

# The Term *madhyamaka* as Explained by the *Tarkajvālā*:

From the Point of View of Pāṇini's Grammar

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**0. Introduction** It is well known that the TJ, a commentary on Bhāviveka's MHK, gives a grammatical explanation of the term *madhyamaka* to derive the term *madhyamakahrdaya* 'the heart (*hrdaya*) of the madhyamaka.' Regrettably, the commentary is now extant only in Tibetan translation, which causes great difficulty in understanding properly the explanation as intended by the original. The TJ tells us that the term *madhyamaka* can be interpreted in two ways: as an upapada tatpuruṣa and as a derivate ending in a taddhita affix; and that the term refers to a śāstra 'teaching, treatise, system' or a siddhānta 'established view' relative to it. The aim of this paper is thus to bring out grammatical points so that the derivation of the term in question may be convincingly accounted for from the point of view of Pāṇini's grammar.

**1. TJ on the term *madhyamaka*** The pertinent passages of the TJ are given by Saitō 2000; 2012 along with their Sanskrit reconstructions, which have minor differences between the two articles. I will here follow Saitō 2000 (typos corrected); the passages are numbered for convenience of argumentation.

(A) The last verse of the MHK: *iti madhyamakasyedaṃ saṃkṣepād dhṛdayaṃ kṛtam / dhūmatāṃ naikasūtrāntabimbadarśanadarpaṇaṃ* (read: *-darpaṇaḥ*) // (Eckel 2008, 65: "This completes the concise heart of the Madhyamaka: for scholars it is a mirror to reflect the meaning of many sūtras." It is clearly shown that the term *madhyamakahrdaya* is a ṣaṣṭhī tatpuruṣa, which consists of *madhyamaka* and *hrdaya* (A 2.2.8 ṣaṣṭhī): *madhyamakasya hrdayam*).

(B) TJ thereon: [1] *mtha' gñis nram par spañs pas dbus dañ 'dra bas na dbu ma ste/* [2] *dbus ñid dbu ma'o zes rañ gi don de la phan pa brjod pa'o//* [3] *dbu ma'i lam de ston par byed ciñ/ sgrogs par byed pas ka zes bya ste/* [4] *skad kyi dbyiñs kyi sgra las dbu ma'i bstan bcos zes bya ba 'am/* [5] *dbu ma zes bya ba'i miñ gañ la yod pa de ni dbu ma'o//* [6] *yañ na ka zes bya ba'i miñ gis brjod pa yin pas dbu ma zes bya ste/ dbu ma'i grub pa'i*

*mtha'o//*

(C) Sanskrit reconstruction in Saitō 2000: [1'S] \**antadvayavivarjitenā madhyena tulyatvān madhyamaḥ* / [2'S] \**madhya eva madhyama iti svārthikataddhitābhidhānam* (or *svārthe tad-*) / [3'S] \**madhyamāṃ pratipadaṃ tām darśayatā vādayatā ca ka iti* / [4'S] \**dhātuśabdān madhyamakaśāstram iti* / [5'S] \**madhyamaka iti saṃjñā vā yatrāsti sa madhyamakaḥ* // [6'S] \**atha vā ka iti nāmābhidhāyitvena madhyamaka iti / madhyamakasiddhāntaḥ* //

(D) Sanskrit reconstruction suggested: [1'O] \**antadvayavivarjitatvena madhyasādhāyān madhyamam* / [2'O] \**madhyam eva madhyamam iti svārthikataddhitavidhiḥ* / [3'O] \**madhyamā pratipat / tām kathayati kīrtayātīti madhyamakam* / [4'O] \**dhātuśabdato madhyamakaśāstram ucyate* / [5'O] \**yadvā madhyamakam iti saṃjñā yasyāsti tan madhyamakam* / [6'O] \**athavā ka iti saṃjñayābhidadhātīti madhyamaka iti / madhyamakasiddhāntaḥ* /

Eckel's interpretation of [3]–[6] (Eckel 2008, 65): “Bhāviveka explains that the suffix “*ka*” refers to “the act (or means) of teaching and proclaiming the middle path.” Then he goes on to say that the word *madhyamaka* can refer to either the “Madhyamaka text” (*madhyamakaśāstra*) or the “Madhyamaka system” (*madhyamakasiddhānta*).”

