

# The Composition of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā

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THE *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā*, like many other Oriental books, is a collective work which has been subjected to additions and alterations in the course of the centuries, to suit the tastes of new generations. In this respect it does not differ from the *Mahāvastu*, the *Lalitavistara*, the *Saddharmapundarīka*, the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, etc., which have all been slowly built up over a long period. If the historical investigation of the doctrinal development within the Mahāyāna is to make any progress, we must learn to distinguish between the different layers in these texts. Some work has been done already on the *Saddharmapundarīka*,<sup>1</sup> the *Samādhirāja*,<sup>2</sup> the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*,<sup>3</sup> and the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*.<sup>4</sup> Without hoping to exhaust the subject, I intend to point out in this article the most obvious accretions to the basic original text of the *Aṣṭa*. This, in its turn, must have grown gradually, but in the present state of our knowledge we cannot, I think, trace out its growth. In any case, such analytical studies of ancient writings are tedious to compose and unattractive to read, and when carried too far they threaten to shatter and pulverize the very text which they set out to examine, as we have seen in the case of Homer and the New Testament.

In addition to the text of the *Aṣṭa* itself, we have at our disposal two other sources for the examination of this problem : the early Chinese translations and the *Ratnagūṇasamcayagāthā* (= *Rgs*). The earliest Chinese translation, by Chih-lou-chia-ch'ên (*Lokakṣema* ?) goes back to A.D. 180, and that of Chih-ch'ien to A.D. 225. The chapter headings of these two versions seem to suggest that by c. A.D. 150 the text of the *Aṣṭa* was constituted roughly as it is to-day. I have been unable to consult these old translations in any detail, and it must be left to someone else, better qualified, to compare the Chinese versions with our Sanskrit text, and to record the passages which they lack. The *Ratnagūṇasamcayagāthā* are a collection of 302 *Gāthās*, in Buddhist Sanskrit, which reproduce a substantial part of the text of the *Aṣṭa*. It is well known that the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* generally expound each topic twice, once in prose and once in verse. In the case of the *Aṣṭa* the verses seem to have been taken out and made into a separate book, which also recurs as Chapter 84 of the Tibetan recension of the *Aṣṭāśasāhasrikā* (= *Ad*). The original text of the *Rgs* seems to have perished. The existing text, printed by E. Obermiller,<sup>5</sup> has been rearranged by Haribhadra (c. A.D. 800) so as to make it correspond to the present chapter division of the *Aṣṭa*. Its value for chronological and historical studies is thereby

<sup>1</sup> By H. Kern and W. Soothill in the Introductions to their translations, 1884 and 1930. There is also a Japanese study by K. Fuse, mentioned in *Bibliographie Bouddhique*, ii, 1929-1930, no. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. N. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, ii, 1941.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. J. Nobel's edition, 1937.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M.-Th. de Mallmann, *Introduction a l'étude d'Avalokiteśvara*, 1948, pp. 39-47.

<sup>5</sup> *Bibliotheca Buddhica*, 1937.

greatly diminished, and we cannot be certain that Haribhadra did not add, omit, or alter occasional verses.

We have thus three landmarks in the history of the *Aṣṭa°*: (1) The *Abhisamayālaṅkāraloka* of Haribhadra, c. 800, which comments on a text identical with our present one, which in its turn is attested by manuscripts from c. A.D. 1000 onwards. (2) The text of the earliest Chinese translation, c. A.D. 150. (3) The text summarized by the *Gāthās* of *Rgs*. In its present shape the *Rgs* dates from A.D. 800, but large portions of it may well go back to before 50 B.C. I will in this article mainly rely on the internal evidence of the text of the *Aṣṭa°*, supported by the more obvious inferences that can be drawn from *Rgs*.

### I.

First of all, it is obvious that Chapters 29 to 31 are later than the remainder of the *Aṣṭa°*, both on external and internal grounds. The verses which our *Rgs* gives under Chapters 29 to 31 do not correspond at all to the text of the *Aṣṭa°*. The *Rgs* has filled the gap with a short treatise on the five perfections, beginning with the *dhyāna-pāramitā*. The *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* makes no attempt to fit Chapters 29 to 31 into its scheme. It is true that Haribhadra's *Āloka* seems to correlate Chapter 29 with the end of the 5th, and with the 6th to 8th *abhisamaya*.<sup>1</sup> In actual fact, the correlation is quite superficial, and was obviously never intended by the author of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, which is based on the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* (= *P*). The last items of the 5th *abhisamaya*, as well as the 6th to 8th *abhisamaya*, sum up a part of the *Pañcaviṃśati*, to which there is no counterpart at all in the *Aṣṭa°*.<sup>2</sup>

Chapter 29 is an independent essay in the form of a litany. Three other litanies have been incorporated into our text of the *Aṣṭa°*, at vii, 170-1, ix, 205-7, and xxxi, 525-6. In *Rgs* none of them is even alluded to. Chapter 29 is absent in all the more extensive recensions of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, i.e. in *S*, *P*, and *Ad*, which in general follow the *Aṣṭa°* fairly closely.

