

The Two Genres of Mahayana Literature: The Prajñā-pāramitā and the Tathāgata-garbha Texts

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Abstract

Canonical and classical Mahayana Buddhist literature falls into two classifications, namely, the Prajñā-pāramitā and the Tathāgata-garbha genres. The Prajñā-pāramitā (“Perfection of Wisdom”) literature is the body of sūtras and their commentaries that represents the oldest major forms of Mahayana Buddhism. The primary purpose of the Prajñā-pāramitā (“Perfection of Wisdom”) is to teach the (ultimate) truth of *śūnyatā*. On the other hand, the Tathāgata-garbha literature deals with the doctrine of the existence of the “*Tathāgata-garbha*” (Buddha-Matrix, Buddha-Embryo, Buddha-Essence, Buddha-Nature) in all sentient beings. The Prajñāpāramitā class of texts emphasizes the highest wisdom (*prajñā*) while the Tathāgatagarbha text unravels the significance of compassion or empathy (*karuṇā*) in its existential and practical world. In

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this paper a brief exposition of these two classes of Mahayana literature is presented with a submission that these two genres are complementary, and not opposed.

Keywords: *Buddha-Nature, Mahayana, Perfection of Wisdom, Prajñā-pāramitā, Tathāgatagarbha*

Introduction

The canonical and classical Mahayana Buddhist literature falls into two classes: the Prajñā-pāramitā texts and the Tathāgatagarbha texts. “This distinction is essentially rooted in the doctrine of the Two Truths admitted in the Mahayana, viz., *Paramārtha* and *Samvṛti*. *Paramārtha* or ultimate truth is that of *śūnyatā*, and it is with this that the *Prajñā-pāramitā* literature is general concerned” (Chatterjee, 2005, p. vii). *Samvṛti* is empirical truth. The phenomenal world, including human beings, cannot simply be dismissed as void or *śūnya*, as it constitutes the existential predicament. In this phenomenal world the Tathāgata comes to the fore, accessible to human beings since they are essentially one with the Tathāgata (they are *tathāgata-garbha*). “This (existential) predicament and how it is to be resolved is dealt with in the other class of canonical literature, viz., *the Tathāgatagarbha* class” (Chatterjee, 2005, p. vii).

The Prajñā-pāramitā (“Perfection of Wisdom”) literature is the body of *sūtras* and their commentaries that represents the oldest major forms of Mahayana Buddhism. The primary purpose of the Prajñā-pāramitā (“Perfection of Wisdom”) is to teach the ultimate truth of *śūnyatā*. The Tathāgatagarbha literature deals with the doctrine of the existence of the “*Tathāgata-garbha*” (Buddha-Matrix, Buddha-Embryo, Buddha-Essence, Buddha-Nature) in all sentient beings. In this study, a brief exposition

of these two classes of Mahayana literature is presented. Subsequently, in conclusion, it is submitted that these two genres are complementary rather than opposed.

The Prajñā-pāramitā Literature

The Mahayana tradition arose and developed in the beginning of the present era. The Prajñā-pāramitās are known as the first treatise of the Mahayana Buddhism (Shastri, 1989, pp. 8-9). The composition of Prajñā-pāramitā texts extended over 1000 years from 100 BC to 1200 AD (Conze, 2017). The *Prajñā-pāramitā* brings an entirely new phase in Buddhism in general, and Mahayana in particular. “A severe type of absolutism established by the dialectic, by the negation (śūnyatā) of empirical notions and speculative theories, replaces the pluralism and dogmatism of earlier Buddhism” (Murti, 1998, p. 83).

The *Prajñā-pāramitās*, by the basic concept of śūnyatā, really revolutionized the entire Buddhism, in all its aspects of philosophy, religion and discipline. The fourteen *avyākṛta* (‘inexpressibles’ or unanswerable set of questions that the Buddha refused to answer) of the Buddha receive their significant interpretation in these texts. The dialectic that is suggested by the Buddha is the principal theme in these texts (Murti, 1977, p. x). The Prajñā-pāramitā tradition emphasized the development of the Bodhisattva Ideal. A Bodhisattva was a person who did not concentrate solely on his or her own enlightenment and the ensuing *nirvāṇa*, but was also very much concerned with bringing all sentient beings to enlightenment and *nirvāṇa* by cultivating compassion and the understanding of śūnyatā. This was elaborated in the Buddhist literature known as the Prajñā-pāramitā. The oldest and the basic Prajñā-pāramitā text is the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra.

