

PARALOKASIDDHI IN CARAKASAMHITĀ

Belief in rebirth is widespread in India, especially as a succession of births and deaths (*samsāra*), and is usually connected with the aim of overcoming this cycle. Often the notion of *karman* is essential.

In some cases, apparently, the necessity was felt to prove rebirth; instances of such proofs are found in literature. Steinkellner<sup>1</sup> has studied a number of treatises on this subject; especially monographs from Mahāyāna Buddhist literature. The monographs in their original form date back to a period between the middle of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th century A.D. It concerns texts in Tibetan, of which some are translations from lost Sanskrit writings. Only two of these monographs (*Dharmottara*, *Prajñāsena*) are preserved; the others (*Jñānasena*, *Śubhagupta* with commentary) are only known from references (catalogues, glosses). Moreover,

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1. E. STEINKELLNER, *Anmerkungen zu einer buddhistischen Texttradition: Paralokasiddhi*, «Anzeiger d. phil.-hist. Klasse d. ÖAdW», 121. Jg. 1984, pp. 79-94. E. STEINKELLNER, *Paralokasiddhi-texts; from: Buddhism and its relations to other religions*, in «Essays in honour of Dr. Shozen Kumoi on his seventieth birthday», Kyoto 1986<sup>1</sup>, pp. 215-223. E. STEINKELLNER, *Dharmottaras Paralokasiddhi; der tibetische Text kritisch herausgegeben und übersetzt*, «Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde», Heft 15, Wien 1986<sup>2</sup>.

E. STEINKELLNER, *Nachweis der Wiedergeburt. Prajñāsenas 'Jig rten pha rol sgrub pa. Ein früher tibetischer Traktat aus Dunhuang. Mit seinen Glossen diplomatisch herausgegeben, übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen versehen*, «Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens, Nr. 1», Teil I: Texte; Teil II: Uebersetzung, Wien 1988.

Steinkellner mentions instances where a *paralokasiddhi* is found as part of a larger text.

An early *paralokasiddhi* is found in *Charakasamhitā*<sup>2</sup> (Sū. 11, 1-33). This proof of the existence of the otherworld occurs in the context of the three aims one should strive for (*eṣaṇā*): life, wealth and otherworld (*paraloka*) (3). The first two aims are dealt with each in one prose section (4 and 5 resp.); but in connection with the otherworld there is doubt and consequently an extensive discussion evolves (6-33). The denial of rebirth (the designation *punarbhava* is used beside *paraloka*) by those adhering to *nāstikya* is considered as not acceptable, as are a number of traditional doctrines which state an origination of man other than by rebirth (6). In this connection Charaka enumerates doctrines trying to prove the origination of man by parents (9-11), nature (*svabhāva*) (12), other agents (*paranirmāṇa*) (13), and chance (*yadr̥cchā*) (14-15). The wise man, however will be convinced by considering things through the light of cognition. Reliable cognition is attained only when one applies the four means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*): *āptopadeśa* (reliable statement), *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference) and *yukti* (looking at things as produced by a combination of many factors) (7,17).

These four *pramāṇas* are first explained at length (18-25), after which they are applied to the problem in hand, i.e. the proof of rebirth:

- «reliable statement» argues that moral conduct and religious observances lead to worldly prosperity and the highest good; but that in this respect persons who have not overcome their mental limitations cannot do without rebirth (27-29);
- «perception» makes one perceive that offspring is different from the parents;

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2. *Charakasamhitā* of Agniveśa, revised by Charaka and Dṛdhabala with the Āyurveda-dīpikā commentary of Chakrapāṇidatta, ed. by VAIDYA JĀDAVAJĪ TRIKAMJĪ, New Delhi 1981.

- that differences exist between persons with the same origin;  
 that in general the destiny of human beings varies considerably;  
 that often in this life one is not rewarded according to one's merits;  
 that the newborn baby, without having learnt them in this life, performs a number of actions like searching for its mother's milk;  
 that people are born with particular (somatic) marks and definite aptitudes;  
 that some recollect a previous existence;  
 that one experiences likes and dislikes towards people who may look the same (30);
- «inference» shows by cause-and-effect reasoning that the succession of rebirths is a consequence of *karman* (31);
  - «*yukti*» makes it clear that amongst the factors which constitute a whole, there are factors influenced by a former life (32).

Caraka's conclusion is that rebirth is established by these four *pramāṇas*; and consequently that religious and ethical conduct is imperative (33).

