

MAHĀPIṬAKA

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of the CHINESE TRIPITAKA
Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai
(Society for the Promotion of Buddhism)

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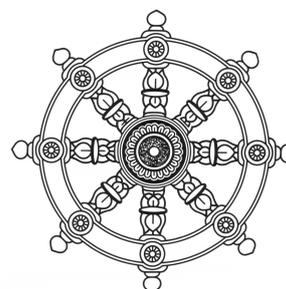


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Publishing Schedule

Published in 2009:

1. SHŌBŌGENZŌ: THE TRUE DHARMA-EYE TREASURY

Volumes 2, 3, and 4

(正法眼藏 *Shōbōgenzō*, Taisho 2582)

Translated by Gudo Nishijima & Chodo Cross

2. SUTRA ON THE CONCENTRATION OF SITTING MEDITATION

(坐禪三昧經 *Zazensanmaikyō*, Taisho 614)

Translated by YAMABE Nobuyoshi & SUEKI Fumihiko

3. IN PRAISE OF BUDDHA'S ACTS

(佛所行讚 *Busshogyōsan*, Taisho 192)

Translated by Charles Willemen

Forthcoming titles:

4. THE COLLECTION FOR THE PROPAGATION AND CLARIFICATION OF BUDDHISM

Volumes 1 and 2

(弘明集 *Gumyōshū*, Taisho 2102)

Translated by Harumi Hirano Ziegler

5. DISCOURSE TO PRINCE CANDRAPRABHA

(月燈三昧經 *Gattōzanmaikyō*, Taisho 639)

Translated by MURAKAMI Shinkan

6. THE ALL PLEASING: A COMMENTARY ON THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE

(善見律毘婆沙 *Zenkenritsubibasha*, Taisho 1462)

Translated by MORI Sodō and ENDŌ Toshiichi

Review:

The Vimalakīrti Sutra

Translated by John R. McRae

In: *The Sutra of Queen Śrīmālā of the Lion's Roar and the Vimalakīrti Sutra*

(BDK English Tripiṭaka Series, published in 2004)

NISHINO Midori

The Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taisho University

The *Vimalakīrti Sutra* (VKN) is one of the earliest Mahayana sutras¹⁾, and it shows us the way to purify the Buddha-land, in other words, to build up the pure Buddha-land for the benefit of the people in this world. Shortly put, the VKN is a sutra that explains how to transform this miserable world into a joyful one. From this point of view, we should give greater importance to the VKN today as a breakthrough from the world in which many people are struggling with the flagging economy and severe moral hazard. This is why I really like to welcome the BDK new English version of this text²⁾.

As was mentioned in the beginning, the VKN is the sutra with the theme of purifying the Buddha-land. In the first chapter 'The Buddha-land', the Buddha himself explained for the bodhisattvas coming from the city of Vaiśālī what that purification is all about. This explanation by the Buddha is the heart of this sutra, so allow me to show what he said in brief. Firstly, he spoke about the basis of purification. He explained that 'the land of sentient beings are the buddha-lands of the bodhisattvas' and, secondly, spoke about the requirements of the bodhisattvas' buddha-lands³⁾. Thirdly, the step by step instruction for the purification of the Buddha-land is as follows⁴⁾.

yāvanto bodhisatvasya prayogās tāvanta āśayāḥ / (prayoga→āśaya)

according to his sincerity does the bodhisattva generate his practice. (鳩摩羅什訳：直心→發行)

yāvanta āśayās tāvanto 'dhyāśayāḥ / (āśaya→adhyāśya)

according to his generation of practice does he attain the profound mind. (發行→深心)

yāvanto 'dhyāśayās tāvantyo nidhyaptayaḥ / (adhyāśya→nidhyapti)

according to his profound mind does he discipline his intention. (深心→意調伏)

yāvantyo nidhyaptayas tāvantyaḥ pratipattayaḥ / (nidhyapti→pratipatti)

according to the disciplining his intention does he practice in conformity with the teaching. (意調伏→如說行)

yāvantyaḥ pratipattayas tāvantyaḥ pariṇāmanāḥ / (pratipatti→pariṇāmana)

according to his practice in conformance to the teaching is he able to rededicate [merit]. (如說行→廻向)

yāvantyaḥ pariṇāmanās tāvanta upāyāḥ / (pariṇāmana→upāya)

according to his rededication does he have skillful means. (廻向→方便)

yāvanta upāyās tāvantyaḥ kṣetrapariśuddhayaḥ / (upāya→kṣetrapariśuddhi)

according to his skillful means does he make sentient beings accomplish [liberation]. (方便→成就衆生)