Chapters 30 and 31 give the story, carried on into the first page of Chapter 32, of the Bodhisattva *Sadāprarudita* ("Ever-wailing"), who went out to seek for perfect wisdom, and who was willing to sacrifice everything to gain it. The almost turgid devotionism of these chapters is very unlike the lucid rationality which marks the sober and highly intellectual discussions between the Lord and his disciples in the first chapter of the *Aṣṭa°*. The story of *Sadāprarudita* serves the purposes of propaganda and edification. Its authors wished to inspire devotion to the perfection of wisdom and to show that inability to understand it is due to the unworthiness of those who are unwilling to make the necessary self-sacrifices.

The somewhat abstract and unfactual text of the *Aṣṭa°* is normally devoid of data which are even roughly datable. At first sight one is tempted to assign Chapter 30 to the first century of the Christian era on the basis of a curious

<sup>1</sup> pp. 893-926.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. folios 465 to 593 of *P*., or Chapters 53 to 73 of *Śatasāhasrikā* (= *S*).

passage in Chapter 30, p. 507, 12–18, which offers a striking parallel to a passage in the Revelation of St. John (v, 1). I give the two passages in parallel columns :—

*Sadāprarudita* : kvāsau Kauśika prajñāpāramitā  
yā bodhisattvānām mahāsattvānām matā pariṇāyikā ?

*Śakra* āha : eṣā kulaputra-asya kūṭāgārasya  
*madhye* suvarṇa-paṭṭeṣu vilīnena vaiḍūryeṇa *likhitvā*  
āryeṇa Dharmodgatena bodhisattvena mahāsattvena  
*saptabhir mudrābhir mudrayivā* sthāpitā sā na  
sukarāsmābhis tava darśayitum.

*Sadāprarudita* : Where is this perfection of wisdom  
which is the mother and guide of the Bodhisattvas,  
the great beings ?

*Śakra* : It has, son of good family, been placed by  
the holy Dharmodgata, the Bodhisattva, the great  
being, in the middle of this pointed tower, after he  
had written it on golden tablets with melted Vaiḍūrya,  
and sealed it with seven seals. We cannot easily show  
it to you.

The parallelism between *Aṣṭa*<sup>o</sup> and Revelation is not confined to this one passage. It extends over the entire context. Not to mention that *sadā prarudita* means “ Ever-weeping ”, and that St. John in v, 4, “ weeps bitterly,” the reason for introducing the book with the seven seals is the same in both cases. Revelation v, 2, asks who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals. The answer is that it is the Lamb alone, slaughtered in sacrifice (v, 9). In the same way, Chapters 30 and 31 of the *Aṣṭa*<sup>o</sup> describe in detail how *Sadāprarudita* slaughtered himself in sacrifice, and how thereby he became worthy of the perfection of wisdom.

This parallel is interesting as showing a new connexion between Christian and Buddhist scriptures. It does not, however, prove that Chapter 30 was composed in the first century of the Christian era, especially since the passage in question is absent in the two oldest Chinese translations.<sup>1</sup> There are as far as I can see three possibilities : either the *Aṣṭa*<sup>o</sup> borrowed from Revelation, or Revelation borrowed from the *Aṣṭa*<sup>o</sup>, or both borrow from a common source, i.e. a tradition current in mystical circles in the Mediterranean. Although the term *mudrā* plays a big part in the Buddhist Tantra, the number seven, and the whole notion of a “ book with seals ” has its roots rather in the Judæo-Roman than in the Indian tradition. The second possibility is therefore the most improbable. The third seems to me the one most likely. The remark about the “ seven seals ” may then have been incorporated into the *Aṣṭa*<sup>o</sup> at any time up to about A.D. 250.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. T224, k. 9, A.D. 180 ; T225, k. 6, A.D. 225.—It is found first in T221, k. 20, p. 144b 29, A.D. 290, and then in T223, k. 27, 420c 23–24 ; T227, k. 10, 583c 5, T220, k. 399, p. 1066a 28 ; and T228, k. 25, p. 673a 23.—I owe this information to the kindness of Professor Lamotte.

καὶ εἶδον ἐπὶ τὴν  
δεξιὰν τοῦ καθημένου  
ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου βιβλίον  
γεγραμμένον ἕσωθεν  
καὶ ἕξωθεν, κατεσφρα-  
γισμένον σφραγίσων  
ἑπτὰ.

And I saw lying in  
the right hand of Him  
who sat on the throne  
a book written within  
and without closely  
sealed with seven seals.

