THE SECOND CHAPTER OF BHAVYA'S
MADHYAMAKAHRDAYA*
(Taking the Vow of an Ascetic)

by
V. V. GOKHALE
Poona

It has not yet been generally recognised that the Mādhyamikas, who are known to have a strong predilection for the logic of language and a metaphysics of transcendence, and who accept the traditional analysis of mind and matter current among the Vaibhāṣikas, also possess a strong streak of asceticism and a passion for ethics oriented towards the Bodhisattva idealism. Coming later in the Mādhyamika tradition Sāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra is an outstanding example of this ethical trend, but even before him Ācārya Bhāvaviveka (or Bhavya, as we call him here), the commentator of Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka and presumably a younger rival of Buddhapālita, is seen to give prominence to this aspect of the Mādhyamika view of life by placing in the forefront of his independent treatise, called the Madhyamakahṛdaya (The Heart of the Madhyamaka Philosophy) two chapters, called: I. Bodhicittāparityāga (Not surrendering the Spirit of the Highest Wisdom) and II. Munivratasamāśraya (Taking the Vow of an Ascetic) before explaining at length his own special method of forming syllogisms that should lead to the conviction regarding the absolute Reality in Chapter III, called Tatvajñānaisaṅgā (Quest for Truth).

In an article on "The Vedānta-Philosophy described by Bhavya in his Madhyamakahṛdaya" published in the Indo-Iranian Journal, Vol. II (1958), Nr. 3, pp. 165-190 (jointly with Prof. Hajime Nakamura, Tokyo). I have already briefly indicated in footnote 1 the general nature of this work of Bhavya as gathered from a hasty handcopy of a palm-leaf manuscript made by Pandit Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana at the Zha.lu monastery in Tibet. There it will be seen, that after the third chapter, viz., Tatvajñānaisaṅgā, Bhavya is occupied with a critical examination of non-Mādhyamika schools, firstly among the Buddhists themselves, viz.,

* Paper read at the 28th International Congress of Orientalists, Canberra, on 7.1.1971, slightly enlarged and revised on 3.2.1971.
the Śrāvakayānists and the Yogācāras in Chapters IV and V respectively, and then among the non-Buddhists, viz., the Sāṃkhyas, the Vaiśeṣikas, the Vedāntins and the Mimāṃsakas from Chapters VI to IX — all these Chapters forming as it were an amplification of the principles and methods expounded by him at great length in his crucial chapter III, Tattvajñānāiṣanā. The tail-end consists of two smaller chapters, viz., X. Sarvajñatāsiddhinirdesa (which is preserved barely in one and a half verse of the Sanskrit original and the Tibetan version of which refers to the Jaina doctrine of Sarvajñatā (omniscience) and XI. Stutilakṣaṇanirdeśa, which completes this work of Bhavya, so to say his magnum opus.

That the first three chapters formed the nucleus of his enlarged and complete treatise as we have it before us, is borne out by the following two verses from Chapter I, Bodhicittāparyāga, which follow immediately after the preliminary salutation to the Buddha in the first three verses. They run thus:

I.4  mahābodhau kṛtadhiyām parārthodayadikṣayā /
     tattvāmrtyavadhārāya saktitaḥ kimcid ucyate //

.5  Bodhicittāparyāgo Munivrataśamāśrayaḥ /
     Tattvajñānaiṣanā ceti caryā sarvārthasiddhaye //

With whatever ability I possess, I venture here to say a few words to guide the comprehension (of those who hold different views) in respect of that nectarlike Truth (tattvāmṛta) — that Truth, which was revealed by those, who, having taken a vow to work for ever for the benefit of others, dedicated all their powers of understanding to the attainment of the Great Wisdom. Non-surrender of the Spirit of the Highest Wisdom, Taking the Vow of an Ascetic, and a Quest for Truth — this threefold course of conduct (caryā) leads to the fulfilment of the entire purpose of life (sarvārthasiddhi).

