On the *Prajñāpāramitāpindārthapradipa* of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna

Kaie MOCHIZUKI

**Preface**

There are two texts attributed to Dipamkaraśrījñāna (or Atiśa = D) in the ‘Sher phyin’ section of the *Tanjur*, the Tibetan Tripitaka. The first is the *Prajñāpāramitāpindārthapradipa* (=PP)\(^1\), a commentary on the *Abhisamayālāmākāra* (=AA) of Maitreya, and the second is the *Prajñāhrdayavyākhya* \(^2\), a commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitāhrdayasūtra*. In this paper I try to analyze the contents of the former in order to understand how D explains the AA \(^3\).

D cites the AA three times in his *Bodhipathapradipa*. As a translator, he translated the *Durbdhālokātikā* \(^5\) of *Dharmakirtiśrī*, and revised the Tibetan translation of the *Āṭṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* \(^6\) and its commentary by Haribhadra \(^7\). Because his teacher, Ratnakaraśānti also had written commentaries on the AA \(^8\), D would have read the AA as an important text in his teaching. In his biography, *rNam thar rgyas pa*, it is said that he studied the AA under gSer gling pa \(^9\). It is said also in the *Deb ther sngon po* \(^10\):

He read on one occasion the AA to an assembly of numerous hearers at sNye-thang. At that time he gave a brief outline of the text only, and since the people were not satisfied, the Master gave also extensive exposition. This was written down by Phya-dar ston-pa and became known as the “Prajñāpāramitā according to the method of Khams” (*Phar-phyin Khams-lugs-ma*). Therefore it is clear that D lectured on the AA in Tibet. We can not identify which lecture became the origin of the PP or if both of them had no relation to it. Because this lecture is a brief outline of the text and from the information which we can get from the colophon of the PP \(^11\), we can assume that one of his lectures became the PP.
Tsong kha pa already doubted whether D had written this text and stated that this work could not be attributed to him, but must have been composed by one of his pupils or some other Tibetan author.

The Structure of the *Prajñāpāramitāπiṇḍārthapradīpa*

This text is written in verses of seven syllables and consists of 994 lines (*pāda*). Because it is shorter than the *AA*, it can not give many comments on the basic text and only gives summaries partly, so it is not easy to understand their meaning. The author divided his text into the three kinds of omniscience, the four methods of realization and the cosmic body of the Buddha according to the eight principal subjects and the seventy topics described in the *AA* I. 3-17 [44-47].


He refers also to former commentators, most often to Haribhadra whose large commentary he revised. We can see Haribhadra’s name much more than that of his teacher, Ratnākaraśānti. On this basis and also based on its contents this text seems to be based on the two commentaries of Haribhadra.

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Postscript

**Conclusion**

It seems clear that we can not call D the author of the *PP*. This text itself says that it was written by D. It means that there had been a basic text of the *PP* before it was written in the present form. From secondary source we can know that it is very difficult to understand the basic lecture of this text. Because we can not get it, we can not conclude if he is an authority of this text or not. But it would be compiled or corrected by other person. 16)

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1) Tib. *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa’i don bs dus sgron ma*. C, Tha 236a1-157; D, No. 3804, Tha 230b1-240a7; G1, Tha 337a-350a6; G2, Nyo 268a-282b4; N1, No. 3192, Tha 261b2-272a3; N2, No. 3865, Nyo 435b7-447a5; P1, No. 5201, Tha 253a6-262a8; P2, No. 5873. Nyo 463a5-475a7. In G, C, P this text is put not only into the Ser phyin section but also into the miscellany (*Ngo tshar*), next to his *Bodhisattvacaryāvatārabhāṣya* (P. No. 5872) and *Sarvakarmārāvanāvāsuddhikaravidhi* (P. No. 5874). It is thought that these three were handed down separately from his other texts.


3) There is another commentary on the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*,'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa’ bum bs dus pa’i snying po, in microfiche in the PL 480 collection.


5) Tib. P. No. 5192 (tr. by D ).

6) Tib. P. No. 734. The first revision was done Subhasita and Rin chen bzang po, the second by D and Rin chen bzang po, and the third by D and rGyal ba’i ’byung gnas. Therefore D revised this sūtra twice in a short time.

7) *Abhisamayālamkārāloka*. Tib. P. No. 5189. tr. by Subhaṣita and Rin chen bzang po. The latter revised it with D.

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11) Lines 987-994 of this text tells us that D from Bengal wrote the *PP*, so it is obvious that this text was composed with others. In the translator’s notes it is said that D and the Tshul khrims rgyal ba translated it. Did he translated it orally?
13) As in his other texts written in verse, one verse does not consist of four lines, so I count this text by line. C and D is short of one line and G2, N2, P2 is short of six lines (but G2 repeats six lines).
16) In the translator’s note (C and D om.) it is said this text is a selection of his commentary on the 25,000 *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* at bSam yas and there are three versions, a fair copy, a vartula one and an Indian one. See A. Chattopadhyaya, *Atiśa and Tibet*, Calcutta 1967, pp. 451-452.

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(Instructor, Minobusan University)