*Histoire du bouddhisme indien**Philologie moyen-indienne**(Section des sciences historiques et philologiques)***« The Seventeen Works Attributed to the Indian Buddhist Scholar Sthiramati »****Jowita Kramer** **Édition électronique**URL : <https://journals.openedition.org/asr/1791>

DOI : 10.4000/asr.1791

ISSN : 1969-6329

Éditeur

Publications de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études

Édition imprimée

Date de publication : 1 septembre 2018

Pagination : 65-66

ISBN : 978-2909036-46-5

ISSN : 0183-7478

Référence électronique

Jowita Kramer, « « The Seventeen Works Attributed to the Indian Buddhist Scholar Sthiramati » », *Annuaire de l'École pratique des hautes études (EPHE), Section des sciences religieuses* [En ligne], 125 | 2018, mis en ligne le 28 juin 2018, consulté le 09 juillet 2022. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/asr/1791> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/asr.1791>

Histoire du bouddhisme indien
Philologie moyen-indienne
(Section des sciences historiques et philologiques)

Jowita KRAMER

Directrice d'études invitée
Université de Munich, Allemagne

**« The Seventeen Works Attributed
to the Indian Buddhist Scholar Sthiramati »**

THE four sessions focused on the scriptural corpus of Sthiramati, a pivotal scholar in the development of Indian Yogācāra thought in the 6th century. So far Sthiramati's work has received far less attention from modern scholars than the treatises of other Yogācāra authors like Asaṅga or Vasubandhu—probably because of the perception of Sthiramati as a commentator and not as an original author in his own right. However, as we have tried to show in a recently published paper, the classification of a text as a “commentary” does not necessarily imply that the text is less original or innovative than a work not belonging to the commentarial genre. Conversely, root texts, as for instance Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhaka*, are often likewise characterized by the restructuring and summarizing of known doctrines, rather than by the introduction of completely new concepts. Commentators like Sthiramati have shaped the doctrinal development of the Yogācāra tradition by introducing new concepts and reorganizing previous teachings to a similar extent as ‘independent’ authors like Vasubandhu. Privileging independent texts over commentarial works in academia reflects our own presuppositions and is not justified.

The four teaching sessions were devoted to the examination of the seventeen works ascribed to Sthiramati and of the main doctrines propagated in these texts. While most of the commentaries among the seventeen works are written on works belonging to the Yogācāra tradition, two of them refer to early Mahāyāna sūtras without a specific Yogācāra background, namely the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā* and the **Kāśyapaparivartaṭīkā*. As Indian commentaries on Mahāyāna sūtras are rare in general, the two works represent important sources for the understanding of the development of the Mahāyāna and have been discussed in particular detail in two of the four teaching sessions. The investigation of their contents and style allows to better assess their place within the Yogācāra school and their position in the history of Buddhist thought. Being mostly known for his commentaries, Sthiramati

is also supposed (in the Tibetan tradition) to have composed seven Tantric works. It can be stated with some certainty that they have been authored by a different individual than the author of the philosophical commentaries.

The first teaching session (Introduction into Sthiramati's Œuvre [lecture]) gave an overview of the seventeen works ascribed to the author Sthiramati in Indian, Tibetan and Chinese sources as well as in modern scholarly publications, and questioned their authorship. We have examined several of these texts systematically with regard to compositional techniques, the occurrences of explicit and 'silent' quotes as well as parallels and divergences in style and contents. Some of the works attributed to Sthiramati show obvious parallels and share a great number of identical passages, whereas others do not seem related at all, provide diverging explanations on similar topics and may even contradict each other. Taking these similarities and divergences into consideration, one may wonder which conclusions are to be drawn with regard to the authorship of the works attributed to Sthiramati.

In the second session (Sthiramati's Commentaries on Early Mahāyāna sūtras I [seminar]) we have read selected passages from one of Sthiramati's commentaries on early Mahāyāna sūtras, namely the **Kāśyapaparivartaṭīkā*, and compared its contents with related passages in Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*. The **Kāśyapaparivartaṭīkā* is a commentary (the only Indian commentary) on the *Kāśyapaparivartasūtra*, a very famous Mahāyāna sūtra dealing with the qualities of the *bodhisattva* and with important Mahāyāna concepts as for instance 'emptiness' (*śūnyatā*), 'the middle and the extremes' (*madhyānta*), etc. The **Kāśyapaparivartaṭīkā*, which is available only in its Tibetan and Chinese translations, is attributed to the author Sthiramati in its Tibetan colophon. The commentary's obvious Yogācāra perspective and its structural similarity with the *Viniścayasāṅgrahaṇī* may be counted in favour of Sthiramati's authorship. However, the fact that comments on the *Kāśyapaparivartasūtra* which are found in Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* differ substantially from parallel explanations in the **Kāśyapaparivartaṭīkā* as well as the **Kāśyapaparivartaṭīkā*'s rather early translation into Chinese (between 508 and 535 by Bodhiruci) make the scenario of a single Sthiramati as the common author of both texts appear doubtful.

In the third session (Sthiramati's Commentaries on Early Mahāyāna sūtras II [seminar]) selected passages of the Tibetan translation of the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā* have been studied and compared systematically with parallel passages in Sthiramati's commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, the **Sūtrālaṅkāravṛttibhāṣya*. The main topic of the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra* is the eighty 'imperishabilities' (*akṣaya*), that is eighty qualities to be possessed by the *bodhisattva*.

The last session (Sthiramati's Philosophical Views [seminar]) was devoted to the investigation of Sthiramati's views on the nature of the mind, the constituents of the person and true reality. We have read selected passages from his commentaries on the *Triṃśikā*, the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (both available in Sanskrit) and the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* (available in Tibetan translation) and focused on concepts such as the "store mind" (*ālayavijñāna*), the afflicted notion [of "I am"] (*kliṣṭamanas*) and the three natures (*svabhāva*).