Zeitschrift: Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft

Band: 46 (1992)

Heft: 1: Études bouddhiques offertes à Jacques May

Artikel: On the authenticity of the Ratnval

Autor: Vetter, Tilmann

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-146969

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Mehr erfahren

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. En savoir plus

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. Find out more

Download PDF: 22.10.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, https://www.e-periodica.ch

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE RATNĀVALĪ*

Tilmann Vetter, Leiden

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) *Śūnyatāsaptati*,
2) *Vigrahavyāvartanī*,
3) *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa*,
4) *Vyavahārasiddhi*,
5) *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā*,
6) *Catuḥstava*,
7) *Ratnāvalī*,
8) *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayakārikā*,
9) *Sūtrasamuccaya*,
10) *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*,
11) *Suhṛllekha* and
12) *Bodhisaṃbhāra*.

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 doctrine[1], but what actually appears in the

* The author wishes to thank Dr. Tillemans for correcting the English of this contribution.

1 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 *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*. In the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* XXX (1986) 110-122, Carmen Dragonetti convincingly argued that the *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayakārikā* and the *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* 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 *Suhṛllekha*"[2] can raise or maintain some doubt in regard to the *Suhṛllekha*. Recently, at the Vth International Seminar on Tibetan Studies, Narita, August 1989, in their paper "On the *Zhib mo rnam par ḥthag pa zhes byaḥi rab tu byed pa*", doubts were expressed by Fernando Tola and Carmen Dragonetti[3] concerning the *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa*.

It is obvious that criteria of style and doctrine (not of scope[4]) must be better employed to obtain more certainty about the relation between the *Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā*s 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.

3 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 *Kārikā*s 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 *Kārikās*[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.[7] 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

5 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 *anuṣṭubh* lines of verse in the metrical works of ādi-Śaṅkara gathered in the *Upadeśasāhasrī* do not show *vipulā* forms with the exception of two *ma-vipulās* 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 Śaṅkara and written in ślokas with regularly occurring *vipulā pādas*, it would be, though not totally impossible, highly improbable that the author was ādi-Śaṅkara.

6 I am referring to *Nāgārjuna: Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, edited by J.W. de Jong, The Adyar Library Series vol. 109, The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Adyar, Madras 1977.

7 In XXVI 1 we read that [a person] who is covered by ignorance (*avidyānivṛtaḥ*) forms (*abhisaṃskurute*) *saṃskārāḥ*; in 6 that a [person] who is craving (*tṛṣyamāṇaḥ*) grasps (*upādatte*) the fourfold grasping (*upādānam*); in 7 that for the [person] who grasps (*upadātā*) [a new] existence (*bhavaḥ*, in 8 explained as [a new stream of] five *skandhāḥ*) comes forth; in 10 that [a person] who is ignorant (*avidvān*) forms *saṃskārāḥ*, that *he* is an agent (*kārakaḥ*), [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 (*draṣṭā*) 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 paper[9], but also to the acceptance of

8 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 *draṣṭā* 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 *draṣṭā*, *śrotā* and *vedakaḥ* 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: *vedakaḥ* is as important as *vedanā*. Of some interest may be the usage of the masculine gender in XIII 5 (*yuvā na jīryate ... jīrṇo na jīryate*) or in XVI 6 (*sopadāno na badhyate / badhyate nānupādānaḥ*) and 8 (*baddho na mucyate tāvad abaddho naiva mucyate*). More to the point are the verses XIV 1-2 which presuppose a *draṣṭā* and a *raktaḥ*, 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 (*avidyānivṛto jantus tṛṣṇāsaṃyojanaś ca saḥ*) 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 yeṣu teṣu skandheṣu 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 *aṣṭau puruṣapudgalāḥ* 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.[10] 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.[11] 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 *pratītyasamutpāda* on the lower level of truth.