yādrśī kṣetrapariśuddhis tādrśī satvapariśuddhiḥ / (kṣetrapariśuddhi→satvapariśuddhi)

according to his accomplishment [of the liberation] of sentient beings is his Buddha land pure. (成就衆生→仏土淨)

yādrśī satvapariśuddhis tādrśī jñānapariśuddhiḥ / (satvapariśuddhi→jñānapariśuddhi)

according to the purity of the Buddha land is his explanation of the Dharma pure. (仏土淨→說法淨)

yādrśī jñānapariśuddhis tādrśī deśanāpariśuddhiḥ / (jñānapariśuddhi→deśanāpariśuddhi)

according to the purity of his explanation of the Dharma is his wisdom pure. (說法淨→智慧淨)

yādrśī deśanāpariśuddhis tādrśī jñānapratipattipariśuddhiḥ / (deśanāpariśuddhi→jñānapratipattipariśuddhi)

according to the purity of his wisdom is his mind pure. (智慧淨→其心淨)

yādrśī jñānapratipattipariśuddhis tādrśī svacittapariśuddhiḥ / (jñānapratipattipariśuddhi→svacittapariśuddhi)

according to the purity of his mind are all his merits pure. (其心淨→一切功德淨)

tasmāt tarhi kulaputra buddhakṣetraṃ pariśodhayitukāmena bodhisatvena svacittapariśodhane yatnaḥ karaṇīyaḥ / tat kasya hetoḥ / yādrśī bodhisatvasya cittapariśuddhis tādrśī buddhakṣetrapariśuddhiḥ sambhavati / (svacittapariśodhana→buddhakṣetrapariśuddhi)

“Therefore, Jewel Accumulation, if a bodhisattva wishes to attain a pure land he should purify his mind. According to the purify of his mind is his Buddha land pure!” (隨其心淨→則仏土淨)

Looking through the above process, we can easily recognize some differences between the Sanskrit text and Kumārajīva’s rendering. Although I cannot get further into this matter here, I’d like to call attention to the process after the dotted line. In order to make the point clear, I shall juxtapose the Sanskrit and three English translations⁵⁾ from Kumārajīva’s Chinese text.

yādrśī bodhisatvasya cittapariśuddhis tādrśī buddhakṣetrapariśuddhiḥ sambhavati /

According to the purify of his mind is his Buddha land pure! (McRae)

When the mind is pure, the Buddha land will be pure. (Watson)

..., because of his pure mind the Buddha land is pure. (Luk)

All these translations suggest that the purity of bodhisattva’s mind is the necessary condition for the purity of his Buddha-land. However, such a conception conflicts with the expression in Chapter 3, ‘the characteristics of the minds of all sentient beings are likewise, in being without defilement’ (McRae’s rendering). It means that no condition is needed to purify the mind.

Moreover in Chapter 1 Buddha said to Śāriputra, “this land of mine is pure, but you do not see it.” It implies that the Buddha-land is already and always pure; therefore it does not require purification or anything resembling it.

Here comes the big enigma! For what reason does the Buddha teach the bodhisattvas the way to purify their Buddha-lands if the land itself is already pure and the mind of its inhabitants also pure? Beyond this enigma, we may hear the true message of the great Bodhisattva Vimalakīrti coming from the Realm of Profound Joy of Akṣobhya Buddha to perform his work of salvation in this dark world.

1) It is said that the VKN was written in India between the 1st or 2nd century taking over the conception of the bodhisattvas from *the Akṣobhya sutra* and the one of emptiness from *the Prajñāpāramitā sutras*.

2) The translation from Kumārajīva’s *Wei-mo-jie-suo-shuo-jing* (Taisho Vol. 14, No. 475) with consulting with the *Zhu-wei-mo-jie-ching* (Taisho Vol. 38, No. 1775).

3) According to the Sanskrit text there are eighteen factors, but the Kumārajīva’s translation includes seventeen like as follows: (1) āśaya (Sanskrit) / 直心 (Kumārajīva) / sincerity (McRae) (2) adhyāśaya / 深心 / profound mind (3) prayoga / — / — (4) bodhichittotpāda / 菩提心 / the mind of bodhi (5) dāna / 布施 / charity (6) śīla / 戒 / morality (7) kṣānti / 忍辱 / forbearance (8) vīrya / 精進 / exertion (9) dhyāna / 禪定 / meditation (10) prajñā / 智慧 / wisdom (11) catvāry apramāṇāni / 四無量心 / the four unlimited states of mind (12) catvāri saṃgrahavastūni / 四攝法 / the four means of attraction (13) upāyakauśalya / 方便 / skillful means (14) Saptariṃśadbodhipakṣā dharmā / 三十七道品 / the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment (15) pariṇāmanācitta / 迴向心 / the attitude of rededication (16) aṣṭākṣaṇapraśamadeśanā / 說除八難 / explaining how to eliminate the eight difficult realms (17) svayaṃ śikṣāpadeṣu vartamānā parāpattiyacodanātā / 自守戒行不譏彼闕 / maintaining one’s own practice of the precepts without reviling the deficiencies of others (18) daśakuśalakarmapathapariśuddhi / 十善 / the ten goods.

