

A Study on the Philosophical Mission of *Vijñaptimātratā* Buddhism :

Based on Tsong Khapa's *Legs bśad sñiñ po*

KATANO Michio

The aim of this study is to trace the development of Yogācāra Buddhist thought within the context of the progressive revelation of Buddhism. To get a handle on this problem, I will study three sections in Tson Khapa's *Legs bśad sñiñ po*. The composition of my paper is as follows :

Introduction

Chapter 1 The World of the Three Types of Existence as the Revelation of *Niḥsvabhāvatva* : A Study of *Legs bśad sñiñ po* 1, 2, 2, A, c (Peking 118b4-121a8, Varanasi p. 82, l. 7-p. 89, l. 10)

c-1 The Exposition in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*

c-2 The Method of Explanation in the *Madhyāntavibhāga*

Chapter 2 Inquiry into the Inconsistencies within Yogārāca Expositions : A Study of *Legs bśad sñiñ po* 1, 2, 2, A, b, 2, ② (Peking 103b1-106b6, Varanasi p. 44, l. 9-p. 52, l. 8)

Chapter 3 The Central Notions of the Yogācāra Philosophic Mission : A Study of *Legs bśad sñiñ po* 1, 2, 2, C (Peking 118b4-121a8, Varanasi p. 82, l. 7-p. 89, l. 10)

When we reflect on the present state of Buddhist studies in Japan, it can perhaps be said that this paper presents nothing new. However, there are different views concerning the central standpoint of Yogācāra Buddhism. It is surprising to find that this point is already clearly delineated in 14th and 15th century Tibet.

The first section of the *Legs bśad sñiñ po* takes up this central issue of Yogācāra Buddhism, and systematically presents many suggestive insights. In this work, Tsong Khapa first restates, using the exposition of the sūtra

itself, such central notions as “inexpressible” and “mark of non-duality” found in the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* which “well discriminates” (reveals in concrete terms) the topics of the Mahāyāna. Next, he explains how the *āgama* of Yogācāra patriarchs like Asaṅga and Vasubandhu are developed as *adhigama*.

In earlier studies, I have taken up Tsong Khapa’s treatment of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and *Viniścayasamgrahani*, but here I take up his expositions based on the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* and *Madhyāntavibhāga*. Despite the great length of the latter works, he picks out the most pertinent verses from them. In particular, it appears that the verses he cites from the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* were those which had not been the object of much attention previously. Yogācāra Buddhism holds that all existence is without self-nature, and that the truth of non-arising is revealed through concrete *vastu*. Through them, the world of *vikalpa* which becomes *vastu* through *paratantra* is contemplated. Just as *paratantra* objects appear as the deluded world of *parikalpita*, completely realized (*pariniṣpanna*) objects are conceived, in which *paratantra* objects arising through deluded discrimination are in themselves (*svalakṣaṇa*) empty. In a separate chapter called “On the Refutation of *Samāropa-anta* in Particular” (1, 2, 2, B), Tsong Khapa discusses this problem in detail (cf. Robert A. F. Thurman, *Tsong khapa’s Speech of Gold in the Essence of True Eloquence*, p.231ff. See also my “Specific Negation of the Extreme of Reification in the Yogācāra school 唯識学における否定対象の認識と否定,” *Ōtani Gakuhō*, 74-1).

In the second chapter of my paper, I discuss how Tsong Khapa treats with keen insight such inconsistencies within Yogācāra treatises, such how the existence or non-existence of the ultimate truth and the worldly truth is established within *viññaptimātratā*. In this way, he shows that there is no inconsistency in the seemingly contradictory teachings. In the third chapter of my paper, I take up the standpoint which is the basis of the *viññaptimātratā* philosophy and Mahāyāna through the study of the concluding

section of the *Vijñaptimātratā* chapter of the *Legs bśad sññ po*.

Of course it must be said that ideas of “representation only and no real objects,” dependent origination through *ālayavijñāna* and *āśraya-parāvṛtti*, are very important in *Vijñaptimātratā* thought. However at its foundation is its philosophical mission to reveal through concrete *vastu* the Mahāyāna truth of emptiness and *niḥsvabhāvatva*.