

A comparative study of Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra and Mahābhārata

—concentrating on *Tathāgatāyuspramāṇa*
parivarta and *Bhagavad-Gītā*—

Norio Sekido

The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* (<S. D. P.) and *Mahābhārata* (<MBh.) belong to the separate religious system, Buddhism and Hinduism, but the Chapter XV-*Tathāgatāyuspramāṇaparivarta* (<T. P. P.) of S. D. P. and *Bhagavad-Gītā* (<Gītā) the Chapter XXV to XXXXII of Bhīṣma Parva in MBh. are somewhat similar in contents. So, in the present paper an attempt has been made to put a glance on this similarity.

The word "puṇḍarīka" used in S. D. P. was directly influenced by the Kṛṣṇa-cult of the Vedānta¹⁾ and *Gītā*²⁾. But, in the opinion of Maurice Winternitze, it is the spirit of the Purāṇas of which we are reminded by every line of the S. D. P., at the times the Buddha of the S. D. P. reminds us of the Kṛṣṇa of the *Gītā*³⁾. Furthermore, according to Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and the fellow scholars, it contains many good passages that have paralleled in the *Gītā*⁴⁾.

The Chapters I to XXII of the S. D. P. came into existence sometimes between 40 and 220 A. D.⁵⁾, on the other hand. *Gītā* was composed about before the Christian Era and it was inserted in the MBh. in the beginning of Christian Era⁶⁾.

Buddha makes a show of it and appears in the world of the living beings according to the S. D. P.

rjū yadā te mṛdu mārḍavāśca utsṛṣṭakāmaśca bhavanti sattvāḥ /
tato aham śrāvakasaṃgha kṛtvā ātmāna darśemyahu gṛdhrakūṭe //
sadādhiṣṭhānam mama etadidrśāṃ acintyā kalpasahasrakoṭyaḥ /
na ca cyavāmi itu gṛdhrakūṭāt anyāsu śāyyāsanakoṭibhiśca //

The same thing has been said in other words, in the teachings of Kṛṣṇa

in the *Gītā*⁹⁾.

On the other place in S. D. P., Buddha says that I am everything in this world, as I am a doctor, father of this world and master of all the subjects.

yameva haṃ lokapitā svayambhūḥ cikitsakaḥ sarvaprajāna nāthaḥ /
viparīta mūḍrāmśca vidītvā bālan anirvṛto nirvṛta darśayāmi //⁹⁾

In *Gītā* also Kṛṣṇa says that I am everything in this world, as the father of this world, mother dispenser and the grandfather etc.

pitā 'ham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ /
vedyaṃ pavitram aumkāra ṛk sāma yajur eva ca //¹⁰⁾

But in one place Kṛṣṇa considers himself as the medicine not a doctor like Buddha in S. D. P.

aḥaṃ kratur ahaṃ yajñaḥ svadhā 'ham ahaṃ auśadham /
mantra 'ham ahaṃ evā 'jyam ahaṃ agnir ahaṃ hutam //¹¹⁾

About this context Kuamārajīva says in his chinese translation of S.D.P. that Buddha considers himself a doctor for all the living beings and he is the best among the doctors who gives the supernatural medicine for the liberation of entire living creatures of this universe¹²⁾.

Through the above-said instances it is clear that T.P.P. is the book of śraddhā on Buddha as well as *Gītā* is a book of bhakti yoga related to Kṛṣṇa, clarified their positions by saying that they make the show of their own and they themselves appear in the world.

Futhermore they put the stress that whole world is their own form but in this context Buddha goes one step forward by saying that he is a doctor not the medicine as Kṛṣṇa says. This whole discussion shows that Buddha and Kṛṣṇa can be interpreted as the Saṅgha forms of the supreme being so both of these books namely T.P.P. and *Gītā* are the books of śraddhā and bhakti yoga respectively.

The term śraddhā is indicated in T. P. P.¹³⁾ On the other hand, bhakti-yoga can be seen in *Gītā*. The *Gītā* recognizes the value of faith or śraddhā in whole of its manifestation. But the bhakti yoga with its various states, is possible only through parā-śraddhā, which is free from trigunas

(satva, rajas and tamas), therefore this nirguṇa (Avyakta i. e. unmanifest) has the indiscrivable relation, with bhakti or parā-śraddhā which is supposed to be worshiped. Moreover the Gītā also deals with an another category of devotion wellknown as sāttvikī-śraddhā. In this way, the nature of śraddhā and bhakti is almost dependent to each other in MBh. as well as S. D. P.. Both of these have their roots in Adhimukti, according to the S. D. P..

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- 1) The Kṛṣṇa theory of Rāmānuja or Viśiṣṭādvaita.
 - 2) J. N. Farqhar : An outline of the religious literature of India, London 1920, p. 114 f.
 - 3) Maurice Winternitz : A History of Indian Literature, voli II, translated by V. Srinivasa Sarma, Delhi, 1983, p. 289~290 ff.
 - 4) K. A. Nilakanta Sastri : A Comprehensive History of India, New Delhi, 1987, p. 391 f.
 - 5) Prof. H. Nakamura : Indian Buddhism, Delhi, 1987, p. 187 f.
 - 6) See reference No. 4.
 - 7) S. D. P., chapter XV st., 6, 10. : Sanskrit Manuscripts of S. D. P. collected from Nepal, Kashmir and Cental Asia, vol. IX, pp. cf. Kern Nanjo edition, pp. 315~326.
 - 8) Gītā., chapter IV st., 6~8. : The Mahābhārata, vol. VI Critical edition, Poona.
 - 9) S. D. P., chapter XV st., 21., op. cit.
 - 10) Gītā., chapter IX st., 17.
 - 11) Ibid., chapter IX st., 16.
 - 12) Taisho Tripiṭaka. vol. IX pp. 43, bc~44, a.
 - 13) Gītā, chap. XVII, śraddhayā parayā. cf. Tibetan Tripiṭaka. Peking edition vol. XXX, p. 56-3-5~p. 58-4-3, It seems that the Tibetan translation took śraddhā as dad-pa.
- 〈Key Words〉 *Gītā*, Bhakti, Puṇḍarīka, śraddhā.

(Ph. D. Candidate, Univ. of Delhi)