## II

A set of four additions can be inferred from the fact that the name of *Akṣobhya* occurs in them. Originally the innovations of the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature were metaphysical. Its mythology remained that of the older Buddhism. In the bulk of the *Aṣṭa*° the names of persons and deities are common to both traditions, Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. In the later part of the *Aṣṭa*°, however, names occur—sometimes in rather an abrupt manner—which belong to a different tradition, that of the Buddha Akṣobhya. I first set out a list of the proper names belonging to the cycle of Akṣobhya, as they are found in the *Aṣṭa*° :—

xix,	365–9	Gaṅgādevī Bhāginī
	366–7	Akṣobhya
	366	Tāra-kopama kalpa
	366–9	Suvarṇapūṣpa (a Tathāgata)
xxvii,	450–2	Akṣobhya
	449, 452	Ratnaketu (a Bodhisattva)
	449	Śikhin (a Bodhisattva)
xxviii,	458	Avakīrṇakusuma (a Tathāgata)
		Tāra-kopama kalpa
	464a–5	Akṣobhya
	474	Akṣobhya
		Gandhahastin (a Bodhisattva)

An examination of these four passages will show that the text was worked over at a time when the cult of Akṣobhya came into vogue, and that a follower of Akṣobhya has inserted a number of references to him. Akṣobhya, as is well known, is a Buddha in the East, with *Abhirati* as his kingdom, or Buddha-field. He was very popular at the beginning of the Christian era, but only fragments of his legend have survived. In China he was known already in the *Han* period.<sup>1</sup> Even in the much later developments of the Tantra the *prajñāpāramitā* has always retained a special connexion with Akṣobhya.

We must now consider these four passages one by one :—

(1) *The prediction of Bhāginī*, *A*, xix, 365, 7–369. The Ganges Goddess Bhāginī<sup>2</sup> is linked here with Akṣobhya, in whose Buddha-field she will be reborn. Her prediction to Buddhahood, which is like the similar story about the daughter of Sāgara, the Nāga king, in the *Saddharmapundarīka*,<sup>3</sup> a concession of the Mahāyāna to women, interrupts the course of the argument. The sentence immediately preceding it runs : *tathā ca prajñāpāramitāyām parijayam karisyāmi sarva-sattvānām kṛtaśo yathā prajñāpāramitāpi me tasmīn samaye paripūrīṃ gamisyatīti*. “ Thus will I master the perfection of wisdom for the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hobogirin, s.v. Ashuku.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. K. Maitra, “ The river goddess Gaṅgā,” *Rūpam*, 6, 1921.—Vogel, “ Gaṅgā et Yamuna dans l’iconographie bouddhique,” *Etudes Asiatiques*, 1925, ii, pp. 385–402.—A. Coomaraswamy, *Yakshas*, i, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. U. Wogihara and C. Tsuchida, 1933–5, chapter xi, pp. 226–8.

sake of all beings that also the perfection of wisdom shall be at that time fulfilled in me.” The sentence which immediately follows on the story, i.e. xx, 370, runs : Subhūti : *prajñāpāramitāyāṃ Bhagavaṃś caratā bodhisattvena mahāsattvena katham śūnyatāyāṃ pariṣayāḥ kartavyāḥ katham śūnyatā-samādhiḥ samāpattavyāḥ ?* “ A Bodhisattva, a great being who moves in the perfection of wisdom, how should he master emptiness, how attain to the emptiness-concentration ? ” The joints are here still quite clearly visible. When the text was later on expanded into the *Śata*°, the pages immediately preceding the prediction of Bhāgini were completely rewritten,<sup>1</sup> so as to make the development of thought lead up to the story, which is absent also in *Rgs*.

(2) xxvii, 449, 12—453, 5, is a stereotyped passage which says that the Buddhas will praise the Bodhisattva who dwells in perfect wisdom. The references to Akṣobhya are inserted quite mechanically in three places, and they contribute nothing to the progress of the argument. The first part of the passage, 449, 12—452, 9, is not mentioned in *Rgs*. The last part of it is (452, 9—453, 5 = v, 4) but without the reference to Akṣobhya. Judging from the distorted and involved grammatical structure of the relevant sentence in *Aṣṭa*° the reference to Akṣobhya may well have been inserted later.