**2. *madhyama*** The word *madhyamaka* is analyzed into two items: *madhyama* and *ka*. The item *madhyama* is a derivate of *madhya* with the taddhita affix *ma*, formed by A 4.3.8 *madhyān maḥ*. [2] states that the taddhita *ma* in question is a svārthika affix like *ka* in *avika* ‘sheep’ introduced after *avi* ‘sheep’ by A 5.4.28 *aveḥ kaḥ*, so that it does not independently convey a meaning of its own. The items *madhya* and *madhyama* convey the same meaning. Let us note A 4.3.9 *a sāmpratike*. Suppose that X is located in the middle (*madhya*; A 4.3.53 *tatra bhavaḥ*). If X is regarded as ‘proper, appropriate’ (*sāmpratika*, KV: *nyāyā, yukta, ucīta, sama*), the taddhita affix *a* occurs after the item *madhya* that denotes the middle: *madhye bhavaḥ* → *madhya-ñi a* → *madhya-φ a* → *madhy-φ a* (A 6.4.148 *yasyeti ca*). Take for example the utterance *madhyam kṣāṭham* ‘the proper piece of wood,’ which the KV on A 4.3.9 paraphrases as *nātidīrgham nātihrasvam* ‘[the piece of wood which] is neither too long nor too short.’ Thus it is reasonable to assume that in [1] and [2] the TJ takes *madhyama* as a derivate of this type of *madhya*, i.e., a derivate of *madhya* with *a*, with the svārthika *ma*. The resultant form *madhyama* means ‘that which is located in the middle and which is regarded as proper.’ The usages *madhyamā pratipat*

(fem.) and *madhyamo mārgaḥ* (masc.) are attested. In [1] and [2] we may use the neuter *madhyamam*, which takes a ‘generic’ neuter (*liṅgasarvanāman*) and a ‘generic’ singular (*saṃkhyāsarvanāman*), accounted for by virtue of the absence of the intention to speak of a specific gender and a specific number (*avivakṣā*). Let us call the referent of the present base *madhyama* ‘Middle.’ This term ‘Middle’ refers to that which is located in the middle, a portion or part equally distant from the extremes, and which has the status of being looked upon as proper in a given context.

### 3. *madhyamaka*

**3.1. *madhyamaka* 1** [3] and [4] are intended to explain the derivate *madhyamaka* as an upapada ‘cooccurring item’ tatpuruṣa (A 3.1.92 *tatropapadaṃ saptamīstham*; A 2.2.19 *upapadam atin*) obligatorily formed by combining *madhyama* and *ka*, which is a derivate, formed from a verb (*dhātu*) with a kṛt affix. This is strongly supported by [4], which makes the point that the item *madhyamaka* contains a linguistic item classed as a verb (*skad kyi dbyiṅs kyi sgra*, *\*dhātuśabda*). The constituent *ka* of the upapada tatpuruṣa *madhyamaka* is a derivate with the kṛt affix *Ḍa*, whose introduction after a verb is accounted for by A 3.2.101 *anyeṣv api dṛśyate*. This sūtra is connected with the following sūtras: A 3.4.67 *kartari kṛt*; A 3.2.84 *bhūte*; A 3.2.97 *saptamyām janer ḍaḥ*; A 3.2.98 *pañcamyām ajātau*; A 3.2.99 *upasarge ca saṃjñāyām*; A 3.2.100 *anau karmaṇi*. A 3.2.101 then provides that the kṛt affix *Ḍa* is seen to follow the verb *jan* ‘be born, arise’ construed also (*api*) with upapadas other than those specified in the preceding sūtras. According to the KV, Pāṇini’s use of the particle *api* ‘also’ is intended to relax all the conditions given in the relevant sūtras (KV on A 3.2.101: *apiśabdaḥ sarvopādhivyabhicārthaḥ / tena dhātvantarād api bhavati*), so that the kṛt affix *Ḍa* follows a verb other than *jan* with no specific time reference (A 3.2.84 *bhūte* is superseded.) Consider an example from the Durghaṭavṛtti on A 3.2.50 (*katham bhayāpahāḥ / ... anyeṣv api dṛśyate iti ḍaḥ*): *bhayāpaha* ‘one who wards off fear, king,’ paraphrased as *bhayam apahantīti bhayāpahaḥ*. In this instance the kṛt affix *Ḍa* is introduced after the verb *han* preceded by the upasarga *apa*, which is construed with the upapada *bhaya* ‘fear’ signifying an object (*karman*) with respect to the action of warding off: *bhaya-Ņas apa-ha* (← *apa-han-Ḍa*) → *bhaya apaha* → *bhayāpaha* (A 6.1.101 *akaḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ*). The formation of the compound *bhayāpaha* cannot be accounted for by A 3.2.50 *ape kleśatamasah*, since the upapada signifying an object is neither *kleśa* ‘pain’ nor *tamas* ‘darkness.’