The Meaning of *Prajñā-pāramitā*

The term '*prajñā-pāramitā*' is a central concept in Mahayana Buddhism. In Buddhism the term 'emancipation' means 'to get the *Bodhi* (the Wisdom of Buddha)' or 'to be perfectly enlightened' or in other words, it means, 'having obtained *prajñā*.' *Prajñā* is to be regarded as consisting of the 'intuition' or *nirvikalpa-jñāna* (the non-discriminating wisdom) and *nirvikalpa-prṣṭhalabdha-jñāna* (the wisdom obtained just after the non-discriminating wisdom). *Bodhi* (the Buddha's Wisdom and Enlightenment) is equal to *Prajñā*, that is, the wisdom which enables one to have unerring judgements and conducts in this world. Thus, the term *prajñā* implies wisdom, insight, and understanding, free from error.

The term *pāramitā* is not to be found in the early Buddhist canons, but appears in later *Mahayana* literature. Har Dayal had explained, on textual basis, that the term "*Pāramitā* is really derived from *parama* as the *Bodhisattva-bhūmi* clearly explains" (Dayal, 1978, p. 166) and *parama* means 'most distant,' 'last,' 'highest,' 'most excellent,' 'greatest,' or 'superior.' "The *pāramitās* are so called because they are acquired during a long period of time (*parameṇa kālena samudāgatāh*) and are supremely pure in their nature (*paramayā svabhāva-viśuddhyā viśuddhāh*)" (Dayal, 1978, p. 166). The term *pāramitā*, occurring in the later writings of Buddhism, means 'the highest-ness' or 'the excellent-ness'. *Pāramitā* is used in the sense of a '*Bodhisattva-caryā*', in the manner of 'the conduct by which one has reached to the other side' (here the 'other side' could be put as '*parama*', the ideal state of the living beings or the Buddha-hood). *Pāramitā*, as *Bodhisattva-caryā*, has been used with reference to six *pāramitās*, namely, *dāna*, *śīla*, *kṣānti*,

vīrya, dhyāna and *Prajñā* (Hitaka, 1983, pp. ix – xii). Thus, the meaning of the term ‘*prajñā-pāramitā*’ is the ‘highest wisdom’ or ‘perfection wisdom’ (or even ‘the perfection of wisdom’).

The Origin, Development and Main Ideas of the Prajñā-pāramitā Literature

The place of origin of the Prajñā-pāramitā literature is a matter of debate. Edward Conze argued that it is of South Indian origin (Conze, 2017), whereas E. Lamotte argued that it was of north-western or Central Asian origin (Lamotte, 1954). A. L. Basham was of the strong view that the conception of transcendental nature of the Bodhisattvas came from the Central Asian background of Buddhism, whereas the philosophical content of Mahayana tradition most likely originated in the South Indian setting (Basham, 1981, p. 37). Paul Williams is of the opinion that “it is not possible at the present stage of our knowledge to make very many certain statements concerning either the origin or the development of the Prajñā-pāramitā literature” (Williams, 2009, p. 47).

As stated above, sometime in the first century BC a novel literature, namely, the Prajñā-pāramitā or the Perfection Wisdom started to emerge in Buddhism (Conze, 1978) which claimed to be the real *Buddha-vacana* (word of the Buddha). There are some 40 Prajñā-pāramitā texts, some very long and some short, which mainly explore the key conceptions of Mahayana Buddhism, like *śūnyatā* (a position against discursive thought, as *prajñā* is not discursive analysis), the Bodhisattva ideal, *mahākaruṇā* (compassion) together with *prajñā* (wisdom). This new literature paved way for a movement and interpretation in the direction of Mahayana. Let us remind ourselves that later on

the *Prajñā-pāramitā* literature became the basis for the classical study of Mahayana. The new literature was “not the product of some organized or unitary movement, and appears to have been produced by well within the existing Buddhist traditions” (Williams, 2009, p. 43). The Mahayana sūtras became some sort of object of worship, among them the perfection wisdom sūtras (*Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras*) are greater significance for the progress of Mahayana tradition.

