal as the Ratnāvalī does from stanza 73 of the second chapter onwards. In denying the reality of things both seem to draw the same line, but the Kārikās concentrate on arguments for the lack of any svabhāva or identity in things, i.e. śūnyatā, thereby intending a peaceful (śiva) cessation of all (perceptions of) diversity44, while the Ratnāvalī only at very few places hints, without arguments, at śūnyatā⁴⁵ or the lack of svabhāva⁴⁶, focusing instead on arguments for the worthlessness of things⁴⁷ and on mere illustrations of their illusory nature⁴⁸; in most passages the Ratnāvalī establishes patterns of behaviour as if the world really existed. It is true that the different approaches to aspects commonly associated with the term Mahāyāna may for the most part be due to the differences between the readers which the author had in mind (the Ratnāvalī was written for a king) and are not really incompatible. For it is possible to interpret the Ratnāvalī (cf. Lindtner p. 64) as placing the core of the Kārikās within the wider framework of Buddhist practices; and, on the other hand, the scheme of explanation established in chapter XXIV of the Kārikās that all these practices and aims (including buddhahood) are to be situated on the lower level of truth is never abandoned. But in this way many Buddhist texts could be brought together. It would also be a case of covering too many Buddhist texts if we accepted the interpretation that the aim of the undescribable nirvana of the Karikas was the same as the aim of buddhahood⁴⁹ as expressed in the Ratnāvalī from stanza 73 of the second chapter onwards, an interpretation which follows a tradition of Buddhist "theology", but has no support in the Kārikās and only a weak

⁴³ Verse 32 in chapter XXIV says that a Buddha's enlightenment could not be understood as a result of a bodhisattva's conduct, if one considered things as having own natures (svabhāva), i.e. natures which were fixed forever.

⁴⁴ drastavyopaśama V 8; sarvopalamphopaśama, prapañcopaśama XXV 24; cf. XVIII 5,9.

⁴⁵ III 97, IV 86,87,96.

⁴⁶ I 49,84, IV 63.

⁴⁷ IV 48-61

⁴⁸ E.g. māyāgaja II 9-13, marīci I 52-56, alāta-cakra IV 57, alāta-mandala I 36.

⁴⁹ Lindtner p. 19: "The ultimate goal of all endeavours is the *summum bonum* of oneself and others: abolition of rebirth, or *Nirvāna*. It implies the attainment of buddhahood, or a double body."

basis in the *Ratnāvalī*.⁵⁰ We must, therefore, search for characteristics which are typical of only a small group of texts.

The presupposition of a person seems to be such a characteristic. If it could be found in the *Ratnāvalī*, it would be a strong sign of authenticity. There is one stanza which at least points in this direction. In I 92 (only in Chinese and Tibetan), in a reference to what is contained in the concluding verses of *Dīgha Nikāya* 11, an agent is said to cease in "perception" like earth, water, fire and air, deeds, causes and effects and such things. This could imply that an agent is as true as these things on the lower level of truth.

Another instance might be found in stanzas I 29-35. They show the mutual dependence of the constituents of a person and the idea of "I". But because the dependence seems mainly to be seen as a temporal one ([new]constituents arise out of ahamkāra [in an earlier life], and ahamkāra again depends on the arising of the constituents), it is problematic evidence. However, stanzas I 30 and 35 exclude the possibility of getting rid of ahamkāra so long as one considers the constituents to be real entities, thereby rejecting the common anātmavāda which is connected with the belief in the reality of the constituents. This might point to the idea, employed in the Kārikās as a preliminary truth, that constituents and person are intrinsically dependent upon each other.

The discussion of further doctrinal items and of the consequences if the *Ratnāvalī* should be accepted as genuine has to be postponed to another occasion.

50 Some kind of basis could be found in Ratnāvalī I 1-II 72, which at the beginning briefly deals with well-being in the world, and from I 25 onwards with release from the world (naihśreyasa, in I 4 defined as moksa). In I 60 the term bodhi is mentioned and in II 22 it is said: bodhim cāpnoty anuttarām. I 60 is not compelling because the bodhi of a śrāvaka (cf. bodhi in IV 92) could be meant, while the bodhi of a buddha can be derived neither from the statement at the beginning of the passage nor from the context. The same could be said of II 22, but the term anuttara must be taken seriously; it certainly points to the enlightenment of a buddha (cf.II 73 and IV 98). It could be interpreted as an allusion (added later?) to the idea that striving for release is nothing but unconsciously striving for a buddha's enlightenment. Maybe the fact that the ideal of buddhahood is propagated in the passages following Ratnāvalī II 73 could be employed as proof of this interpretation, but there is no direct support for it, while in V 38-39 a clear distinction between release and buddhahood can be found: dānād bhogah sukham sīlāt ksāntyāh kāntih śramād dyutih / dhyānāc chāntir mater [= prajñā, V 37] muktih krpā sarvārthasādhanī // saptabhih sakalais tv ebhir yugapat pāram āgataih / acintya-jāānavisayam lokanāthatvam āpyate // V 39. Note, furthermore, that prajāā, by destroying kleśas, is a means for release throughout the Ratnāvalī, while punyasambhāra creates the rūpakāya of a buddha and jñanasambhāra the dharmakāya (III 12).