(3) xxviii, 457—8, is a short narrative note about the prediction of *Avakīrṇakusuma* which has given the name to the chapter. That it is a later insertion is evident not only from its contents, and from its absence in *Rgs*, but also when we compare the last sentence of Chapter 27 with the first sentence which follows the story. At *A*, xxvii, 456, 6—12, we read : *tasmāt tarhi Kauśika sarva-sattvānāṃ agratāṃ gantu-kāmena . . . kulaputreṇa vā kuladuhitrā vā anena vihāreṇa vihartavyaṃ yo'yaṃ bodhisattvānāṃ mahāsattvānāṃ prajñāpāramitāyāṃ caratāṃ viharatāṃ vihāra iti*. “ Therefore, Kauśika, a son or daughter of good family who wishes to go to the highest state possible for any being . . . should live this life which is the life of Bodhisattvas, of great beings who move in the perfection of wisdom, who live in it.” And then, at xxviii, 459, 1—2 : *tasmāt tarhy Ānanda bodhisattvair mahāsattvair uttamera vihāreṇa vihartukāmaiḥ prajñāpāramitāvihāreṇa vihartavyaṃ*. “ Therefore, Ānanda, the Bodhisattvas, the great beings who wish to live the best life, should live the life of perfect wisdom.” The story breaks up the sequence of the two sentences.<sup>2</sup>

(4) xxviii, 464a to 474, the end of the chapter, is marked at beginning and end by a reference to Akṣobhya. The first reference occurs in the description of the magical apparition of Akṣobhya's Buddha-field (pp. 464a—6), which is

<sup>1</sup> Ś, MS. Cambr. Add. 1632, chapter 42, folios 97b—102a; P, MS. Cambr. Add. 1628, folios 400a 8—404b 4.

<sup>2</sup> It is not easy to explain why the first sentence should be spoken to Śakra and the second to Ānanda. A solution is offered by *Rgs*, where the last verse of chapter 27 (v. 9) refers to *A* xxvii, 456, and the next verse (chapter 28, v. 1) to *A* xxviii 466, 2—9, which also follows smoothly on p. 456 and is also addressed to *Ānanda*. It may therefore be that the bulk of the whole passage from pp. 457 to 466 was added at a later time, with the exception of a reference to the *dharmakośa* (cf. *A*, p. 464, 12, and *Rgs*, chapter 28, v. 2), which would naturally be addressed to *Ānanda*.

clearly an insertion and absent from *Rgs*. The second is added quite mechanically at the end of an exposition of the advantages of perfect wisdom (pp. 471, 6–474), which is again lacking in *Rgs*.

The large *Prajñāpāramitā* has reproduced all the passages just mentioned relating to the cycle of Akṣobhya except xxviii, 474, 2–4. In addition, the same circle of devotees of Akṣobhya is responsible there for an insertion in the text which breaks the sequence of the argument at *S* 308 = *P* 91. The large *Prajñāpāramitā* does not begin immediately with the argument of the *Aṣṭa*°. It adds a long preliminary discourse on the aspects of the perfection of wisdom which are of special interest to the “Disciples”. This preliminary discourse ends with the Venerable Śāriputra, and the other great disciples, exclaiming : *mahā-pāramiteyaṃ Bhagavan bodhisattvānāṃ mahāsattvānāṃ yaduta prajñā-pāramitā*, etc. “A great perfection of the Bodhisattvas, the great beings, O Lord, is this, i.e. the perfection of wisdom.” The praise of the perfection of wisdom is then followed (at *S* 316 = *P* 95) by a short narrative, showing that the Buddhas in all directions endorse the sermon of the Buddha Śākyamuni. Now, at the beginning and end of this passage a follower of Akṣobhya has added, in the same mechanical fashion as in the *Aṣṭa*°, two propagandistic references to Akṣobhya. They are similar to the Akṣobhya passages in the *Aṣṭa*°. The same conception of *Abhīrati* as the Buddha-field, and of the *Tāra*° as *kalpa*, the same idea that many Tathāgatas are reborn at the same time with the same name, and the same concern to find a place for women, by stating that “these 300 nuns, Ānanda, will be reborn in the 61st aeon as Tathāgatas, etc., Mahāketu by name.”

### III.

We now come to the evidence of the *Ratnagaṇasamcaya-gāthā*. I have listed in Table 1 those arguments and passages of the *Aṣṭa*° which are absent in it. It is noteworthy that *Rgs* omits all those parts of the *Aṣṭa*° which have, on internal grounds, been suspected as later additions. In addition, a number of further passages are missing from *Rgs*. It would be extremely rash to assume that none of them formed part of the *Aṣṭa*° at the time when the *Rgs* was composed. The omissions consist of episodes, separate arguments, and elaborations of arguments. Some of the episodes might have been considered as too insignificant,<sup>1</sup> and some of the elaborations as too tedious<sup>2</sup> for inclusion in the summary of the *Rgs*. Some of the arguments may be covered by the similes in which *Rgs* abounds. In the early chapters the verse summaries follow the text fairly closely. It is quite possible that, as the text of *Aṣṭa*° expanded, verse summaries to the new chapters were added by different authors, who were often quite content to pick out one sentence here and there. Moreover, the ordinary standards of literary criticism cannot be always applied, since in a *prajñā-pāramitā* text one must be prepared for a fair amount of inconsequential reasoning.

<sup>1</sup> E.g. ii, 33–4, 41.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. iii, 75–6, vi, 138–142.