In some other places in Caraka<sup>2</sup> the principle of rebirth is stated especially in referring to *karman*; for instance in theories on the formation of the human being, as in: *CaSū.* 25, 1-29; *CaŚā.* 2, 27-44; *CaŚā.* 3, 1-27; *CaŚā.* 4, 4-8. But no real proofs for rebirth are furnished; although in *CaŚā.* 3, 6 and 17, in the discussion between Ātreya and Bharadvāja, the possibility of remembering previous existences (*jāṭismara*) is mentioned.

In the *Suśrutasaṃhitā*<sup>3</sup> no distinct *paralokasiddhi* was traced. The *Caraka* is assumed to have been redacted in the first two or three centuries of our era<sup>4</sup>. It would be interesting to know

3. *Suśrutasaṃhitā* with the *Nivandhasaṅgraha* commentary of Dalhaṇa etc., ed. by VAIDYA JĀDAVJI TRIKAMJI and NĀRĀYAṆ RĀM, Jaikrishnadas Āyurveda Series 34, Varanasi-Delhi 1980.

4. G. J. MEULENBELD, *The Mādhavanidāna and its chief commentary*, Chapters

whether other *paralokasiddhis* from that period exist. The *Nyāyasūtra*<sup>5</sup> (dated sometime between 200-450 AD<sup>6</sup>) has a short section on *paralokasiddhi* (N.S. 3.1. 18-26). I do not intend to pursue this line now, since a comparison of the *Nyāyasūtra* and the Nyāya notions in Caraka should be studied in detail; besides the *Nyāyasūtra* gives only a few arguments which are also found in Caraka.

Concerning the texts he studied Steinkellner<sup>7</sup> mentions a division into two types, which had already been followed by Tibetan catalogues:

- *tshad ma*: belonging to the Buddhist epistemological tradition. By means of *pramāṇas* the continuity of cognition (*cittasantāna*) is proved. The authoritative text is the *pramāṇavārttika* II, vv. 34-119, of Dharmakīrti (600-660 AD); in a number of writings by his followers the same type of *paralokasiddhi* is encountered;
- *theg po chen po'i bstan bcos sna tshogs* (Mahāyāna treatises). The investigation is performed by arguments (*upapatti*, *'i had pa*) which go back to the 10th chapter of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, a Mahāyāna *sūtra* from the 2nd or 3rd century AD. The *upapattisiddhanyāya* (*'i had pas sgrub pa'i rigs pa*) is a set of positive and negative argumentations. The positive ones incorporate *pramāṇas*. That is what Steinkellner denotes as «the methodology of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*».

Of the monographs studied by Steinkellner, *Dharmottara* and

1-10, Introduction, Translation and Notes, Doctoral thesis Utrecht, Leiden 1974, p. 404.

5. *Nyāyadarśana*. The *Sūtras* of Gotama and the *Bhāṣya* of Vātsyāyana, ed. by PADMAPRASĀDA ŚĀSTRĪ and HARIRĀMA SŪKLA, etc., Kashi Sanskrit Series 43, Varanasi 1983.

6. V.A. VAN BIJLERT, *Epistemology and spiritual authority. The development of epistemology and logic in the old Nyāya and the Buddhist school of epistemology with an annotated translation of Dharmakīrti's Pramāṇavārttika II (Pramāṇasiddhi)* vv. 1-7, «Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde», Heft 20, Wien 1989, p. 35.

7. STEINKELLNER 1984, pp. 81 and 91. STEINKELLNER 1986<sup>1</sup>.

*Śubhagupta* belong to the first type mentioned; *Jñānasena* and *Prajñāsena* to the second.

In these writings the different discourses on rebirth have in common that as a rule there is a discussion with the Lokāyatas (the word Lokāyata is used for systematized materialism in general both for the doctrines and the followers). Lokāyatas deny rebirth and especially its moral consequences. Steinkellner<sup>8</sup> refers to a classification of the Lokāyata by Frauwallner given in his unpublished notes. Frauwallner distinguishes an older and a more recent theory. Characteristic for the older theory is the idea that cognition originates from the four *mahābhūtas*. The more recent one he divides in two stages of development: in the first, cognition originates from the body but thereafter propagates itself; in the second, cognition originates from parents or from the mother only. Essential for the later theories is also that one no longer relied on *pratyakṣa* only, as a *pramāṇa*, but had to apply *anumāna* in addition<sup>9</sup>.

