

DAO-AN'S PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY- DHYĀNA TO PRĀJNA

Aparna Erra Shree

Research scholar

Delhi University

Several prominent monks had contributed to all aspects of Chinese Buddhism. Most of them were related to separate fields such as Literature, politics, religion, economy e.t.c. They could take part in many social activities and hold important positions in Chinese society. Many of them were scholars, philosophers, sociologists, and courtiers of the king also. His activities were changing the status of monks in China. There were many more fourth-century monks who became famous in Chinese Buddhist history such as Kumarajiva, Fo-tu-teng, Hui-Yuan, Dao an and so on, but it is not possible to discuss all in one research paper. Hence, I have specified the topic with "Role of Dao-an and his philosophical journey".

INITIAL WORK OF DAO-AN ON DHYĀNA PRACTICE

When Buddhism first arrived in China¹, it was mixed up with popular religious beliefs and practices. Buddhist thought gradually develops in China, after the translation of Buddhist scriptures in the middle of the second-century². By the first quarter of the third century, there was two Buddhist thought existed: *Dhyāna* (concentration) and *Prājñā* (wisdom). "The objective of *Dhyāna* was to meditate and to achieve calmness of mind as to remove ignorance and delusions, while that of *Prājñā* was to gain the wisdom that things possess no self-nature (*svabhāna*)"³.

Slowly, *Prājñā* literature developed in China and its influence spread all over the region. At the beginning of *prājñā literature*, their influence was slight; records show that the Buddhist monks came under the influence of the Light Conversion