A comparison of *Aṣṭa*° and *Rgs* therefore can by itself not decide any particular issue. But in those cases where the text of the *Aṣṭa*° appears to have been recast at some time or other, the *Rgs* can often furnish important corroborative evidence. If we turn, for instance, to Chapters 8 and 9 we find large parts of them unrepresented in *Rgs*. Here the evidence of the large *Prajñāpāramitā* is curious in that the Chapters 26 to 28 of the *Śatasāhasrikā* omit most of the portions of *Aṣṭa*° which are absent in *Rgs*. Or, to take another point, Chapter 13 of the *Aṣṭa*° has all the features of an independent treatise.<sup>1</sup> *Rgs* reproduces only one short simile,<sup>2</sup> which may easily have belonged to the end of Chapter 12. It may be that at one time something was omitted from the *Aṣṭa*° to make room for Chapter 13, as the Chapter 12 of *Rgs* ends with four verses which have no counterpart in *Aṣṭa*°. These and other considerations must be left to others.

On the other hand, even the text envisaged by *Rgs* is not all of one piece. Some of it bears all the marks of later insertion. One unmistakable example is the end of Chapter 20, from page 380, 13, onwards, together with Chapter 21, up to page 395. The passage begins quite abruptly and breaks up the trend of the argument. The argumentation is laborious and fairly incoherent. The style is fumbling and clumsy and the thought mediocre. The rambling discourse is held together by concern with the subject of irreversibility and prediction to Buddhahood. It seems to constitute a kind of afterthought to Chapter 17. The connexion with Chapter 17 is particularly evident in the passage xx, 383, 13–15, which sets the topic for the rest of xx and for xxi, and which repeats the formula characteristic of Chapter 17, i.e. *punar aparaṃ Subhūte yair ākārair yair līngair yair nimittair avinivartanīyo bodhisattvo mahāsattvo dhārayitavyas tān ākārāṃs tāni līngāni tāni nimittāni deśayisyāmi . . .* “And again, Subhūti, the attributes, tokens and signs by which one should know the Bodhisattva, the great being, as irreversible, those attributes, tokens and signs I will demonstrate.” That a complete break in the argument takes place at xx, 380, has been perceived by the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, which at this point starts the 5th *abhisamaya*, and by the larger recensions of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, which here begin a new chapter.<sup>3</sup>

#### IV

With the help of the foregoing analysis we can I think determine how the *Aṣṭa*° ended at a certain stage of its development. Chapters 25 to 28, incoherent as they seem at present, do when freed of accretions, represent two different

<sup>1</sup> The chapter shows great similarities to chapters 1–4 of the *Sandhinirmocana*, which also deal with the five marks of the Absolute. Cf. pp. 21 and 182 of E. Lamotte's translation, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> A 281, 8–14. *Rgs* xiii, 1 :—

yo eva paśyati sa paśyati sarva-dharmān  
sarvān amātya kariyāti upekṣya rājā /  
yāvanti Buddha-kriya dharmata śrāvakānām  
prajñāya pāramita sarva karoti tāni //

<sup>3</sup> i.e. Sanskrit *Śata*, chapter 45, Tibetan *P*, chapter 45, Tibetan *Ad*, chapter 55, *P* trsl. *Mokṣala*, chapter 62, *P*, trsl. *Kumārajīva*, chapter 61, *P*, trsl. *Hüen tsiang*, chapter 60.

treatises, one (I) on the supreme excellence of the perfection of wisdom (marked SE in Table 2), and another (II) on the “Entrusting” of the *Sūtra* to Ānanda (marked P in Table 2).

I. A praising of the excellence of perfect wisdom would be a fitting conclusion to the work, just as in *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* the exposition of the principal message in Chapter 15 is followed, in Chapters 16 to 20 by a praising of its advantages. In *Aṣṭa*°, likewise, this is the recurring theme from Chapter 25 onwards. This is obvious in Chapter 25, especially when we pay attention to such expressions as *sarva-sattva-sārā* on p. 426, 10, *sarva-sattvānām agratāyām śikṣate*, at p. 431, 15, and to the praise, in xxvi, 434–8, of the great merit of the *sattva-sārā*. At the end of Chapter 26 this trend of thought is interrupted by a short essay on the illusory nature of all things (pp. 438–443), which may be one of the *Sūtra*'s inconsequential turns, or may have been inserted at a later date.<sup>1</sup> Chapter 27 continues the argument when it acclaims the Bodhisattvas as “doers of what is hard” (*duṣkara-kāraṅkā*), and expounds (pp. 444–456) the sublimity of their achievement, which it attributes to their capacity for winning complete detachment, and for practising “non-apprehension”. In consequence the Bodhisattva is honoured and protected (pp. 446–9), and the Buddhas laud him because he “dwells” in perfect wisdom (pp. 449–452). Page 453 then resumes the topic of “doers of what is hard”, returns to “detachment”, “non-apprehension”, and the “dwelling in the perfection of wisdom”, and the chapter concludes with a tribute to the supreme excellence of the *prajñā-pāramitā* (p. 456). After a short interruption (see above II, no. 3) the theme of supreme excellence is resumed in xxviii, 459, 1, and continued until p. 460, 14, where it gives way to the “transmission” of the perfection of wisdom to Ānanda.

