

Remarks on the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* as Cited in the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*

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Despite a number of researches so far carried out by our contemporary scholars, there still remains a fundamental question concerning the authorship of the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (MPU, 大智度論), which has traditionally been ascribed to Nāgārjuna (龍樹). The purpose of the present paper is to cast a new light on this traditional issue in a careful analysis of the texts and interpretations of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MK, 根本中頌) given in the MPU.

In the MPU, fourteen stanzas are cited expressly from the MK, four of which are quoted twice in different contexts of the MPU. After giving a comparative table of those stanzas with their corresponding verses embedded in other commentaries, the present writer deals with two significant examples, MK 17.20 and 23.13, which, to some extent, reveal some of the noteworthy characteristics of the MK as cited in the MPU.

From the above discussion are drawn the following conclusions: First, the MPU must be a “translation” work even though Kumārajīva (鳩摩羅什), the translator, added a number of explanatory words to the original text which had already been transmitted to Central Asia in the middle of 4th century A.D. Secondly, the original text on which Kumārajīva based his rendering of the MPU, was most probably written by another person than the well-known Nāgārjuna and Piṅgala (青目), the author of the *Zhōng-lùn* (中論) which was also translated by Kumārajīva. Thirdly, the translation work appears to have been accomplished by many hands including Kumārajīva and some of his pupils’.