4) Sanskrit quotes are from “*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*” (Taisho University Press, 2006), and English ones from the BDK version by McRae.

5) In reverse chronological order: John R. McRae “*The Vimalakīrti Sutra*” (BDK, 2004), Burton Watson “*The Vimalakīrti Sutra*” (Columbia University Press, 1997), and Charles Luk “*Ordinary Enlightenment*” (Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1972).

Apocryphal Scriptures

The Bequeathed Teaching Sutra, Translated by J. C. Cleary

The Ullambana Sutra, Translated by BANDŌ Shōjun

The Sutra of Forty-two Sections, Translated by Heng-ching Shih

The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment, Translated by Peter N. Gregory

The Sutra on the Profundity of Filial Love, Translated by ARAI Keiyo
(BDK English Tripiṭaka Series, published in 2005)

John R. McRae

Chair, Publication Committee

Once upon a time, a Chinese Buddhist scripture judged to be apocryphal suffered a harrowing fate. The government denounced it as a forgery, had it ritually incinerated, and excluded it from any subsequent printings of the canon. Readers may be reminded of the treatment the *Laozi's Conversion of the Barbarians Scripture* received after Daoists lost in public debate to the Buddhists, or more recently the suppression of the Falun gong.

Whether a text was apocryphal or not used to be a simple matter. Had it actually been translated into Chinese, or was it composed in that language? In retrospect it seems unfair that any text of Indian or Central Asian origin was accepted and Chinese compositions rejected. To paraphrase the late Michel Strickmann, it is not clear why a fabricated Indian text should be so much more valuable than a fabricated Chinese one.

Today scholars are looking at Chinese apocryphal scriptures in more sophisticated ways, and we have realized that all apocrypha are not alike. To be sure, some texts are intentional forgeries. More common, though, are those composed on the basis of oral transmission from the “western region,” or mixtures of transmitted and invented material. And, even with the total forgeries, they had to be written on the basis of substantial knowledge of the Buddhadharmā to have any chance of acceptance at all.

The BDK English Tripiṭaka volume *Apocryphal Scriptures* contains five different texts rendered by five separate translators. Two of these treat the issue of filial piety, which although by no means absent in India is the bedrock ethical value of Chinese society. First is the *Ullambana Sutra*, translated by one of the important early contributors to the BDK translation project, the late BANDŌ Shōjun (1932–2004). Readers may consult Stephen Teiser's excellent *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton University Press, 1988) for further information. Second is the *Sutra on the Profundity of Filial Love*, translated by the late ARAI Keiyo (1939–2007), a short but delightful treatment of the indebtedness everyone should feel toward their parents. Since it mentions the “apocryphal term” *ullambana* (which scholars today feel was manufactured in China), this text is no doubt later than the preceding one.

The earliest text introduced here is the famous *Sutra in Forty-two Sections*, translated by the Taiwanese Buddhist nun Heng-ching Shih. Ven. Heng-ching mentions this text's relationship to the

story of Buddhism being introduced to the Chinese imperial court through a dream of Emperor Ming in 65 C.E., but she judiciously avoids invoking its reputation as the earliest Chinese Buddhist scripture. As she notes, the text is only attested from the early sixth century; presumably it was written sometime in the fifth or perhaps fourth century.

Whatever its date, the format of the *Sutra in Forty-two Sections* is remarkable. Rather than having the opening *nidāna* section universal to the sūtra format, it is simply a series of passages attributed to the Buddha. Is this primitive format a function of an early provenance, before the sūtra format was known in China? Or was it constructed this way to appeal to Chinese readers? Some of its contents overlap with demonstrably early texts, but I have not seen any well-conceived analysis of who was borrowing from whom.