II. The *Parīndanā* begins at xxviii, 460, 14, goes on to p. 464a, and is resumed again in Chapter xxxii, 527. Page 527, 15, follows logically immediately on p. 464a. In the printed editions of the *Aṣṭa*° the context of the argument has been here obscured by the omission of a palm leaf. I reproduce the missing portion of the text in an Appendix.

The authenticity of the *Sūtras* of the Great Vehicle was disputed by the followers of the old tradition, who maintained that they were “not the Buddha word but poetry made by poets”.<sup>2</sup> Since, according to tradition, Ānanda was the repository of the Scriptures and of the *Sūtras* in particular,<sup>3</sup> this accusation was countered by the claim that the Buddha had entrusted the *Sūtra* in question to Ānanda. A *parīndanā* is also given in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*,<sup>4</sup> and in

<sup>1</sup> The little treatise begins quite abruptly on p. 438, 16. After it, chapter 27 has first two sentences which refer back to xxvi, 434, 6, and the third, 444, 8–11, refers back and links up with xxvi, 438, 10–15, the sentence immediately preceding the suspected insertion. On the other hand, the *apī* at 444, 11, refers back to xxvi, 440, 17, right in the middle of the treatise. A definite decision seems at present not possible here.

<sup>2</sup> *naitad buddhavacanāṃ kavi-kṛtaṃ kāvyam etat. Aṣṭa*°, xvii, 328, an echo of *Samyutta Nikāya*, ii, 267. Cf. *A.N.*, iii, 107.

<sup>3</sup> E. Lamotte, *Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse*, i, pp. 101–5, 223.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 27, pp. 392–3, *anuparīndanā*.



*Daśabhūmika*,<sup>1</sup> though the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* is entrusted not to Ānanda but to the Bodhisattvas. For the rest the situation in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* is analogous to that of the *Aṣṭa*°. At the end of the prose version of Chapter 20 we have a remark on the *parīndanā* of this *dharmaparyāya*,<sup>2</sup> and it is probable that originally Chapter 27 followed immediately on Chapter 20.<sup>3</sup>

The suggestions which I have put forward in the course of this article have dealt in the main with the latter part of the *Sūtra* as that most likely to have been remodelled in the course of time. The problems which touch on the remainder of the *Aṣṭa*° must be left to the efforts of others.

TABLE I  
CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN *Aṣṭa*° AND *Rgs*

<i>Pages of Aṣṭa</i> ° <i>represented</i> <i>in Rgs.</i>	<i>Omissions.</i> <sup>4</sup>	<i>Verses of Rgs</i> <i>which do not</i> <i>correspond</i> <i>to Aṣṭa</i> °.
i, 1-32	ii, 33-4, Introduction	
ii, 34-41	ii, 41, Śakra's flowers	
ii, 41-9	iii, 50-7, 10, various guṇas, and prajñāpāramitā as a vidyā (cf. v. 5)	
iii, 57-75	iii, 75-80, various guṇas (75-6); episode of heretics and Māra's attack (76-80)	
iii, 80-2	iii, 82-92, various advantages from perfect wisdom (cf. v. 8)	
iv, 94-101	v, 102-112, Merit	v, vv. 2, 5-8
v, 112-13	v, 114-122, Merit	
v, 122-134	vi, 138, 12-142, 12, Metaphysical questions on "turning over" (cf. v. 5)	
vi, 135-8	vi, 143, 3-150, 11, Further metaphysics (cf. v. 6)	
vi, 142-3	vi, 161-9, Further elaboration of anumodanā, etc.	
vi, 150-161	vii, 170-1, Litany	vii, v. 7
viii, 186-195	viii, 196-9, Like space and an echo. Conclusion	
ix, 200-1	ix, 200, Episode of Maitreya	ix, v. 1
	ix, 201-7, Great gain from perfect wisdom; second turning of the wheel of dharma; Litany	
x, 211-220	x, 208-211, 5, Past deeds account for present attitude to perfection of wisdom	
	x, 221-230, Bodhisattvas sustained by Buddhas; prediction about spread of the prajñāpāramitā; description of Bodhisattvas who in the future will study it	
xi, 232-5	xi, 235-8, Three similes	

<sup>1</sup> Chapter 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Wogihara-Tsuchida, pp. 330-1.

<sup>3</sup> H. Kern, *The Saddharma puṇḍarīka*, 1909, Introduction, pp. xxxi, xi-xxii. W. E. Soothill, *The Lotus of the Wonderful Law*, 1930, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> The omissions discussed in sections I and II are marked with an asterisk.