While accepting chapter XXVI as authentic, I do not include the stanzas 4 (*cakṣuḥ pratītya rūpaṃ ca samanvāhāram eva ca / nāmarūpaṃ pratītyaivaṃ vijñānaṃ saṃpravartate //*) and 11 (*avidyāyāṃ niruddhāyāṃ*

10 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 *dvādaśāṅga* and the warnings against *dṛṣṭi*s 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 (*saṃkalpa/viparyāsa*, cf. *Śūnyatāsaptati* 10 and 62).

saṃskārānām asambhavaḥ / 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 (*dṛṣṭi*) 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 vā* – 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 (*catuṣkoṭi*), but seems to allow the use of the term *saṃtati* (stanza 16) / *saṃtāna* (22). This middle way is near to the middle way preached in *Saṃyuttanikāya* (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 Way*[15], 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 Nāgārjuna 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 *Saṃyuttanikāya* 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 sarvabhāvānāṃ śūnyatvāc chāśvatādayaḥ / kva kasya katamāḥ kasmāt saṃbhaviṣyanti dṛṣṭayaḥ //.*

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

14 XIII 8 *śūnyatā sarvadṛṣṭīnāṃ proktā niḥsaraṇam jinaiḥ / yeṣāṃ tu śūnyatādṛṣṭis 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 *nirvāṇa*. In both chapters the *catuṣkoṭi* 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 *saṃtāna*.[17] As stanzas 22-24[18] 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 *draṣṭavya* instead of *upalambha*[19]).

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: *sarveṣām eva bhāvānāṃ*

17 Cf. XXI 15-21, where the idea of a *saṃtāna/saṃtati* as a middle way between eternity and anihilation is rejected.

18 XXV 22 *śūnyeṣu sarvadharmeṣu kim anantaṃ kim antavat /*
kim anantam antavac ca nānantam nāntavac ca kim //
23 *kim tad eva kim anyat kim śāśvatam kim aśāśvatam /*
aśāśvataṃ śāśvataṃ ca kim vā nobhayam apy atha //
24 *sarvopalambhopaśamaḥ prapañcopaśamaḥ śivaḥ /*
na kvacit kasyacit kaścid dharmo buddhena deśitaḥ //.

19 V 8 *astitvaṃ ye tu paśyanti nāstitvam alpabuddhayaḥ /*
bhāvānāṃ te na paśyanti draṣṭavyopaśamaṃ śivam //.

20 IV 8 *vigrahe yaḥ parīhāraṃ kṛte śūnyatayā vadet /*
sarvam tasyāparihṛtaṃ samaṃ sādhyena jāyate //
9 *vyākhyāne ya upālambhaṃ kṛte śūnyatayā vadet /*
sarvaṃ tasyānupālabdhaṃ samaṃ sādhyena jāyate //.

rūpenaiva samaḥ kramaḥ //.[21] Moreover, the main terms of the stanzas IV 8-9 (except *śūnyatā*), viz. *vigraha*, *parihāra* [m.c. *parīhāra*], [*a-*]*parihṛta*, *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 stanzas[23]). 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*.

24 *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 *anuṣṭubh* metre[25], and both regularly have some kind of *vipulā*. In the *Ratnāvalī*, as Hahn has already established[26], we have 29 instances of *na-vipulā* (u u u, i.e. the fifth, sixth and seventh syllables of *pāda a* or *c* are short), 22 of *bha-vipulā* (– u u, i.e. the fifth syllable is long, the sixth and seventh are short), 29 of *ma-vipulā* (– – –, i.e. the fifth, sixth and seventh syllables are long, the third being short), and 7 of *ra-vipulā* (– u –). 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-vipulā*[27], 17 of *bha-vipulā*[28], 40 of *ma-vipulā* of which 35 have a clear caesura after the fifth syllable[29] while 5 do not[30], and 48 of *ra-vipulā* of which 44 have a clear caesura after the fourth syllable[31] while 4 do not[32]. On a total of 884 lines[33] 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

25 With the exception of the last stanza in the *Ratnāvalī*, which is composed in the *Śārdūlavikrīḍita* metre.

26 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 *prasannāḥ kupitāḥ svasthā* in V 80a, which is a *pathyā pāda*, instead of *kupitāḥ prasannāḥ 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 (*alobhamohadveṣaś ca*) and 24a (*dhyānāpramāṇārūpyais 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* (υ — υ, which is the normal characteristic of the syllables 5, 6 and 7 in *pādas b* and *d*)[34], 3 instances of *sa-vipulā* (υ υ —)[35] and 1 instance of a *ta-vipulā* (— — υ).[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 Mātṛceta's *Śatapañcāśatka* and to Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*[37], and not far from that in the *Kārikās*. It may be noteworthy that the 303 lines of the Sanskrit fragments of Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka* 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*, *vā*, *punaḥ* and *tu*, which have some frequency in the extant Sanskrit stanzas of the *Ratnāvalī*, we observe that in the *Kārikās*