The nucleus of enlightenment is *Prajñā*, and there can be no *pāramitā* without *Prajñā*. There came up a series of sūtras, which lay special emphasis on *Prajñā-pāramitā*, holding that the *Prajñā-pāramitā* is superior to the other five *pāramitās*. The other five are taken as *pāramitās* only when this particular *pāramitā* called *prajñā-pāramitā* is practiced. The sūtras, thus, emphasizing this thesis is named the *Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtras*. The *Prajñā-pāramitā* texts are many, and the largest one might be the *Śatasāhasrikā* with 100,000 ślokas, and the smallest is the *Prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya* with fewer than 14 ślokas. The other important *Prajñā-pāramitā* sūtras are the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, the *Abhisamayālamkāranusareṇa saṃśodhita-Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, the *Saptaśatikā*, the *Vajracchedikā* and the *Suvikrāntavikrāmi-paripṛccha*.

The large collection of *Prajñā-pāramitā* literature was concerned with the inherent *śūnyatā* of self and phenomena, and of the ‘two truths’ of the ultimate and conventional reality (Johnson, 2001, p. ix). In the *Prajñā-pāramitā*, the basic idea reiterated is that there is no change, no origination, no cessation, no coming in nor going out. The real is neither one nor many and neither ātman nor *anātman*. Origination and decay all

are imagined, that is, they are speculations. The real is śūnya, utterly devoid of conceptual constructions. It is transcendental to thought and can be realized only through no-dual knowledge, *Prajñā*, the highest wisdom. *Prajñā-pāramitās* are known as the first treatise of the Mahayana.

The Tathāgata-garbha Literature

Along with the Prajñā-pāramitā literature, there developed the Tathāgata-garbha literature, which was concerned with the existence of the Buddha-essence or Buddha-potential in all sentient beings. This Buddha-nature is very important, because, if all the sentient beings did not possess it, then the path of the Bodhisattva who tries to help all beings reach enlightenment would be useless. “The question of the *Tathāgata* is in fact about the ultimate ground of both the soul and objects - about the unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) in general. The *Tathāgata* as the Perfect Man (*uttama puriso param puriso*) is the ultimate essence of the universe” (Murti, 1977, p. xiv). *Tathāgata* is not merely human, but also a cosmic principle.

The *Tathāgata-garbha* Doctrine

According to the *Tathāgata-garbha* doctrine, all beings have Buddha-nature, or the essence of the Buddha-hood, and all are potential Buddhas. This Buddha-nature is being covered with adventitious defilement (*āgantuka-kleśa*). When the adventitious defilement has been removed, the true nature becomes apparent, and this is called *aśraya-parāvṛtti*. All living beings live and exist in the world of the absolute called *Tathatā* or Śūnyatā. Just as the birds fly in the air so freely, so also all sentient beings breathe in the Buddha nature. Just as birds fly freely in the air, so too do

sentient beings breathe within Buddha-nature. Just as all things are permeated by air, so are all things permeated by Buddha-nature. It is because all living beings harbor this Buddha-nature within themselves that they are regarded as the germ (*dhātu*) that brings forth the Buddha-hood. Hence, every living being is said to be a *tathāgata-garbha* (or matrix of *tathāgata*) (Nagao, 1992, pp. 115-122). The meaning of the term *tathāgata-garbha* is that, it is the womb (*garbha*) where the *Tathāgatas* are conceived and matured; and we all are potential *tathāgatas* (Suzuki, 1981, p. 177).