<i>Pages of Aṣṭa° represented in Rgs.</i>	<i>Omissions.<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Verses of Rgs which do not correspond to Aṣṭa.°</i>
xi, 239-240	xi, 240-2, Elaboration of Māra's deeds	
xi, 242-4	xi, 244-8, Elaboration of Māra's deeds	
xi, 248-252		
xii, 253-7	xii, 257-270, How the Tathāgata views the world	xii, vv. 6-9
	xiii, 277-281, 8, The perfection of wisdom is unthinkable, etc.; narrative	
xiii, 281, 9-14	xiii, 281-3, Nothing to take hold of; narrative	xiii, v. 2
xiv, 284-291		
xv, 292-305		
xvi, 306-311	xvi, 312-321, Perfect wisdom and skill in means; enlightenment and emptiness; the three vehicles; requisites of going forth to enlightenment	
xvi, 321, 13-322		
xvii, 323-340		
xviii, 341-351		
xix, 352-6	xix, 357-360, No objective support and no own-being	xix, vv. 3-5
xix, 361-5	xix, 365-9, *Prediction of Bhāgini	
xx, 370-384		xx, vv. 5-7, 11-16 ?, 17-20
xxi, 385-395	xxii, 405-9, Emptiness and growth in enlighten- ment	xxii, v. 6
xxii, 396-405	xxiii, 410-13, How the Bodhisattvas are superior to Śakra	xxiii, vv. 1, 3
xxiii, 413	xxiii, 414-15, Rewards of perfect wisdom	
xxiv, 416	xxiv, 417-420, Conditions which lay a Bodhisattva open to the influence of Māra	xxiv, vv. 2, 6
xxiv, 420	xxiv, 421-3, The Bodhisattva's right attitude to other Bodhisattvas	
xxv, 424-8	xxv, 428-430, Fewness of Bodhisattvas	
xxv, 430-3	xxvi, 434-5, 14, Śakra praises the Bodhisattvas	xxvi, vv. 2, 3
xxvi, 435-443	xxvii, 444-6, What is hard to do, and the Bodhi- sattva's courage in doing it	
xxvii, 446, 19-449, 19	xxvii, 449, 19-452, 9, *The Buddhas praise the Bodhisattva	xxvii, v. 8
xxvii, 452-6	xxviii, 457-8, *Prediction of Avakīrṇakusuma	
	xxviii, 459-464a, Praise of perfect wisdom; transmission of prajñāpāramitā to Ānanda (but cf. v. 2, which refers to both p. 464 and pp. 467-8)	
	xxviii, 464a-466, *Akṣobhya's Buddha-field	
xxviii, 466-471	xxviii, 471-4, *Advantages derived from perfect wisdom	
	xxix, 475-480, *Litany	vv. 1-14
	xxx, 481-511, *Sadāprarudita	vv. 1-14
	xxxi, 512-526, *Dharmodgata	vv. 1-18
	xxxii, 527-9, *End of story of Sadāprarudita; transmission to Ānanda	vv. 1-6

<sup>1</sup> See footnote on previous page.

TABLE 2  
THE COMPOSITION OF THE LATER PARTS OF THE *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*<sup>1</sup>

"Original" Sūtra	III	II	I
i-xii	xiii		
xiv-xviii			
xix, 352-6	xix, 357-360		
xix, 361-5		xix, 365-9	
xx, 370-380	xxii, 405-9		
xx, 380-xxi, 395 ?	xxiii, 410-413		
xxii, 396-405	xxiii, 414-15 ?		
xxiii, 413 ?	xxiv, 417-420		
xxiv, 416 ?	xxiv, 421-3		
xxiv, 420 ?			
xxv, 424-8 SE	xxv, 428-430 SE		
xxv, 430-3 SE	xxvi, 434-5 SE		
xxvi, 435-8 SE	xxvii, 444-6 SE	xxvii, 449-452	
xxvi, 438-443 ?		xxviii, 457-8	
xxvii, 446-8 SE	xxviii, 459-460 SE	xxviii, 464a-6	
xxvii, 452-6 SE	xxviii, 460-4a P	xxviii, 471-4	
xxviii, 466-471 SE			xxix
	xxxii, 527-9 P		xxx
			xxxi
			xxxii, 527

<sup>1</sup> Column I shows the items eliminated by section I of this article, and by *Rgs*; column II gives those which contain a reference to *Akṣobhya* and are absent in *Rgs* (see section II); column III gives those which are missing in *Rgs* from chapter 19 onwards in full. A question-mark indicates a doubt about the inclusion. For SE and P see p. 258.

