

Abstract

This volume contains the historical and doctrinal studies of a Māhāyana scripture entitled the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇī*. Concise in length but precise in its teaching on entering the realm of nonconceptuality (*avikalpa*), this scripture was cited in numerous important Buddhist treatises throughout the centuries, including Sthiramati's *Triṃśikāṭikā*, Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama*, Vimalamitra's *Cig car 'jug pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i bsgom don*, gNubs chen Sang rgyas ye shes' *bSam gtan mig sgron*, Ratnākaraśānti's *Āryāṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-pañjikā-sārottamā*, Atīśa's *Bodhipathapradīpa*, Tsong kha pa's *Lam rim chen mo*, and Mi pham rgya mtsho's *Chos dang chos nyid rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa'i 'grel pa ye shes snang pa rnam byed*, as well as in the Dunhuang manuscript P116, *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung*, and commentaries on it by Śākya bshes gnyen and Rang byung rdo rje.

Two fragmentary Sanskrit manuscripts of the scripture were discovered in Gilgit and Nepal. With only two fragmentary Sanskrit manuscripts extant, our study of this scripture has had to rely on its Chinese and Tibetan translations. Two Chinese translations are known to us. One is by Dharmapāla in the Song dynasty and collected in the Taishō edition, while the other, whose translator is unknown, is found among the Dunhuang Chinese manuscripts preserved in

Chinese National Library, Beijing. The Tibetan translation was by Jinamitra, Danaśīla and dKa' ba dPal brtesgs in the 8th century. Slightly different versions of this translation, however, are found in the Peking, the sDe dge, and the sTog Palace editions. In addition to the historical survey of the role this scripture played in Mahāyāna Buddhism in India and Tibet, the current study includes a comparison of the various translations of this scripture and the critical edition of the Sanskrit manuscript by Matsuda Kazunobu.

In terms of historical research, the study by Shen Weirong and Henry Shiu shows that the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇī* is an important source for the Indian Yogācāra tradition in particular, as also noted by Mi pham rgya mtsho in his commentary to the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*. The scriptural source or inspiration in the composition of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* is precisely the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇī*. Considered by the Tibetan tradition as one of the Five Texts of Maitreya, the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, like the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇī*, also centres around the theme of “entering the realm of nonconceptual wisdom” on the basis of making the distinction (*vibhaṅga*) between misperceived phenomena (*dharma*) and reality-itself (*dharmatā*). The approach of the fourfold abandoning of marks presented in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* is clearly reflective of the related teachings in the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇī*.

Unavailable in Chinese translation until the 20th century, the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* stems from a tradition in Yogācāra that clearly distinguishes itself from the school of

Yogācāra thought that Xuanzang helped bring to China in the 7th century. Developed along the lineage of Dignāga, Dharmapāla, and Śīlabhadra, the latter tradition, places much emphasis on the doctrine of “cognitive-representation only” (*vijñaptimātratā*) and Buddhist logic and is also different from the “classical tradition” which accepts a more central doctrinal focus of the teachings of the *tathāgatagarbha*, the *dharmakāya*, the three naturelessness, nonconceptual wisdom, etc. Hence, a brief review of the development of the “classical school” and the “new school” of Yogācāra is also included.

The doctrinal aspect of the present study is presented through a structural analysis and commentary on the scripture by Master Tam Shek-wing (rDo rje jigs 'bral). Tam elucidates the teaching of “dependent-origination” in four successive levels, and further gives a comparative study focussing on the notion of “entering the realm of nonconceptuality” from the perspectives of the classical tradition of Yogācāra Buddhism and the systems of meditation of the rNying ma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, by relating the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* to other Yogācāra treatises such as the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* and the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, and the Yogācāra teachings such as the fourfold “correct practices” (*prayoga*), the fivefold path, as well as the teachings of five Dharmas and the teaching of the four stages of *svacittadrśavibhāvanatā*, *utpādashitibhaṅgadrṣṭivivarjanatā*, *bāhyabhāvābhāvopalakṣaṇatā*, and *svapratyātmāryajñānadhigamābhilakṣaṇatā* discussed in the *Laṅkāvatāra*, the *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* teachings in the *Samhīnirmocana*, the practices of Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga and also the fourfold practices (*bsnyen sgrub kyi yan lag bzhi*) found

in the treatises of the rNying ma tradition.

This study concludes with an analysis of the citation of the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇī* in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, and discusses the four main chapters of this important Sangs rgyas ye shes' work on the practice of the Graduate Approach, Sudden Approach, Mahāyoga, and Atiyoga, in relation to the doctrinal teachings and practices considered earlier.