In China and Japan, the most common synonym of *tathāgata-garbha* is the “Buddha-nature” (Chinese *fo-hsing*; and Japanese *bussō*). The Sanskrit terms, which correspond to *fo-hsing*, according to the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra* (or called simply as the *Uttara-tantra*) are *buddha-dhātu* and *buddha-gotra*, of which the former appears in the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra, and the term *tathāgata-garbha* is found in the colophon of the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra. The Lamkāvatāra-sūtra uses the term *tathāgata-garbhavāda*. It should be noted that the term *buddha-dhātu* is not found in either the Śrīmālasūtra or the Lamkāvatāra-sūtra (Sebastian, 2005, pp. 16-19).

The Tathāgata-garbha-sūtra is one of the most important sources for the *tathāgata-garbha* doctrine in the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra and the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra*. The fundamental idea of the Tathāgata-garbha-sūtra is expressed in the formula, “*sarva-sattvās-tathāgata-garbhāḥ*” which could be translated as “all beings possess the *tathāgata-garbha*” (De Jong, 1979, p. 585). The *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra śāstra* is the foremost example of this Tathāgata-garbha

literature. This text was originally written in Sanskrit and is known as the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*. “The book, *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*, seems almost the only treatise extant that as attempted a systematization of the theory of *tathāgata-garbha*” (Nagao, 1992, p. 118).

The Tathāgata-garbha Sūtra

The Tathāgata-garbha Sūtra might have been the first of the tathāgata-garbha texts, which introduced the idea that all sentient beings possess the *tathāgata-garbha*, the Buddha-nature. This text gives the classical illustrations of how the *tathāgata-garbha* is veiled by the defilements. The text consists of nine examples, which represent the relationship between the *tathāgata-garbha* and the adventitious defilements (*kleśas*) that conceal it. The nine examples illustrated in this text are: the Buddha in an ugly lotus flower, honey concealed by a swarm of bees, a kernel of fruit in the bark, gold buried in impurities, a treasure in the ground, a sprout in a small seed, the image of the lord covered by a tattered garment, the Universal Monarch in the womb of a miserable woman, and a precious statue covered with dust. They are the examples illustrating the Essence of Buddha-hood (*tathāgata-garbha*) in the living beings. These same examples could be repeated in the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyanottaratantra* as well.

The Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda Sūtra

The Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda Sūtra is a text in which a character named Queen Śrīmālā instructs the assembly, speaking in both a devotional and philosophical manner about the *tathāgata-garbha* in positive terms. This text is, in a way, highly critical

of the negative interpretation of *śūnyatā*. It is one of the earliest Mahayana Buddhist scriptures dedicated specifically to the exposition of the *tathāgata-garbha* concept. The *garbha* is described as possessing the four *guṇa-pāramitās* as permanence, bliss, self, and purity qualities also found in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga-Mahāyānottaratantra*. In this sūtra, the *garbha* is ultimately identified with the *Dharmakāya* of the *Tathāgata*. The text presents an elevation and adoration of the Buddha and his attributes, which may serve as a significant foundation for Mahayana devotionalism. It is regarded as the primary scriptural authority for the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga-Mahāyānottaratantra*, the most comprehensive *śāstric* treatment of the *tathāgata-garbha* in Mahayana Buddhism. The Śrīmālādevī-simhanāda Sūtra was considered the chief scriptural source in India for the doctrine of the universal potentiality for Buddhahood (*tathāgata-garbha*), and its importance undoubtedly contributed to its historical popularity as a subject of commentary by Buddhist scholars in China and Japan. Scholars have identified it as a third-century product of the Mahāsaṃghika sect of South India (Wayman & Wayman, 2007, p. 5).

The Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa Sūtra

The Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa Sūtra is a short text that is extant only in the sixth-century Chinese translation by Bodhiruci. There is no surviving Sanskrit or Tibetan version of the complete text. However, fragments of the text in Sanskrit survive as quotations in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga-Mahāyānottaratantra* and other related texts. Hence, scholars agree that the text originally existed in Sanskrit. The current Sanskrit title is a scholarly reconstruction based on the Chinese version.

