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The Structure of Śāntarakṣita's Tattvasaṅgrāha in the Light of Kamalaśīla's Commentary

ABSTRACT

The paper provides an insight into the structural features of the famous VIII century Buddhist treatise *Tattvasaṅgrāha* by Śāntarakṣita with regard to the text's main purpose (*prayojana*) as it is treated in Kamalaśīla's commentary *Pañjikā*.

Any text along with its referential (representational) function of conveying message-meaning to the addressee, or its expressive function, reflecting the author's attitude to what is communicated, also performs the 'appellative' function, encouraging the recipient of the message to act. This function which could also be called praxiological was always significant in Indian text culture, since from the times of Veda-s it was embedded in its very core. This function is of paramount importance in the case of Indian religious and philosophical texts, whose main aim is to convince and transform the consciousness of their percipients. Along with linear models of message transfer, Sanskrit texts could demonstrate non-linear semantic structures, transmitting the main idea of the text indirectly.

It is exactly how one should perceive the message on Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṅgrāha* according to the suggested by Śāntarakṣita's prominent student Kamalaśīla in his *Pañjikā* commentary to the treatise. He proposes to consider *Tattvasaṅgrāha* not as a thematically heterogeneous encyclopaedic or doxographic work, whose main objective is to refute different non-Buddhist views (as it is often treated by scholars now), but as a text, which by its very design exposes one of the most important Buddhist principles – the law of the dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). The themes, discussed in a number of the chapters of *Tattvasaṅgrāha*, indeed, appear to have direct correlation with the characteristics of *pratītyasamutpāda* given to it in *Śālistamba-sūtra* – an early Mahāyāna text, which explains this universal law. Kamalaśīla suggests looking at *Tattvasaṅgrāha* as at one big unit-sentence - *mahāvākya*, with the exposition of *pratītyasamutpāda* as its unitary purpose-meaning (*abhidheya*). In this context the treatise functions as a praxiological tool for the 'installing' into the consciousness of the text's addressee the knowledge of 'true principles' (tattva-s) of *pratītyasamutpāda*. This interpretation of the main message of the text raises also a question of the adequate translation of the name of the treatise into other languages, because, according to Kamalaśīla, '*Tattvasaṅgrāha*' means the 'Assembly of Principles-(tattva'-s)' which specify precisely *pratītyasamutpāda* (*pratītyasamutpāda-viśeṣaṇāni tattvāni*).