CHAPTER I
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

A. Justification of the Topic

Buddhism is arguably more of a philosophical outlook, or spiritual tradition, than a religion. It does not believe in a deity and does not look for a relationship between Humanity and God. It centres on the search for enlightenment through the practice and development of morality, meditation and wisdom, taking the Middle Way through life’s challenges. Compassion, and a regard for the interconnected nature of life, is central. The *Vajracchedikā Sūtra (Diamond Sūtra)* is one of the monumental scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It is very well known that the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-Neng, heard that sentence and awakened to the Way. Any dwelling of the heart is no dwelling, we realised that all the ten thousand dharmas are not separate from the self-nature. This may explain why Zen Buddhists in particular are attracted to it. The *Vajracchedikā Sūtra* is intended as an antidote to suffering, which is achieved through wisdom. It tells us that realising the emptiness of all things is the key step on this path and that its articulation comes, paradoxically, in the Bodhisattva ideal of saving all sentient beings.

*The Vajracchedikā Sūtra* or the *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* belongs to the ninth meeting of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā.* This Sūtra is also known as the Perfect Wisdom of the Great Compassion the title that is used in the topic under consideration. This Sūtra is considered as core of all the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā sūtras* as a system of *Prajñāpāramitā* that reflection

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from true realm of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and all beings. The Sūtra tells one how to rejects any notion, any discrimination; any darkness like any attachment or any doubt of all phenomena, such as I, other, beings and mine (the Vajracchedikā Sūtra,) of all thing, all being.4 Or beyond cling of all things and interact together or we should not dwell in anything when we give our blessing and virtues which are immeasurable.5 The Tathāgata is not be seen through notion form those who by “my form did see me, and those who followed me by voice, wrong the efforts they engaged in, me those people will not see.”6 The Lord Buddha also reminded that one should be an island to one self, that free inquiry (Kālāma Sutta).7 We can consider and abide that after undertaken and observed by oneself that is led to benefit and happiness for oneself and for other.

Specifically, the Vajracchedikā Sūtra was interested in the interrelatedness the universe vows of a Bodhisattva or a Buddha that non attachment. The basic idea of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra (first-third centuries CE) describes a Cosmos of Infinite Realms upon realms, mutually containing one other or the dharmadhātu, the realm of all dharmas8. There are no divisions in the totality of reality views the cosmos as holy, as the universal reality of the Buddha, the universal Buddhahood of all reality. The Vajracchedikā Sūtra is a practical way of the perfect wisdom and the Compassion, which free any form (śūnyatā). Keeping good conduct, the mind is calm (nirvāṇa). Therefore, it is that identical with the Buddha’s teaching in the Mahāyāna Buddhism. Therefore, to realise the concept of the perfect wisdom, the great compassion

5 Ibid: 86, 57.
as the true nature or suchness of the cosmos is to discover the Buddha-nature of all existence.\(^9\) Hence, an attempt has been made to carry out investigation on the topic the Perfect Thought (Prajñāpāramitā) and the Great Compassion (Mahākaruṇā) as reflected in the Vajracchedikā Sūtra: An Analytical Study.

Furthermore, the perfect wisdom or the perfect wisdom and the great compassion or proper conduct lead to the understanding of skillful means, also middle way.\(^10\) The Heart Sūtra and the Vajracchedikā Sūtra that is translated by Edward Conze, Max Muller, Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh.

Moreover, The Perfect Thought or Perfect Wisdom (Prajñāpāramitā) and the Great Compassion (Mahākaruṇā) in the Vajracchedikā Sūtra plays an important role in the process to enlightenment of emptiness (Śūnyatā) as a practical path which is beyond mystical or religion or we can say it is way and languages for Buddhist Zen (Chan, Meditation). The larger chapter says, if we dwells in dharmas, we does not dwell in Prajñāpāramitā; if we does not dwell in dharmas, we dwells in Prajñāpāramitā.\(^11\) That is why every one of the great prajñā assemblies begins with an explanation of not dwelling. Just waken on individual experience, the Buddha always says in the Majjhima-Nikāya: the middle way, the vinaya, dhyāna and prajñā, or the Noble Eightfold Path, three dharma seals, refuse in Triple Gem, and make great vows.

On the proposed subject, we can finds different sources, material in different languages on this topic such as Sanskrit, English. One may also mention here that some information is available in the texts of the Pāli Canon.