In this sūtra, there is a complete identification of *tathāgata-garbha*, *sattva-dhātu*, and *dharmakāya* (or *dharmadhātu*) (King, 1992, pp. 13-16).

The Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra

The Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra is a Mahayana alternative to the Mahāpari-nibbāḍa-suttanta of the early Buddhism. This text is extant only in Chinese and Tibetan, however Sanskrit fragments have been recovered. “The most important innovation of the text in the context of the development of *tathāgata-garbha* or Buddha-nature thought is its linking of the term *buddha-dhātu* or *tathāgata-dhātu*, which appears to be used for the first time in this text, with *tathāgata-garbha*” (King, 1992, p. 14). This text is a positively faith-promoting and spiritually affirmative manifestation of Buddhism which recognizes the hidden reality of the unconditioned, egoless Buddha-nature in all sentient beings (Yamamoto, 2013).

The *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*

Mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstra

These above-mentioned four most important *tathāgata-garbha* sūtras and the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition are summarized and epitomized in the important śāstra called the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstram* or simply called the *Uttaratantra* (Uttaratantra, 1950). The Tibetan tradition attributes this text to Maitreya, as one of his five works. It is a fifth century text. Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese versions of the text are existing and available. A detailed analytical study of this text, interpreting every verse, is available to us today (Sebastian, 2005).

Other Important Texts

There are several other important tathāgata-garbha texts composed after the Śrīmālā-devi-siṃhanāda Sūtra, which though not treating the *tathāgata-garbha* doctrine exclusively or even intentionally, yet contained elements complementary to a final systematic presentation of the *tathāgata-garbha* theory. According to B. E. Brown, those texts which contain elements of *tathāgata-garbha* doctrine are the Dhāraṇīśvara-rāja Sūtra, the Ratnadārika Sūtra, the Jñānālokālamkāra Sūtra, the Sāgaramati-paripṛcchā, the Gagana-ganja-bodhisattva-paripṛccha, the Ratnacūḍa Sūtra, the Mahāyāna-abhidharma Sūtra, the Mahayana-sūtrālamkāra, the Vajracchedikā, the Aṣṭasāhasrikā, the *Dr̥dhādhyāśaya-parivarta*, the *Tathāgata-guṇa-jñāna-cintya-viṣayāvatāra-nirdeśa*, the *Kāśyapa-parivarta*, and the *Ṣaḍāyatana Sūtra* (Brown, 1991, p. 43).

Conclusion

In conclusion, I submit that the two classes of Mahayana literature, namely, the Prajñā-pāramitā and the Tathāgata-garbha texts are complementary to each other in the large corpus of Mahayana Buddhism. J. Takasaki had opined that the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstram* aims at the criticism of the *Prajñā-pāramitā* (Takasaki, 1966, pp. 54-60). Takasaki's view could be challenged as Śūnyatā theory is complementary to the *Tathāgata-garbha* theory. Without the former, it is not possible to establish the latter (Prasad, 1997, p. 6). Even in the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstra*, a considerable part is devoted to establish the relationship between *tathāgata-garbha* and *śūnyatā*. It is said in the *Ratna - gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstra*:

“*Tathāgata-garbha-jñāna-meva tathāgatānām śūnyatā-jñānam*”
(the knowledge of the *tathāgatagarbha* is the knowledge of the
emptiness of the Tathāgatas).¹

In the Prajñā-pāramitā literature also we find the concept of *tathāgata-garbha* highlighted. The *Adhyardhaśatikā*, a Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra, evidently for the first time mentions the doctrine that all sentient beings are *tathāgata-garbha* (Ruegg, 1977, p. 285). Abhayākaragupta,² in his the *Munimatālamkāra*, refers to the verse 9:37 of the Mahayana-sūtrālamkāra quoted in the Commentary on the Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstra 1:148. It is a passage that deals with the universal presence of *Tathatā* in all sentient beings, saying that by his use of ‘*tathāgata*’ the author accepts the *dharma-dhātu*, which has *pudgala-nairātmya* and *dharma-nairātmya* as its characteristics (Ruegg, 1977, p. 287). D. Seyfort Ruegg argues that in the *Aṣṭasāharikā-prajñā-pāramitā*: 3, there is a mention of *dhātu*, in the expression of *tathāgata-dhātu*, refers to a relic contained in a *stūpa*. By quoting the original source he goes on, “in as much as this notion of the *stūpa* as *tathāgata-dhātu-garbha* is thus found in the Prajñā-pāramitā literature, it could indeed be supposed

