

Thematic Paper Title	: An Analytical Study of the Origin and Development of Hṛdaya Sūtra in Buddhism
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Abstract

The title of this thematic paper is ‘An analytical study of the origin and development of Hṛdaya Sūtra in Buddhism ’, and this is a qualitative research study.

This thematic paper is of two objectives: (1) To study the origin of Hṛdaya Sūtra in Mahāyāna Buddhist literatures (2) to analyses the development of Hṛdaya Sūtra through translated versions.

From the research it is found as follows:

The origin of the Hṛdaya Sūtra took place in the Vulture Peak at Bihar India. The “Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya Sūtra” exists in both longer and shorter forms. The earliest extant text of the Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya Sūtra is on the palm leaf Sanskrit Manuscript. Both of the forms exist with a long and a short version in Hōryū-ji Temple in Japan. The Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya Sūtra it is very brief. It contains the key concepts of ‘Emptiness’ Philosophy, but it includes the Emptiness of Five Skandhas, Four Noble Truths, Eighteen Dhātus, Twelve Links of Dependent Origination and Nirvāṇa.

The translation of Prajñāpāramitā text in China had great influences on the development of Buddhist thought. In the history of

Chinese Buddhism, the transmission of the Prajñāpāramitā category of sūtras in China, from (one text to) two texts, to three texts, to four texts, to eight texts, up to the sixteen texts [theories], all display the continual development of the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras. It is very early that the translation of Hṛdaya Sūtra in Chinese started from Dong Wu dynasty (Third century A.D), there was a translation made sometime during the mid-third century by a monk named Chih-ch'ien. So, totally in Chinese Mahāyāna, there are eleven translation versions of the Hṛdaya Sūtra in the standard Buddhist Tripiṭaka. There still exist nine versions of Hṛdaya Sūtra with both short and long texts. As for the Hṛdaya Sūtra, though there are several different translations with some similarities and differences, it is the one translated by a Chinese monk called Xuan Zang. It is the most popular and is widely adopted throughout the ages.

Through the study of this thematic paper specially we found that the Kumārajīva and Xuan Zang short version the text starting with: “The Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, while practicing the profound prajñāpāramitā, clearly saw that all five skandhas are empty, thus overcoming all suffering.” But relatively speaking, the others longer version especially those belongs to Dharmachandra, Facheng and Dānapāla omitted ‘thus overcoming all suffering’, and the same longer version which was belongs to another two translator who is Prajñā and Prajñācakra has wrote the ‘thus overcoming all suffering’, so this is the main difference between them. We also found that the Tibetan longer version and Edward Conze Sanskrit short version has did not mention about ‘thus overcoming all suffering’ in his translation.

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As a token of respect, I dedicate whatever benefits may arise from this thematic paper to the Triple Gem, to my parents, master and teachers, and to all those who are benevolent.

Ven. Skalzang Dolma
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List of Abbreviations

CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association
DN	Dīghanikāya
MMK	Mūlamadhyamakakārikā

Others Abbreviations:

AD	Anno Domini
B.C.E	Before Common Era
B.C	Before Christ
C.E	Common Era
Eg.	For example
H.H	His Holiness
Ibid.	Ibiden / in the same book
Skt	Sanskrit
Tib	Tibetan
Chi	Chinese

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