For the Lokāyatas it is an essential point in the discussion with their opponents to disprove the existence of an eternal *ātman*; against Buddhist *anātmavādins*, however, arguments are aimed at denying the continuance of the flow of cognition after cessation of physical existence.

Steinkellner<sup>10</sup> observes that in the texts studied by him the aim of formulating a *paralokasiddhi* was to show that a *bodhisattva* has supreme compassion (*karuṇā*) and omniscience (*sarvajñatā*); qualities which can only be brought to perfection (*pāramitā*) in the course of many lives. In the earlier (Hīnayāna) Buddhism, however, for the preaching monks the incentive to stress rebirth had been to bring (materialistic) rulers to moral conduct (in this case too the belief in rebirth was eventually motivated, as reflected in the *Paralokakathā* from the 29th chapter of Āryaśura's *Jātaka-māla*, dating from the 4th century AD).

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8. STEINKELLNER 1986<sup>2</sup>, pp. 8-12.

9. E. FRAUWALLNER, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*, II. Band, Salzburg 1956, pp. 307-308.

10. STEINKELLNER 1984, pp. 88-91.

When we compare the Caraka *paralokasiddhi* with these Buddhist texts, it clearly shows similarities with Steinkellner's category of Mahāyāna treatises. At the beginning a discussion with opponents is conducted; subsequently proofs of rebirth are put forward through *pramāṇas*.

As for opponents confrontation with Lokāyatas is prominent, like it is in the Buddhist *paralokasiddhis*. At first they are designated as Nāstikas: an appropriate name in this context, since, as stated by Frauwallner<sup>11</sup>, it is rebirth which materialists consider as nonexistent (*nāstiparalokaḥ*). Here the Nāstikas are reproached for adhering to one *pramāṇa* only, i.e. perception, (*pratyakṣaparāḥ*); this is one of the basic tenets (*pratyakṣaikaḥ pramāṇavāda*) in Bārhaspatya philosophy<sup>12</sup>. This is followed by a discussion with adherents of a number of traditional doctrines:

- *mātāpitarau*. Parents as generating a human being. The commentator, Cakrapāṇidatta<sup>2</sup>, points out that in this doctrine parents are considered the sole cause, and that another self plays no part (*mātāpitarāv evātmāntaranirpekṣāv...*; p. 68, column 2.34). Origination from parents is mentioned in the second stage of the later Lokāyata theory in Frauwallner's classification. After thus coming into existence, cognition further generates itself. This self-generation is, however, not mentioned in Caraka. It is true that elsewhere Caraka mentions parents as one of a number of factors in the formation of the human being; but not as the sole factor.
- *svabhāva*. The text and, in particular, the commentary<sup>2</sup> make it clear that by this the nature of the five elements is meant (*paridr̥ṣyamānapr̥thivyādibhāvānām evāyam svabhāvo...*; p. 68, column 2.36-37); consequently one is here dealing with *svabhāvavāda* and *bhūtamātravāda* of Bārhaspatya philosophy<sup>12</sup>. Even with *bhūtacaitanyavāda* (*yatsaṃyogaviśeṣān militāḥ santaś cetanaṃ... ...kāryaviśeṣam*

11. FRAUWALLNER 1956, p. 295.

12. M. NAMAI, *A Survey of Bārhaspatya philosophy*, «Indological Review» 2, (1976), pp. 29-32 (30).

*ārabhante*; comm. p. 68, column 2.37-38); illustrated by the example of intoxicating properties arising from a combination of non-intoxicating ingredients (*yathā surābijādīni pratyekam amadakarāṇy api madakaram... ārabhante...*; comm. p. 68, column 2.38-39).

- *paranirmāṇa*. It is shown that this other creative agent is the suprapersonal self, *ātmaviśeṣa* (*para aiśvaryādiguṇayukta ātmaviśeṣaḥ tena saṃsāryātmanirpekṣiṇā nirmāṇam paranirmāṇam...*; comm. p. 68, column 2.40-41; p. 69, column 1.1).
- *yadṛcchā*. This means chance which is not influenced by causality (*yadṛcchā kāraṇāpratiniyamenotpādaḥ...*; comm. p. 69, column 1.3). Remarkably Caraka also in this case designates its adherents as: *Nāstikas*; and clearly shows his contempt for these persons (*pātakebhyaḥ paraṃ caitat pātakaṃ...*; *CaSū.* 11,15).

By modern authors generally *yadṛcchavāda* is not classed under materialism proper.

In the discussion mentioned, Caraka deals at any rate twice with *Lokāyatas*. Most probably these can be considered adherents of the older theory in the classification of Frauwallner.