Hereafter follows an exposition of the Bodhicitta, which forms the subject-matter of the First Chapter, Bodhicittāparyāga. Thus, these two stanzas quote the titles of the first three Chapters, describing the ethical ideals and the logical method prescribed by Bhavya in his Madhyamakahṛdaya (containing nearly a thousand verses, of which well over one third part is occupied by the Third Chapter alone).

I have already pointed out (in note 1, referred to above, to my said article in the II, II), that an independent treatise called Tattvajñānāṁrtyatāvatara could be regarded as the earlier nucleus of the enlarged Madhyamakahṛdaya and that it contained only the three chapters, which have been mentioned in the above two stanzas by their titles. The de-
scription of the Absolute Reality as tattva (among Buddhist philosophers) seems to have come in vogue at least since the days of Harivarman’s Tattvasiddhi – The restoration of this title as: Satyasiddhi by UI and other scholars is hardly justified by its Chinese translation (新译) – and it continued to be favoured by positivistic thinkers like Śantarakṣita in his Tattvasaṃgraha. Bhavya himself likes to call it the tattvajñānāmṛta (the Nectar of Truth) in various contexts in his present treatise, e.g., III.136 ...

V. 1 Anye pracakṣate dhīrāh svanītāv abhimānānāh / tattvāmṛtāvatāro hi Yogācārāh sudeśitaḥ //; VIII.94 (= Tib. 86) Buddhānāh lokabandhūnām tattvāmṛtam idam param //. Moreover, the title Tattvajñānāmṛtāvatāra is authenticated in the colophon to Chapter III, so that there should be no doubt, that we have this small tractate of three chapters here incorporated within the larger treatise called Madhyamakahṛdaya.

Out of the three Chapters of this Tattvajñānāmṛtāvatāra, the first two, as mentioned at the outset, deal with the ethical idealism of the Mādhyamikas while the third deals with the Madhyamaka philosophy, set forth in the style of the Svātantrika logic, which appears to represent Bhavya’s own contribution to Indian philosophy. In the present article, I propose to edit the Sanskrit text of the Second chapter. It contains only twelve stanzas and is (after Tib. versions) the smallest among all the chapters of the Madhyamakahṛdaya except the very last one, which contains only three stanzas. While in the first chapter Bhavya speaks about the “Non-relinquishment of the Bodhicitta”, in the Second chapter he speaks in positive terms about the acceptance of the vow of an ascetic. The text, corrected in the light of the Tibetan versions, runs as follows:

Chapter II: Munivrataśamāśraya (Taking the Vow of an Ascetic)

1

Evam dṛḍhamahābodhisamādāno jagad-dhite /
Pratirūpām pratipadam pratipanno vīrājate //

Having thus gone in for a resolute acceptance of the (vow, in respect of the) Great Wisdom for the sake of the good of the world, and having established himself in the Right Path (pratirūpa pratipad), he is covered with glory.

2

Sa maitryāḥ 'pratighātīnyā kāruṇyena prasarpinā /
Saddharmādhigamātrpto dharmaśāne vimatsaraḥ //

1 The avagraha is missing in the Ms (= manuscript copy).
With his love (maitri), which (always protects and) never injures, and the
development in him of a feeling of compassion (karunya), he is insatiable in
his greed for knowledge of the Good Law, and is far from sparing in his reli-
gious gifts.

3

\[ \text{Rjunā}^{2} \text{hatamānena manasā tattvadarśinā} / \]
\[ \text{Paradośekṣaṇāndhena svadośāpattibhirunā} // \]

With a mind, straightforward and devoid of self-conceit, he visualises the
Absolute Truth, and while turning a blind eye towards the sins of others, he
is anxious about himself falling into (the merest) error.

4

\[ \text{Vivādalokasamsargalokāyataparāṁmukha} / \]
\[ \text{Nirguṇe }^{3} \text{pi gunādhānapratatyā}^{4} \text{śrāṃsītādaraḥ} // \]

He turns his back on (all kinds of) disquisitions, on social contagion and on
(those confounding sophists belonging to) the Lokāya cult, and his faith in
the continuous generation (pratati) of virtue in (the minds of) even those
who are devoid of all virtue, is unswerving (asrasmita).