The very first text in this volume, the *Bequeathed Teaching Sutra* translated by J. C. Cleary, claims to be the Buddha's very last instructions before entering nirvāṇa. This is one of the earlier translations of a Chinese Buddhist scripture into English: The great NUKARIYA Kaiten (1867–1934), known later for his two-volume history of Zen Buddhism in India and China and for serving for many years as president of Komazawa University, published a very creditable English translation of this text in 1897. Perhaps he and other contemporary Zen teachers (such as SHAKU Sōen [1859–1919], the first Zen master to teach in the United States and teacher of D. T. Suzuki [1870–1966]) favored this brief scripture because of its strong affirmation of moral discipline.

Finally, we have the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*, masterfully translated by Peter N. Gregory. Here the sūtra format is followed to the letter, and the overall mood is very much that of an Indian scripture. But there are tell-tale clues of apocryphal origin in the content of the text. First, it is clearly dependent philosophically on the *Mahayana Awakening of Faith*, which has long been thought of as an apocryphon and which ISHII Kōsei and others now believe is a combination of translated and composed passages. Second, the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment* uses the distinction of principle and phenomena, which Robert Gimello showed years ago was an innovation that allowed Chinese Buddhists to discuss manifest reality and the truth of emptiness, without having to get tangled up in all the fine print about *dharmas* and their interactions.

The *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment* is the product of sophisticated religious creativity, with its elaborate distinctions involving sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation, inherent enlightenment and the expedients of spiritual cultivation, and a tripartite analysis of *śamatha* (meditative concentration), *samāpatti* (meditative attainment), and *dhyāna* (here understood as quiescent insight). Reading this scripture helps one understand the context from which early Chinese Chan or Zen Buddhism arose in the early eighth century — and the power of religious innovation per se.

Report:

An Important Year in the Translation of Buddhist Scriptures

John R. McRae
Chair, Publication Committee

If my experience this year with international meetings is any guide, we are witnessing a wonderful upsurge of activity in the translation of Buddhist scriptures.

In March I traveled to tiny Bir, India, in the foothills of the Himalayas, where I participated in a meeting involving 50 translators and a number of high-ranking Rinpoches from the three major Tibetan Buddhist lineages. The purpose of the meeting was to plan how best to coordinate and stimulate efforts leading to the eventual translation of the entire Tibetan Buddhist canon. The location was Deer Park, a wonderful training and retreat center founded by Dzongzar Khyentse Rinpoche, a gifted teacher and leader born in Bhutan in 1961. Khyentse Rinpoche has a degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and in addition to his religious roles he has produced two movies (including the delightful story of two young novices' efforts to see the final game of the World Cup). He also served as consultant to Bertolucci on "The Little Buddha."

The Khyentse Foundation is administered in exemplary fashion by Canglioli Che, and at Deer Park her colleague Ivy Ang, a professional trainer and meeting facilitator, led us through a series of focused discussions. With such a large group of Buddhist scholars and practitioners (metaphors of herding cats come to mind!), it was amazing how Ivy was able to keep us together — in the end we articulated 100-year, 25-year, and 5-year mission statements, and we also created a provisional organizational structure and a specific plan of action for how to proceed. There were of course important differences of opinion: Should Indian scriptures be done first, because of their primacy within the Buddhist tradition as a whole? Or, should the initial goal be translation of commentaries, which are far more central to Tibetan training regimens? And, for the several hundred scriptures in which there are individual transmission lineages, should translators only work with teachers having transmission in the text in question?

Since the participants and the Khyentse Foundation wished only to facilitate and coordinate translation efforts, we avoided anything that might be misconstrued as reaching for hegemonic control. A group visit to Dharamsala and an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who expressed his enthusiastic support, was the climactic event of the week. I am happy to report that, with subsequent working group meetings in San Francisco and elsewhere, the Buddhist Literary Heritage Project is well on its way. For further information, you can download meeting documents, a slideshow, and a video report from <http://www.khyentsefoundation.org/downloads.html>.

Then in early June I attended a "Sūtra Translation Council" at Hsi Lai Temple, the impressive Foguang Shan establishment in southern California. This meeting was organized by my old friend Ven. Yifa, a nun in the Foguang Shan organization and a fellow Ph.D. under Stanley Weinstein at Yale.

With a lot of assistance from Professor Hun Lye of Davidson College, about 25 mostly senior scholars gathered for a wide-ranging discussion of issues surrounding the English translation of Buddhist scriptures (primarily from Sanskrit and Chinese). The agenda was wide-ranging, with discussion of issues of terminology, textual attribution, uniformity of terminology (an ideal very difficult to accomplish), and some soul-searching (if that usage is acceptable here!) as to whether the situation regarding Buddhist translations is improving or not. One of the ideas that was generated was that of occasional “Sūtra Camps,” at which small numbers of students and scholars would gather to study individual texts. For this meeting, see <http://www.woodenfish.org/sutra/council>.