1. The *Ratna-gotra-vibhāgo-mahāyānottara-tantra-śāstra* 1: 154-156. In the commentary of 1:155 it is mentioned *Tathāgata-garbha-jñāna-meva tathāgatānām śūnyatā-jñānam*. It is translated by E. Obermiller in this manner: “The transcendental wisdom cognising the Essence of the Buddha is the knowledge about the Relativity of the Buddhas” (Obermiller, 1931, p. 236).
2. Abhayākaragupta (अभयाकरगुप्त) (11th century AD) was a Buddhist monk, scholar and tantric master (*vajrācārya*) and the abbot of *Vikramaśīla*. He was born in the city of Gaur, West Bengal, and is thought to have flourished in the late 11th-early 12th century AD, and died in 1125. Abhayākaragupta’s *magnum opus*, the *Vajravāli*, is a “grand synthesis of tantric practice and rituals” which developed a single harmonized tantric ritual system which could be applied to all Tantric Buddhist mandalas.

that at least one of forerunner of the classical *tathāgatagarbha* theory is attested in this body of texts” (Ruegg, 1977, p. 288).

It must be correct to submit that the *Prajñā-pāramitā* literature always intends to take our attention to the *Paramārtha* level, while the *Tathāgata-garbha* literature should be considered in the *Samvṛti* level. One of the important features of Mahayana Buddhism is the practice of *Prajñā-pāramitā*. *Prajñā* is supra-rational. It is the highest wisdom and insight. *Prajñā* unravels the reality as it is (*Prajñā yathābhūtam artham prajānati*). The object of *Prajñā-pāramitā* is *tathatā*, *dharmadhātu*, *bhūta-koṭi*, which are words used for the ultimate (*paramārtha*) in the *Mādhyamika*.³ *Tathatā* is the Truth, but it is impersonal. In order to reveal itself, it needs a medium. *Tathāgata* is that medium. *Tathāgata* is the reality personified or personalized. It has got both the aspects of the ultimate and the phenomena in it. He is identical with *Tathatā*, but embodied in a human form. That is why *Tathatā* is also called *Tathāgata-garbha* (Stcherbatsky, 1977, p. 55). *Śūnyatā* and *Karuṇā* are the essential characteristics of *Tathāgata*. *Śūnyatā* means *Prajñā* (highest wisdom or insight). Having *Śūnyatā* or *Prajñā*, the *Tathāgata* is identical with *Tathatā* or *Śūnyatā*. Having *Karuṇā*, he is the saviour of all sentient beings. Thus, *Prajñā* stands for the *paramārtha* and *Karuṇā* for the *samvṛti* levels of the Reality (Stcherbatsky, 1977, p. 56).

3. Candrakīrti writes, “*Ya sa dharmānām dharmatā nāma saiva tatsvarūpam*”, which means “That which is the essential being of all elements of existence is the nature of Reality.” It is *tathatā*, it is Reality such as it is. Again, Candrakīrti says, “*tathābhāvo'vikāritvam sadaiva sthāyitā*”, meaning “The thatness of Reality consists in its invariability, in its remaining for ever as it is”. This is as quoted by Th. Stcherbatsky. (1977, p.55).

Hence, I submit that as there is the Prajñā-pāramitā literature, so also there is a separate (yet related to the *Prajñā-pāramitā*) class of texts known as the Tathāgata-garbha literature. The main theme of tathāgata-garbha literature is the idea that ‘all sentient beings possess the *tathāgata-garbha*.’ The realization of the Buddha-nature, or *tathagata-garbha*, is possible only when one attains the highest wisdom (*prajñā*). Thus, these two classes of the texts are complementary in the Mahayana Buddhist corpus.

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