In order to explain the derivate *ka* with *Ḍa*, it will suffice to take into account the following type of verb: monosyllabic; an initial sound is *k*; a meaning is one of the meanings to be expressed by the Tibetan terms (a) *ston pa* and (b) *sgrogs pa*. In [3] the TJ considers two possibilities: the verbs *\*kath* ‘tell, state’ (dhātupāṭha X.307: *katha vākyaprabandhe* ‘*kath* occurs to denote the act of composing an utterance.’) and *\*kṛt* (dhātupāṭha X.111: *kṛtA saṃśabdane* ‘*kṛt* occurs to denote the act of praising.’), respectively. Derivations are as follows: (a) *katha-Ḍa* → *kath-ḥ-Ḍa* (A 6.4.48 *ato lopaḥ*) → *k-ḥ-Ḍa* → *ka*; (b) *kṛtA-Ḍa* → *kṛt-ḥ-Ḍa* (A 1.3.2 *upadeśe* ‘*j* *anunāsika it*; A 1.3.9 *tasya lopaḥ*) → *kṛt-Ḍa* → *k-ḥ-Ḍa* → *ka*. That part of an item which begins with its last vowel is termed *ṭi* (A 1.1.64 *aco* ‘*ntyādi ṭi*’) and an operation takes effect with respect to a single sound as it would with respect to an initial or final sound (A 1.1.21 *ādyantavad ekasmin*). The parts *-ath* of *kath* and *-ṛt* of *kṛt* are called *ṭi*. Vt. 1 on A 6.4.143 (*teḥ*): *ḍity abhasyāpy anubandhakaraṇasāmarthyāt* applies. A 6.4.143 *teḥ* provides that the *ṭi* part of the presuffixal base *bha* (A 1.4.18 *yaci bham*) is dropped before an affix marked with *ḍ* (*ḍit*). The presuffixal base occurring before a *kṛt* affix cannot be called *bha* since relevant affixes are those introduced by sūtras of the fourth and fifth adhyāyas. The present vārttika is thus formulated, saying that even if a presuffixal base occurring before an affix marked with *ḍ* is not called *bha*, the *ṭi* portion of the base is dropped, since, otherwise, the marking of an affix with *ḍ* would be in vain: this marking has the purpose of serving to bring about the zero substitution of a *ṭi* portion of a presuffixal base; A 6.4.128 *bhasya* is blocked.

[3] gives a string which is assumed to be equivalent to the upapada compound *madhyamaka*: *madhyamaṃ kathayati kīrtayatīti madhyamakam*. A corresponding abstract string is *madhyama-Nās ka*. On the assumption that the *kṛt* *Ḍa* denotes an agent (*kartṛ*) by A 3.4.67 *kartari kṛt*, the compound *madhyamaka* means ‘X which teaches or proclaims the Middle.’ [4] explicitly states that X is what is referred to as *śāstra*: *madhyamaṃ śāstram*; *madhyamakaśāstram*.