Indian translator, *Kumārajīva* (401CE). The Text was first translated from Sanskrit into English and summarised by the Germen Scholars, Max Müller (1881), E. Conze (1957) and later by D.T. Suzuki (1934). The Text in general was explained by Chinese Master, Huan Hua (2002), Yutang Lin (2003) and the Japanese scholar Shigenori Nagatomo (2000). The two oldest text sources relate to *Vajracchedikā*’s commentaries in 400 CE by the two brothers, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu as well as the Chinese translation of *Kumārajīva* in 400 CE. The Sixth Patriarch of Zen (2001), Hui-neing, Thich Nhat Hanh (1997, www.plumvillage.org ), Mu Soeng (2000), and Jae Woong Kim (1999) have also done creditable work on this topic.

These books discuss in a general way the enlightening of mind, they do not exclusively discuss in a nature between the Perfect Thought and the Great Compassion as good material or a good method for those who want to discover for themselves true peace and true happiness for others, they should come without condition, without attachment to dharmas. This is practical way, one must realise. So, the great compassion must be covered.

**B. Statement and Clarification of the Historical Topic and Translation**

Buddhism spread along the network of trade routes between northern India and Asian countries, usually known as the silk-road. The earliest Buddhists were probably foreigners from central Asia; and the sacred texts translated from Sanskrit into Chinese were already in place by the first century CE.

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The sermons are most often used to describe the teachings of the Buddha. Sūtras preached by the Buddha were committed to memory by his disciples and passed down from generation by generation, from time to time.

Translation of Texts: The history of the text is not fully known but Japanese scholars generally consider the Diamond Sūtra to be from a very early date in the development of Prajñāpāramitā literature. It is said that Nāgārjuna, who lived in the second century first transmitted the Vajracchedikā Śūtra which in Sanskrit text belonging to the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra into Chinese in the second century CE (that is not accepted by most scholars).

The Vajracchedikā Śūtra has the three documents introduced into Kumārajīva’s Chinese translation by first Emperor Zhao Ming of the Liang Dynasty (one of the Six Dynasties), the Diamond Sūtra has been divided into 32 chapters by Max Müller: (Bibliography No.1). The two oldest sources, which relate to Vajracchedikā are commentaries written in 400 CE by two brothers, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu and their Chinese translation of Kumārajīva in 400 CE.14 The Text, first one of these texts was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva about (401 CE) The Diamond Sūtra was again translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Bodhiruci (509 CE), Paramārtha (558 CE), Xuan zang (648 CE) and Yi-jing (703 CE). The Prajñāpāramitā Śūtra is one of the oldest Buddhist canonical books, translated into Chinese by Master Xuan zang's translation in six-hundred books about 600 CE. The first title of Sūtra is Tao-hsing - The practising of the way (172 CE). The Tibetan translation in 800 CE and the Khotanese version in 800-1000 CE (Biobl, no. 7) are also important sources for research on the topic under consideration.

The term *Vajracchedikā as Sūtra* was shortened at the ninth meeting of *Mahā-Prajñāpāramitā Tripitaka* which forms part of the *Taisho Tripitaka* vol.8, No. 235. It was translated during the Yao, Chin Dynasty from Sanskrit. *Prajñāpāramitā -Tripitaka* includes seven hundred books.

Western scholars such as Max Müller and Edward Conze have traditionally considered the earliest *Sūtra* in the four phases as follows:  

a. 100 BCE to 100 CE. This period is characterised by formation and composition of basic text. The oldest text from this period is the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* Perfection of Wisdom in 8,000 Lines, which was probably put in writing in the first century BCE (The first translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā* into Chinese occurred in the second century CE.)

b. 100 CE to 300 CE. In this period the basic texts are expanded. *Aṣṭasāhasrikāsūtra* (8,000 verses) *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (25,000 verse) belongs to this period.

c. 300 CE to 500 C.E. This is characterised by the restatement of the basic ideas in short *Sūtra* on the one hand and versified summaries on the other. The *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (three hundred verse) and *Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya* or *Heart Sūtra* belong to this period.

d. 500 CE to 1200 CE. This period is characterised by the influence of the *tantra*, evidence of magical elements in the *Sūtra* and their usage as *Adhyārđhaśatikā prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (150 verses)  

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