In addition to these two large meetings, there were also two smaller events. In early May I traveled to Bangkok for a one-day meeting to begin planning a union catalog of Buddhist scriptures, envisioned as a comprehensive digital guide to canonical Buddhist literature in all its variations — Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Tibetan, Mongolian, etc. Since the project is supported financially by the International Association of Buddhist Universities and is being guided by Professors Lewis Lancaster (University of California, Berkeley, Emeritus) and Phillip Stanley (Naropa University), I think it has extremely good prospects for success.

Finally, in early September there a one-day meeting at The University of Tokyo on issues involving the Longzang or “Dragon Canon,” which was published during the reign of Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736–95). It is encouraging that Buddhist textual study is now proceeding to the level of canonical formation and textual variants. Even more, I was deeply moved by the example of Ryōō Dōkaku (1630–1707), a Tokugawa-period monk who devoted his life to making Buddhist canons (including multiple copies of the Longzang) available throughout Japan. In a word, his profound dedication to the Dharma and the monumental extent of his accomplishments reminded me of our own founder, Mr. NUMATA Yehan, the twentieth century’s most important benefactor of Buddhism and Buddhist studies.

Recent Developments in the SAT Taishō Database Projects

<http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/ddb-sat2.php>

Charles Muller
Center for Evolving Humanities
The University of Tokyo

2009 has been a big year in the development of the SAT Taishō Database. Although the new database went online during April 2008, many new functions were added and improved during 2009. The most fundamental and important aspect is that the full Taishō canon is now fully available online in a dedicated database format, with a wide range of special functions that can be applied to a search. To begin with, one may choose between searching through the whole canon, or searching through

selected portions of the canon. Users can also filter their searches to find terminology in works by a designated author, translator, or commentator. In addition, the database uses the CHISE variants replacement system in the search, so that users can still find strings of texts, even while using variants of certain kanji. Users may now also scroll through the body of the text, and can now access by page number, and display over a full fascicle as necessary.

Once the user has found a certain term, or has located a specific portion of a Taishō text that she or he would like to study, a whole new set of options is presented. One of the most important is the ability to parse the text based on terms contained in the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism [DDB] (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb>) as well as the comprehensive database of East Asian dictionary indexes that is attached to the DDB (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/allindex-intro.html>). When the user drags his or her mouse through any portion of Taishō text presented on the screen, any words contained within the text will be listed on the left side of the screen, along with basic English glosses. Terms that are not contained in the DDB, but which are contained in the comprehensive index, will be listed with their source locations. In the previous iteration of this function, the DDB entries located in the text were listed by their order in the DDB, but they are now listed in descending order according to the length of the entry. For purposes of convenience while working, the search window can also be dragged to a different location on the screen.

From the beginning of the new installation of the SAT Database, integrated search with the INBUDS database (<http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/INBUDS/search.php>) has been a major function. During the past year this function has been significantly advanced by the ability to display a reference to the PDF file of the article which is located through the INBUDS-search window. Through this, users can search related articles from a bibliographic database which has been maintained by The Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies. Then, if a PDF file of the article has been created (the creation of these PDFs is still a work in progress), a PDF icon is displayed at the ending of each line. Clicking on this icon will bring one to the Web page of the CiNii service which is maintained as a Japanese government project by the National Institute of Informatics. CiNii (<http://ci.nii.ac.jp/en>) is providing this PDF service for the whole academic society, not only to Buddhist studies or Humanities.

The DDB has also continued to grow steadily. By the end of 2009, the total number of entries will have gone beyond 50,000, making it one of the largest reference works on Buddhism in existence. The usage of this resource continues to rapidly increase, more than tripling since the time of its initial interoperation with the SAT database. We continue to receive large contributions of data from the best scholars in the field, and the DDB is now subscribed to by thirty libraries from first-rate academic institutions around the world (http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/subscribing_libraries.html). In addition through access via SAT, the DDB can be searched directly from Jim Breen's WWWJDic Server (<http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/~jwb/cgi-bin/wwwjdic.cgi?1C>) as well as DDB Access, the DDB parsing/lookup tool created by Jean Soulat (<http://download.smarthanzi.net/ddbaccess/>).

We have a number of new enhancements for all of these applications in the process of

development, as well as entirely new projects in the works, so we expect to be able to make many exciting new announcements during the coming months. We are also working toward the closer cooperation and interoperation with other Buddhist Studies research resources in the near future, and welcome suggestions and inquiries from those who are involved in similar projects.

Announcement:

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