**3.2. madhyamaka 2** [5] is intended to take the item *madhyamaka* as a name word (*saṃjñāśabda*). The point made here is that what bears the name *madhyamaka* is spoken of as *madhyamaka*. The derivation of the name *madhyamaka* is also accounted for by A 3.2.101 *anyeṣv api drśyate*, for which the condition is considered that the derivate formed is a term referring to a particular thing as in A 3.2.99 *upasarge ca saṃjñāyām* (e.g., *prajā*

‘progeny’). In this case the item *saṃjñāyām* ‘in the domain of a name’ is taken to recur in A 3.2.101. Pāṇini’s work (*śāstra*) is called *śabdānuśāsana* ‘a means of teaching correct forms.’ The technical term *śabdānuśāsana* is characterized as *anvarthasaṃjñā, anvarthaṃ nāma* ‘an etymologically analyzable name’ (MBh [Paspasā] (I.1.2–3): *śabdānuśāsanaṃ nāma śāstram adhikṛtaṃ veditavyam* [I have adopted the reading by Vedavrata.]). In the same manner we can safely say: *madhyamakaṃ nāma śāstram*: the work (*śāstra*) in question is called *madhyamaka*. That is, the work has the name *madhyamaka*, retaining the etymological meaning ‘that which teaches or proclaims the Middle.’

Consequently, the upapada compound *madhyama-ka* can refer either to a *śāstra* which teaches or proclaims the Middle or to a *śāstra* which bears the name *madhyamaka* with its etymological value.

**3.3. *madhyamaka* 3** [6] is intended to explain the item *madhyamaka* as a taddhita derivate formed from the nominal base *madhyama* by introducing the taddhita affix *ka*. In his Vṛtti on Gaṇaratnamahodadhi 184 Vardhamāna mentions *saṃjñāyām*, a gaṇasūtra accompanying A 5.4.3 *sthūlādibhyaḥ prakāravacane kan*. Vṛtti on GRM 184: *saṃjñāyām iti gaṇasūtram / tasyārthaḥ / svaprakṛtyarthasya pravṛttinimittam anapekṣya yaḥ śabdaḥ saṃjñārūpatayārthāntare vartate tasyānena kapratyayaḥ / ... / śūdraśabdo jātāu prasiddhaḥ / śūdrako nāma vīraḥ /* The gaṇasūtra provides that an item takes the affix *ka* if the derivate formed from it is a term referring to a particular thing (*saṃjñāyām*). Three kinds of meanings are involved here: *svaprakṛtyartha*, *pravṛttinimitta*, and *saṃjñārūpatayārthāntaram*. For example, in the case of the item *śūdraka*, in relation to the affix *ka* its own base (*svaprakṛti*) is *śūdra* and the meaning of this base (*svaprakṛtyartha*) is ‘a śūdra caste.’ The basis of the application (*pravṛttinimitta*) of the word *śūdra* is the property of being a śūdra caste. The item *śūdra* denotes a meaning other than the meaning śūdra caste (*arthāntara*), characterized by its own form, the form of the name word (*saṃjñārūpa*). According to the gaṇasūtra, when this item denotes its own form, it takes the taddhita affix *ka*. The derivate *śūdraka* is thus a name which can be used independently of the property of being a śūdra caste. The entity is what bears the name *śūdraka*. The same is true of the name *madhyamaka*. The item *madhyama* denotes its own form to form, by introducing the affix *ka*, the name word *madhyamaka*, which refers to a siddhānta; the siddhānta bears the name *madhyamaka* without its etymological value. Therefore, in view of this, we may interpret [6]: *\*athavā ka iti saṃjñayābhidadhātūti madhyamaka iti /*

*madhyamakāsiddhāntaḥ*, as follows: “Alternatively, since [the item *madhyama*] denotes [its own form] because of the name-forming [affix] *ka*, [the name] *madhyamaka* is established. This name refers to a *siddhānta*, which has the name *madhyamaka*.”