To prove rebirth, four *pramāṇas* are used: *āptopadeśa*, *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *yukti*, which Caraka applies also elsewhere. For «reliable statement» the terms *āgama* and *śruti* act as synonyms of *āptopadeśa*. Highly essential for Caraka are the *āptas*, who are distinctly described (18-19); in his own statements he consistently uses *āptāgama* and *āptopadeśa*. Syllogism is not explicitly employed, although in the definition of *anumāna* (21) the example of fire and smoke occurs, characteristic for syllogisms.

It would be getting too far off the subject to consider the definitions of *pramāṇas* used in Caraka and to make comparisons on this point with other texts, in particular with the *Nyāyasūtra*. Also the way Caraka applies the *pramāṇas* in proving rebirth will not be examined here, although some points could certainly be raised on this subject (e.g. the kind of arguments dealt with under *pratyakṣa*; the application of *anumāna* on questions concerning *paraloka*). Essential in this respect is that Caraka opposes the use of only one

means of valid cognition, i.e. *pratyakṣa* or *anumāna*, by his opponents. Instead he stresses the necessity of the application of all four *pramāṇas* to establish rebirth.

Thus, as is the case in the Buddhist *paralokasiddhis*, for Caraka the confrontation with the Lokāyatas is important. Also in *Prajñāsenā* (the only preserved text of Steinkellner's «Mahāyāna treatises») a discussion with opponents occurs; a discussion comparable especially with those under «*svabhāva*» and «*paranir-māṇa*» in Caraka. The positive arguments for rebirth in *Prajñāsenā* are collected in Caraka under the heading of *pratyakṣa*.

As in the earlier Buddhism, Caraka stresses that in accepting rebirth as a fact, one should attend to religious prescriptions and follow moral conduct. He (surprisingly) does not appear to use rebirth as an argument for proving an eternal *ātman*.

Thus on some points the Caraka text can be compared with the Buddhist *paralokasiddhi* texts mentioned. It is, however, not yet possible to place the Caraka text in a *paralokasiddhi* tradition or traditions; to this end more, especially non-Buddhist, *paralokasiddhis* have to be traced and studied. These should be searched for in spite of Dasgupta's remark<sup>13</sup> that apart from the *Nyāyasūtra* only Caraka has attempted to give a proof of the theory of rebirth; apparently he was not aware of the *paralokasiddhis* in Buddhist literature.

Looking once more at this Caraka text one can hardly avoid the impression that this *paralokasiddhi* is of an existing type, and has been inserted in this place. It is a quite separate whole, much more lengthy than the first two *eṣaṇās* which cover only one prose section each; the subject is thoroughly discussed, extensively explaining the *pramāṇas*. One would expect the medical relevance to be shown, but this is not the case. As regards the striving for life (*prāṇaiṣaṇā*), the prose section closes with: «following that [prescription] mentioned before, one attains a long life by maintaining [one's] vital power» (*tad yathoktam anuvartamānaḥ prāṇānupālād*

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13. S. DASGUPTA, *A history of Indian philosophy*, Delhi 1975, Vol. II, p. 408.



*dīrgham āyur avāpnoti*); and for the striving for wealth (*dhānai-ṣaṇā*): «acting thus one lives a long life» (*tathā kurvan dīrgham jīvitam jīvati*). In the case of *paraloka* the only remark is: «acting thus one attains fame in this world» (*tathā kurvann iha ...yaśo labhate...*). Here one would also expect a remark on a person's health-prospects (in future lives); for instance in connection with the *karman* he has built up.

Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya<sup>14</sup> considers this text as a concession to the Brahmanical lawgivers, and thus a deviation from scientific thought, since Caraka, in Chattopadhyaya's opinion, makes everything dependent on *śruti*, in the sense of sacred scriptures. He is definitely carrying things too far. It is true that Caraka gives the *āptopadeśa pramāṇa* pride of place and that the significance of religious and moral conduct is clearly mentioned. For Caraka however this *pramāṇa* implies the use of reliable sources rather than a dependence on doctrine. This is his reason for stressing the importance of the *āptas*. But most essentially he insists that *paraloka* should be proved by serious application of all four *pramāṇas*.

Which leaves us with a *paralokasiddhi* treatise as a self-contained unit inserted in this medical textbook.

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14. DEBIPRASAD CHATTOPADHYAYA, *Science and society in ancient India*, Calcutta 1979, pp. 375-378 and 397.

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