

Book Reviews

Nagarjuna's Sūtrasamuccaya: A Critical Edition of the Mdo Kun Las Btus Pa

**By Bhikkhu Pāsādika
Academic Forlag Kobenhavn 1989**

Bhikkhu Pasadika's deep interest in Nagarjuna's Sūtrasamuccaya had lasted three decades. His translation of this very important Mahayana treatise as "to a considerable extent a preliminary version" was published in late 1970's in installments in *Linh-Ion-Publication d'études bouddhologiques* from 1978 to 1982. Realizing that a critical edition was a prerequisite for a better translation, he undertook the task. It was a well-planned and seriously executed project. In addition to the Peking edition of the Tibetan text which he used for his preliminary translation, Bhikkhu Pasadika obtained, through the courtesy of renowned Buddhist scholars such as L. M. Joshi and Venerable Acarya Lozang Jamspal, version of the text from Tokyo, Prague, New York and Paris.

Bhikkhu Pasadika follows the most advanced norms of textual criticism and delves into Chinese and Japanese traditions, Indo-Tibetan lexicographical material and an extensive array of secondary sources. He has also conducted a comparative study of corresponding Sanskrit passages in other texts as Sīksasamuccaya and Gandavyuha.

The Tibetan text as worked out by Bhikkhu Pasadika emerges from four Tibetan editions identified as

- Chone (Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, New York, USA)
- Derge (Toyo Bunko, Tokyo, Japan and Oriental Institute of the Academy of Science, Prague, Czech Republic)
- Marthang (Blockprint, Columbia University, New York, USA) and
- Peking (red Peking printing and black Peking print)

None of the texts were found to be free from errors; the editor had not adopted any of them as the base text. As "no negligible number of Sanskrit passages corresponding to Sūtrasamuccaya is preserved in other Buddhist Sanskrit works, he could take the Sanskrit passages as the base text. But it was no easy task as he had to deal with abridgements and amendments which created doubts as to whether a text was corrupt or still intelligible.

To a student of Sūtrasamuccaya as found in Tibetan, Bhikkhu Pasadika's thoughtfulness has a special benefit. He has painstakingly identified each sutra with the original Sanskrit text.

Christian Lindtner, in his Foreword underscores the urgency of publishing reliable critical editions and translations (not just translations) of the early Mahayana sutras, "the importance of which is seen from their manifest influence upon later sastras, through citations, terminology, etc." Sūtrasamuccaya is certainly one of them. One would wholeheartedly agree with Lindtner that Bhikkhu Pasadika's contribution in this respect stands out as one of the most notable.

--Ananda W. P. Guruge