**4. *śāstra*** The term *śāstra* is derived from the verb *śās* ‘teach, instruct’ with the uṇādi affix *ṣṭraN* (US 4.158: *sarvadhātubhyaḥ ṣṭran*). Its core meaning is ‘teaching.’ A detailed explanation of this term has been given by Cardona 1997, 572–573. Let us concentrate on two aspects of the *śāstra*: *grantha* ‘work, treatise’ (AK 3.3.179c: *nideśagranthayoḥ śāstram*) and *upadeśa* ‘teaching.’ NV on NS 1.1.1 (4.1–2): *śāstram punaḥ pramāṇādivācakapadasamūho vyūhaviśiṣṭaḥ, padaṃ punar varṇasamūhaḥ, padasamūhaḥ sūtram, sūtrasamūhaḥ prakaraṇam, prakaraṇasamūha āhnikam, āhnikasamūho ’dhyāyaḥ, pañcādhyāyī śāstram* / (Cardona 1997, 573: “The *śāstra* is a group of words characterized by a particular arrangement (*vyūhaviśiṣṭaḥ*) and stating such things as means of knowing rightly (*pramāṇādivācakapadasamūhaḥ*) ... ; a group of *āhnika* makes up a chapter (*adhyāya*); and the *śāstra* is a group of five chapters (*pañcādhyāyī*).” Note: *pañcādhyāya* + *ÑiP* A 2.1.51 *taddhitārthottarapadasamāhāre ca*; A 4.1.21 *dvigoḥ*). Let us note also the following statement on *tantra* ‘a branch of learning’ by Pakṣilasvāmin: NBh on NS 1.1.26 (261.2–3): *tantram itaretarābhisambaddhasyārthasamūhasyopadeśaḥ śāstram*. The words *tantra* and *śāstra* are mutually synonymous, referring to a system or an organized or methodically arranged set of ideas. It is quite natural that when the *śāstra* is defined as a group of five chapters, the contents of the chapters are connected with one another. The chapters are defined as a group of *āhnikas*. Accordingly, the term *śāstra* signifies a particular work and an organized set of ideas taught therein. A dogmatic, soteriological, etymology of the term *śāstra* given by Buddhist philosophers need not be discussed here (see MacDonald 2015 II.14–15, n. 40. Note: *śās* [ ← *śās* + *Kvi*] + *tra* [ ← *trai* + *Ḍa*] → *śāstra* ‘that which subdues and which protects’ [viśeṣaṇobhayakarmadhāraya]).

**5. *siddhānta*** Let us note Uddyotakara’s statement and Viśvanātha’s comment thereon: NV on NS 1.1.27 (262.13): *yo ’rtho na śāstritaḥ tasyābhyupagamo na siddhānta iti* / (“The acceptance of that subject matter (*artha*) as being such and such which has not been treated by a *śāstra* (*śāstrita*) is not a *siddhānta*.”) Vṛtti on NS 1.1.26 (260): *tathā ca śāstritārthanīścayaḥ siddhāntaḥ* / (“This being the case, the determination (*nīścaya*) of the subject matter treated according to a *śāstra* (*śāstritārtha*) is a *siddhānta*.”) We see that a *śāstra* is linked with a *siddhānta* in the relation expressed by the derivate *śāstrita*, which

is formed from the base *śāstra* with the taddhita affix *itaC*. This derivation is accounted for by A 5.2.36 *tad asya saṃjātaṃ tārakādibhya itac*. The set beginning with *tārakā* ‘star’ is a type listing (*ākṛtiḡaṇa*) that includes only illustrative instances (*tārakitaṃ nabhaḥ* ‘the sky, studded with stars, starry sky’). The item *śāstra* is included in the group (Vṛtti on GRM 388). The derivate with this taddhita affix (*śāstra* + *itaC* → *śāstrita*) denotes ‘X on which a śāstra appears, X which is treated by or according to a śāstra.’ In this way a śāstra and a siddhānta are related to each other. It is for this reason that the TJ treats the madhyamakaśāstra and the madhyamakasiddhānta as making a pair.

