

Berichte aus der Orientalistik

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**Nektar der Erkenntnis**

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Bhavyas Tarkajvālā I-III. 26

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# *Nektar der Erkenntnis*

*(Nectar of Insight)*

Buddhistische Philosophie des 6. Jh.: Bhavyas *Tarkajvālā* I-III. 26  
(Buddhist philosophy in the 6th century A.D.: Bhavya's *Tarkajvālā* I-III. 26)

A. L. HEITMANN

The history of Indian philosophy dates back to the time before the Christian era. In particular the development of Indian Madhyamaka spans more than 1000 years. The comprehensive treatment and systematic analysis of its entirety is so far unwritten and largely remains the goal of future endeavour. However, the first substantial building blocks towards this are specific monographic studies that try to explore the relatively uncharted territory of the history of Indian Madhyamaka.

The present work, an edition of the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* I-III. 26 and an edition and translation of the *Tarkajvālā* I-III. 26, is a contribution to this end. It provides an insight into the major work of an Indian Madhyamaka propounder, Bhavya/Bhāvaviveka, who exerted an intellectual influence far beyond his own time in the 6th century A.D.

The *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* (*dBu ma'i sñiin po'i tshig le'ur byas pa*) is considered an authentic work. It is one of the earliest doxographical works that has survived to us and is one of the reliable sources on the history of early Indian philosophy. The only available commentary to it is the *Madhyamakahrdayavyrti Tarkajvālā* (*dBu ma'i sñiin po'i 'grel ba rTog ge 'bar ba*).

The present study of these two texts includes all available primary sources: The text of the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* as preserved in three Sanskrit sources, collected over a span of more than ten years; and its Tibetan translation together with that of the *Tarkajvālā* both executed by the Indian scholar-monk Atiśa and his Tibetan collaborator in the 11th century. Both texts are examined as transmitted in five editions of the Tibetan Buddhist canon and their interrelationship with the Sanskrit sources is investigated. The Tibetan translation of the *Tarkajvālā* is the earliest accessible source for the lost Indian autograph.

The reader can therefore follow the well structured outline by a Madhyamaka proponent of a Buddhist path that leads to the knowledge of reality (*tattvajñāna*), i.e. the first transworldly stage of liberation.

The first three chapters of the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* and *Tarkajvālā* constitute an integral thematic unit. The three constituents of a Bodhisattva's mind of enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) - love, compassion and knowledge - are elaborated with scholarly skill and poetical finesse in the first chapter. The ethics (*vrata*) of this Bodhisattva abiding in the nirvāṇa-without-foundation (*apratishthitanirvāṇa*) are the main theme of the second chapter: An array of his virtues saturated with his altruistic aspirations is displayed as well as compared to those of brahmanical practices. The author's philosophy is mainly introduced in the third chapter with his view of the two truths (*satyadvaya*) based on scriptural authority and reasoning. *Tarkajvālā* III. 1-26 discusses not only the twofold (conventional and absolute) insight (*prajñā*), but also introduces the prerequisites for obtaining knowledge of reality, meditative equipoise and the author's mode of reasoning developed on the basis of the logic-epistemological school headed by Dignāga.