5

\[ \text{Kṛpodbhātena dānena sarvajñatvagatasphah}^{5} / \]
\[ \text{Sarvasya janakāyasya sarvaduḥkhospāntaye} // \]

While practising charity out of (sheer) commiseration (kṛpā), he creates in
himself a desire for omniscience (only) for the sake of pacifying all the miseries
of the entire world of living beings.

6

\[ \text{Śīlāmaḷaṣaṃsāyī kṣamāsītāpavitrakah} / \]
\[ \text{Vīryabaddhajaṭabhāro dhyāna}^{6} \text{jñānaparāyaṇaḥ} // \]

He takes his (holy) bath as it were in the pure waters of Morality (śīla); Pa-
tience (kṣama) is as it were the white ring of hemp on his finger (pavitraka);
he has tied up his matted hair, representing as it were his Fortitude (vīrya);
and he has dedicated himself to contemplation (dhyāna) and knowledge.

7

\[ \text{Samunmiṣitatdinetrāḥ śāstra}^{7} \text{lokajñatāpaṭuḥ} / \]
\[ \text{Hṛrā}^{8} \text{patrāpyavasanaḥ sauratya}^{8} \text{tanbandhanaḥ} // \]

---

2 Mc. reads ajñāna-, but Tib. draṇ = upright, honest, straightforward (explained in the Commentary (i.e. Tarkajvala) as ‘without deceit’).
3 Mc. reads -pratati-, which may be corrected as above following the Tib. ...yon. tan.gyi/ rgyun.rnams.skye.bar rtag.tu.gus/.
4 The Tarkajvala here discusses the question: “If charity is given with a desire for omniscience, how could the donor be disinterested (phaḷāṣārahitāh)?”.
5 Mc. shows a gap of three syllables as: —na, which is filled in as above after Tibetan readings.
6 The Tarkajvala explains the word śāstra in the same way as the famous stanza: \[ \text{Yac chāsti vaḥ kleśāripiṇ aśeṣān, santrāyate durgatito bhavāc ca} /\] etc. variously attributed to Arya Deva or Vasubandhu (see my article on the “Paścacakhandhaka by Vasubandhu and its commentary by Sthiramati”, ABORI, Vol. XVIII, pt. iii (1937), p. 283, note 1).
7 Mc. reads hripatrāpya-. (Cf. Śiksāsamuccaya (Bendal), p. XVII, quoting Whitney, 1250f., cf. Pān. VI. iii. 25 for the retention of the nominative form in the compound word).
8 For sauratya see Mhvy. 1115, 6597 (Sakaki); Śiksāsamuccaya, p. 183 etc.
With his eye of intelligence wide opened and his skill in theoretical as well as practical matters, he puts on his garments of modesty and bashfulness as it were, and he wears a girdle as it were of dignified softness (sauratya) around his waist.

8

Kṛpākṛṣṇājinaḥ śraddhā⁹ malakamanḍaluh /
Śrītiguptendriyadvāro dhṛtivetrāsanāsanah //

Wearing the dark deerskin as (a symbol of) Commiseration (kṛpā) and having a spotlessly clean water-jug (kamanḍalu) in the form of Faith (śraddhā), and with the gates of his senses guarded as it were by constant awareness (śmrīt), he has his seat on the reed-mat of Endurance (dhṛti).

9

Mahāyāna⁹ mahāramyatapovanasaṃśrayaḥ /
Dhyānapriitipalāhāraḥ sṃṛtyupasthānagocarāḥ //

He has his dwelling in the luxurious forest-hermitage of Mahāyāna (Superior Career), where he nourishes himself upon the fruits of happiness, born of Meditation; and the sphere of his actions is represented by the location of (the four kinds of) Mindfulness (sṃṛtyupasthāna).

10

Gambhīrodārasūtrānta¹¹ svādhyāyahatakibisah /
Pratītyotpādasāvitrīṃ¹² japon satyadvayāśrayāṃ //

He has destroyed all his sins by giving oral instruction (svādhyāya) in the Sutrānta-texts, which are profound and extensive, while chanting to himself as it were the Hymn to the Sun (Sāvitrī) in the form of the Chain of Causation (Pratīṭyasamutpaṭā), founded upon the twofold aspect of Truth.