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 dveṣasya*, but the author, to avoid a *ma-vipulā* with a long third syllable, wrote a *pathyā*, *vastu rāgasya doṣasya*, 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 *āhetuka*, instead of *ahetuka*, where it is required by metre. IV 2cd reads: *āhetukaṃ na cāsty arthaḥ kaścid āhetukaḥ kva cit*; the second *āhetuka* is necessary, the first evidently assimilates. On the other hand, *ahetuka* in XII 1b, *dvābhyāṃ kṛtam ahetukam*, or in XXVII 12d, *saṃbhūto vāpy ahetukaḥ*, must not be changed into *āhetuka*. Being aware of this one can be sure that in XII 9d we have to read *duḥkhaṃ āhetukaṃ* (de Jong's edition: *ahetukaṃ*) *kutaḥ* (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 'rthataḥ* (in I 47b) to *hetur āhetuko 'rthataḥ*.

35 II 8a,15a; XVII 28c.

36 IX 9c.

37 M.Hahn, edition p. 13.

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

ca occurs	364 times, which is about	41 times per 100 lines.
eva	145	16.4
api	83	9.4
iti	66	7.5
hi	66	7.5
vā	46	5.2
punaḥ	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 *Kārikās* 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 lines[39] 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
iti	23	6	7	7	43
hi	1	2	2	2	7
vā	5	2	4	4	15
punaḥ	6		1	1	8
tu	6	3	7	6	22
	111	59	117	49	336

39 605 lines of *anuṣṭubh* metre and 2 lines of *Śārdūlavikrīḍita* 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 *Ratnāvalī* there is not only a lower frequency of *pādas* without compounds, there are also regularly lines where the caesura between the *pādas a* and *b* or *pādas c* and *d* is formed by a juncture between two stems of a compound.[40] This never happens in the *Kārikās*.

The most interesting result of the stylistic comparison is not the deviation of chapter V, which may be explained as due to its dogmatical contents[41], 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+baddhavādeṣu saṃyamaḥ*).

41 That such passages tend to employ compounds and be without particles can also be observed in *Ratnāvalī* I 8-18, referring to the *karmavibhaṅga* 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 *pādas* without compounds being about 55 against 79 in the *Kārikās*. Also remember that in the *Ratnāvalī* there are caesuras between *pādas a* and *b* or *c* and *d* at the juncture of stems in a compound, something which cannot be found in the *Kārikās*. In this respect Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*, with about 62% of particles and 80% of *pādas* without compounds and only two instances of such a caesura within a compound (XIII 25ab and cd), is nearer to the *Kārikās*.

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 *Kārikās*.

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 *Catuḥśataka*, XI 15d. Incidentally, its occurrence in *pāda 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 *pāda* (*Kārikās* VII 25, XX 8, XXVII 10; *Ratnāvalī* 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 place[43] 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) diversity[44], while the *Ratnāvalī* only at very few places hints, without arguments, at *śūnyatā*[45] or the lack of *svabhāva*[46], focusing instead on arguments for the worthlessness of things[47] and on mere illustrations of their illusory nature[48]; 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 *nirvāṇa* of the *Kārikās* was the same as the aim of buddhahood[49] 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 *draṣṭavyopaśama* 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-maṇḍala* I 36.

49 Lindtner p. 19: "The ultimate goal of all endeavours is the *summum bonum* of oneself and others: abolition of rebirth, or *Nirvāṇa*. 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 *ahaṃkāra* [in an earlier life], and *ahaṃkāra* 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 *ahaṃkāra* 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 (*naiḥśreyasa*, in I 4 defined as *mokṣa*). In I 60 the term *bodhi* is mentioned and in II 22 it is said: *bodhiṃ 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 bhogaḥ sukhaṃ śīlāt kṣāntyāḥ kāntiḥ śramād dyutiḥ / dhyānāc chāntir* mater [= prajñā, V 37] muktiḥ *kṛpā sarvārthasādhanī // saptabhiḥ sakalais tv ebhir yugapat* pāram āgataiḥ / *acintyajñānaviṣayaṃ* lokanāthatvam *āpyate //* V 39. Note, furthermore, that *prajñā*, by destroying *kleśas*, is a means for release throughout the *Ratnāvalī*, while *puṇyasambhāra* creates the *rūpakāya* of a buddha and *jñanasambhāra* the *dharmakāya* (III 12).