**6. Conclusion** The term *madhyamaka*, as the upapada tatpuruṣa consisting of the taddhita derivate *madhyama* ((*madhya* + *a*) + *ma*) and the kṛt derivate *ka* (*kath* + *Ḍa*; *kṛt* + *Ḍa*), refers to the śāstra which teaches or proclaims the Middle or to the śāstra which is named *madhyamaka* ‘that which teaches or proclaims the Middle.’ Alternatively, the term *madhyamaka*, as a derivate ending in the taddhita affix *ka*, refers to the siddhānta which is the determination of the subject-matter treated by the madhyamakaśāstra. From the perspective of Pāṇini’s grammar, the interpretation of the item *ka* simply as a suffix given by Eckel and Saitō, utterly far-fetched, is untenable. Now that the compound *madhyamaka-hṛdaya* is accepted as a ṣaṣṭhī tatpuruṣa, equivalent to the string *madhyamakasya hṛdayam*, it is unlikely that the term *madhyamaka* refers to an individual person who teaches or proclaims the Middle, since the heart of such a person, an internal organ, cannot be man-made (*kṛta*). In addition, it is difficult to take the compound *madhyamaka-vādin* to mean ‘a person who is a proponent and who teaches or proclaims the Middle’ (\**madhyamakaś cāsau vādī ca*), because this type of compound is usually taken as an upapada tatpuruṣa (*vad* + *ṆinI*; A 3.2.78 *supy ajātau ṇinis tācchīlye*), not as a karma-dhāraya; it must mean ‘a proponent who asserts the madhyamaka siddhānta’ (*madhyamakam vadatīti madhyamakavādī*).

What is important to note is that in the MHK the madhyamakaśāstra stands in contrast to other śāstras, philosophical systems: Sāṃkhya, Vaiśeṣika, Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, and Nyāya. The most possible explanation is that the concept of madhyamakaśāstra, with so broad a domain as to include the Yogācāra system, was developed as standing for ‘Buddhology’ in its proper sense.

### Abbreviations

**A:** Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Cardona 1997, Appendix. **AK:** Amarasiṃha's *Nāmaṅgānuśāsana*, alias *Amarakośa*. *Amara's Nāmaṅgānuśāsanaṃ with the Commentary Amarakośodghāṇa of Bhaṭṭa Kṣīrasvāmin*. Ed. Hari Dutt Sharma. Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1941.

**Durghaṭavṛtti:** Śaraṇadeva's *Durghaṭavṛtti*. *The Durghaṭavṛtti of Śaraṇadeva*. Ed. Gaṇapati Śāstrī. Trivandrum: Travancore Government Press, 1909. **GRM:** Vardhamāna's *Gaṇaratnamahodadhi*. *Vardhamāna's Gaṇaratnamahodadhi with the Author's Commentary*. Ed. Julius Eggeling. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1963. **KV:** Vāmana and Jayāditya's *Kāśikāvṛtti*. *Kāśikāvṛtti of Jayāditya-Vāmana, Along with Commentaries Vivaraṇapañcikā-Nyāsa of Jinendrabuddhi and Padamañjarī of Haradatta Miśra*. 6 vols. Ed. Śrīnārāyaṇa Miśra. Varanasi: Ratna Publications, 1985.

**MBh:** Patañjali's *Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣya*. (1) *Śrībhagavatpatañjalivivracitaṃ Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣyam (Śrīkaityātakṛta-Pradīpena nāgajībhāṭṭakṛtena bhāṣyapradīpodyotena ca vibhūṣitam)*. 5 vols. Ed. Vedavrata. Gurukul Jhajar (Rohatak): Hairyāṇā-Sāhitya-Saṃsthānam, 1962–1963. (2) *The Vyākaraṇa-mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, Edited by F. Kielhorn, Third Edition, Revised and Furnished with Additional Readings, References and Select Critical Notes by K. V. Abhyankar*. 3 vols. Ed. Kashinath Vasudev Abhyankar. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1962–1972.

**MHK:** Bhāvivēka's *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā*. See Saitō 2000. **NBh:** Pakṣilasvāmin's *Nyāyabhāṣya*. *Nyāyadarśanaṃ with Vātyāyana's Bhāṣya, Uddyotakara's Vārttika, Vācaspati Miśra's Tātparyauṭīkā & Viśvanātha's Vṛtti*. 2nd ed. Ed. Taranatha Nyaya-Tarkatīrtha and Amarendramohan Tarkatīrtha. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1985. **NS:** Gautama's *Nyāyasūtra*. See NBh. **NV:** Uddyotakara's *Nyāyavārttika*. See NBh. **TJ:** *Tarkajvālā*. See Saitō 2000. **Uṇādikośa:** *Uṇādikośa of Mahādeva Vedāntin*. Ed. K. Kunjunni Raja. Madras: University of Madras, 1956. **Vṛtti:** Viśvanātha's *Vṛtti*. See NBh. **Vt:** Kātyāyana's *vārttika*.

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