11

Varnāṭhyauḥ pratipat¹⁴ puspaḥ sarvadiggandhavāhibiḥ /
Upāsīnas tv aharāhāḥ samyaksamāṃbuddhābhāskaram¹⁵ //

And day after day he worships the Sun, who is the Perfectly Enlightened One (Samyaksamāṃbuddha), with flowers in the form of his achievements (pratipat-puspa), which waft their fragrance in all directions and are rich with (colorful) praise (vara).

12

Hutākuśalasaṃkhalpaḥ pratisāṃkhyaṇapāvake /
Munivratam cared evam anuttarapadāptaye //
Munivratasamāṃśrayaparicchedaḥ dvīvyaḥ //

Having sacrificed all undesirable notions in the fire of reflexion (pratisāṃkhyāna), one has to live an ascetic life of this type for reaching the summit, where there is nothing beyond.

End of Chapter Two on Taking the Vow of an Ascetic.

⁹ Mc. reads śuddha-, but Tibetan has dad.pa/.
¹⁰ Mc. reads naṣṭāṅga- for Mahāyāna-.
¹¹ Tarkajvalā explains Sutrānta as texts like the Prajñāpāramitā.
¹² Tarkajvalā: Sāvitrī, because the Buddha is called the Sun (Śāvitrī). (See verse 11 below: saṃbuddhabhāskaraḥ; also Suttanipāta 457, 568; Vinaya I, 246 etc.).
¹³ Mc. reads -srayat/.
¹⁴ Pratipat = Tibetan bṣgrub.pα; Cf. LVP’s L’Abhidharmakośa, VII, p. 32 n. etc.
¹⁵ Mc. reads -bhāskaraḥ //.
In the above, Bhavya has before him the picture of a fully accoutred Muni of the Brahmanical tradition — a Muni with his matted hair, deerskin, water-jug, girdle, reed-mat, sacrificial fire, Sun-worship and whatnot, all of which he seems to admire, if not envy. In poetical flourishes these are described as symbolic of the Mahāyānic virtues, like those of the Pāramitās (śīla, kṣamā, virya, dhyāna), learning and practical wisdom combined with modesty, mercifulness, faith, alertness, endurance and divine service. The central conception of his Mādhyamika philosophy is represented by the Pratītyasamutpāda formula of ‘Dependent Origination’ in both its aspects, viz., that of saṁyag (phenomenal reality) and paramārtha (the Absolute Reality) — a formula, regarded by him as a substitute for the Śāvitrī (or Gāyatri) mantra of the Brahmanic Muni. Actually, the Buddhist Muni described here is not exactly an ascetic, but a sage or holy man in a wider sense, reminding us of the simple and straightforward description of him in the Munisutta of the Pali Suttanipāta 12, or even that of the Śhitaprajñā-yogin of the Bhagavadgītā II.

It is perhaps not altogether without reason that the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas, whose traditions coming through Buddhāpālita and Candrakīrti still dominate the ruling Tibetan Buddhism today, regard the Svātantrika Bhavya as a sort of misfit. His general acceptance of the principles of formal logic, as established by the founders of Nyāya, his sympathies with the Jaina view of omniscience and to a certain extent with the monistic illusionism of the early Vedāntins, and his systematic study of the contemporary philosophical doctrines, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, with a view to examine them critically and refute them from the point of view of the Nāgārjunian Madhyamaka as understood by him mark him out as a learned man of compromise as well as a keen and resourceful proselytiser.

Bhavya’s real contribution to Buddhist philosophy, however, is his initiation of the Svātantrika method, which he has illustrated at length in the third chapter of his Madhyamakahṛdaya, viz., Tattvajñānaisaṅgā, as noted above, and which came to be appreciated by later Buddhist philosophers, like Śāntarakṣita. Special attention has already been drawn to this third chapter in Sanskrit by Prof. Shotaro Iida (Vancouver), who in his Dissertation, submitted to the Wisconsin University (U.S.A.) on “An Introduction to the Svātantrika Mādhyamika” (1968) has utilized a part of it for drawing his own conclusions.