#### APPENDIX

Here I reproduce the palm leaf which is missing in Mitra's edition of the *Aṣṭa*, after the Bodleian MS. Sansk. a. 7 (R), fol. 165v-166a. A large part of the passage is quoted by *Śāntideva* in *Śikṣāsamuccaya* 351, 9-352, 6. The missing passage comes between pp. 464 and 465 of Mitra's edition, and I have marked it as 464a.

sacet tvam Ānanda śrāvaka-yāni- (p. 464a)

kānāṃ pudgalānāṃ śrāvaka-bhūmau dharmāṃ deśayes, tasyāṃ ca dharmā-

deśanāyāṃ ye tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasre loka-dhātau sattvās te sarve arhattvaṃ sāksātkuryus, teṣāṃ api tvayā me śrāvakeṇa dharmā-cakra-pravarttanā-nupravarttanato dharmāṃ deśayato śrāvaka-kṛtyaṃ na kṛtaṃ syāt. sacet punas tvam Ānanda bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasyaikam api prajñāpāramitā-pratisaṃyuktaṃ dharmā-padaṃ deśayeh saṃprakāśayer, evam ahaṃ tvayā śrāvakeṇa dharmā-cakra-pravarttanā-nupravarttanato dharmāṃ deśayata ārādhitaḥ syān, na tu tayā paurvikayā dharmā-deśanayā yayā te tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasre loka-dhātau sarva-sattvā arhattvaṃ prāpitās, teṣāṃ cārhatāṃ yad dānamayaṃ puṇya-kriyā-vastu śīlamayaṃ puṇyakriyāvastu bhāvanā-mayaṃ puṇya-kriyā-vastu, tat kiṃ manyase Ānandāpi nu sa bahuḥ puṇya-skandhaḥ ?

(Ānanda) āha : Bahu Bhagavan bahu Sugata.

Bhagavān āha : Tatas sa Ānanda śrāvaka-yānikaḥ pudgalo bahutaraṃ puṇyaṃ prasavati yo bodhisattvānāṃ mahāsattvānāṃ prajñāpāramitā-pratisaṃyuktaṃ dharmāṃ deśayati. ato 'pi sa Ānanda bahutaraṃ puṇyaṃ prasavati yo bodhisattvo mahāsattvo 'parasya bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasya prajñāpāramitā-pratisaṃyuktaṃ dharmāṃ deśayati, antaśa eka-divasam api. tiṣṭhatv Ānandaika-divasam antaśaḥ purobhaktaṃ api. tiṣṭhatv Ānanda purobhaktaṃ dharmo deśitaḥ, antaśa eka-nālikāṃ apy eka-nālikāntaram api vā. tiṣṭhatv Ānanda eka-nālikāntaram antaśo muhūrttam api. tiṣṭhatv Ānanda muhūrttam antaśa eka-lavam api. tiṣṭhatv Ānanda ekalavam antaśa eka-kṣaṇam api. tiṣṭhatv Ānandaikakṣaṇam antaśa eka-kṣaṇa-sannipātam api. yo hy Ānanda bodhisattvo mahāsattvo 'parasya bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasyaika-kṣaṇa-lava-muhūrttam api prajñāpāramitā-pratisaṃyuktaṃ dharmā-padaṃ deśayaty, ayan tato bahutaraṃ puṇyaṃ prasavati. idaṃ hy Ānanda tasya bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasya dharmā-dānaṃ sarva-śrāvaka-pratyekabuddhā-yānikānāṃ kuśala-mūlāny abhibhavati. evam Ānanda kuśala-mūla-samanvāgato bodhisattvo mahāsattvaḥ, evam etat kuśala-mūlaṃ samanvāharann, asthānam etad Ānandānavakāśo yat sa bodhisattvo mahāsattvo vivarttetānuttarāyāḥ saṃyaksambodheḥ, na caitat sthānam vidyate.

Atha khalu Bhagavāṃs tasyāṃ velāyāṃ tathārūpaṃ ṛddhy-abhisam-skāram abhisamskṛtānyathārūpeṇa sarddhy-abhisamskāreṇābhisamskṛtena tāś catasraḥ paṛśado bhikṣu-bhikṣuṇy-upāsakopāsikā deva-nāga-yakṣa-gandharvāsura-garuḍa-kinnara-mahoraga-manuṣyāmanuṣyā vā, sarve te Buddhā-nubhāvenākṣobhyaṃ tathā-

(p. 465) gatam arhantaṃ saṃyaksambuddhaṃ paśyanti sma, etc.

A similar enumeration with *tiṣṭhatu* is found in *Dīgha Nikāya* ii, 314. For *purobhakta*, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* gives *prāgbhakta*, Tib. *sna-dro* "forenoon". The lists of short divisions of time in *Abhidharmakośa* iii, 179, *Divyāvadāna* 643-4, and *Mahāvīyutpatti* 253 differ from the one given here. *Ānguttara Nikāya* iv, 137, has *khaṇo*, *layo*, and *muhutto*.