

## On Ornaments of Speech in Kṣemendra's *Avadānakalpalatā*

YAMASAKI, Kazuho

The *Avadānakalpalatā* by the Kashmiri poet Kṣemendra (ca. eleventh century) is a collection of Buddhist legends in 108 chapters. According to its colophon, the work was written at the request of Nakka, a Hindu friend of Kṣemendra's, so that the treasure trove of Buddhist legends would be accessible to Hindus. On one hand, Kṣemendra attempts to be faithful to the plot of the Buddhist legends on which the work is based. On the other, he takes pains to offer his Hindu audience an assortment of descriptions such as the seasons, sunrises, or the pleasures of love, which are typical of court poetry.

Many scholars restrict themselves to the study of the textual relationship between the *Avadānakalpalatā* and canonical Buddhist texts, and leave out of consideration the question of what poetic tradition influences the *Avadānakalpalatā*. This paper attempts to answer this question, focusing on the examples of ornaments of speech used in the seventy-second chapter of this work. A closer perusal of the text shows the following:

Many of the examples of alliteration are not constructed within the confines of the rules set down by the Kashmiri poetician Rudraṭa (ca. ninth century), who takes the view that ornaments of speech are the soul of poetry.

In the verses devoted to the description of a charnel ground Kṣemendra deliberately repeats the consonant /k/ to reproduce the sound of cracking skulls, and thereby evokes an emotion of disgust. It should also be noted that in his treatise on poetics, *Aucityavicāracarcā*, Kṣemendra criticizes Dharmakīrti (ca. seventh century) for using alliteration that does not give a poetic charm to his verse. These facts show that, at the time when he wrote the *Avadānakalpalatā*, Kṣemendra inclined to the view that the soul of poetry lay not in the display of linguistic virtuosity but in the suggestion of a particular emotion.