

MAHĀPIṭAKA

Newsletter New Series No. 31

January 1, 2026

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE of
the ENGLISH TRANSLATION
of the CHINESE TRIPITAKA
Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai
(Society for the Promotion of Buddhism)

Editor: Kenneth K. Tanaka

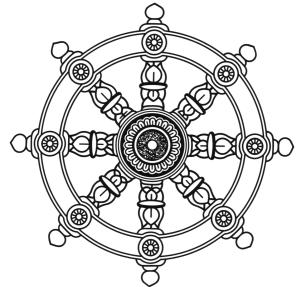


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Publishing Schedule

Published in 2025:

NĀGĀRJUNA'S TREATISE ON THE TEN GROUNDS

(十住毘婆沙論 *Jūjū-bibasha-ron*, Taishō 1521)

Volume II (Chapters 19–35= Fasc. 9–17)

Translated by Dharmamitra

GREAT CESSATION-AND-CONTEMPLATION

(摩訶止觀 *Maka-shikan*, Taishō 1911)

Volume II (Fasc. 6–10)

Translated by Paul L. Swanson

Forthcoming titles:

DISCOURSE TO PRINCE CANDRAPRABHA

(月燈三昧經 *Gattōzanmaikyō*, Taishō 639)

Translated by *MURAKAMI Shinkan

COMBINED VOLUME: DIAMOND PERFECTION OF WISDOM SUTRA/ SUTRA ON THE PAST VOWS OF KṢITIGARBHA BODHISATTVA/ THE SUPREME GOLDEN LIGHT KING SUTRA

(金剛般若波羅蜜經 *Kon-gō-han-nya-ha-ra-mitsu-kyō*, Taishō 235/ 地藏菩薩本願經
Ji-zō-bo-satsu-hon-gan-gyō, Taishō 412/ 金光明最勝王經 *Kon-kō-myō-sai-shō-ō-kyō*,
Taishō 665)

Translated by Lewis R. Lancaster and Huifeng (M. B. Osborn)/ Shi zhiru/
*Claus Oetke and HINO Eun

THE ALL PLEASING: A COMMENTARY ON THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE

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

Volumes I & II

Translated by Translation Editorial Committee

THE NIRVANA SUTRA

(大般涅槃經 *Dai-hatsu-ne-han-gyō*, Taishō 374)

Volume II (Fasc. 11–20)

Translated by Mark L. Blum

FLOWER ORNAMENT SUTRA (AVATĀMSAKA-SŪTRA)

(大方廣佛華嚴經 *Dai-hōkō-butsu-kegon-gyō*, Taishō 279)

Translated by Dharmamitra

Translator's Comments:

The Great Cessation-and-Contemplation (Mohezhiguan)

Paul L. Swanson
Professor Emeritus, Nanzan University

I have many memories from translating the *Mohezhiguan* (Jpn. *Makashikan*). It has been said that I spent over thirty-five years on this project, but this is both an exaggeration and an understatement: while my initial encounter with the *Mohezhiguan* dates back decades, my work on the translation was often intermittent, shaped by the ebb and flow of other academic pursuits, administrative responsibilities, family affairs, and teaching.

I first encountered Zhiyi and the *Mohezhiguan* when I took a seminar on Nichiren as part of my Master's degree course at Sophia University in 1975 (now 50 years ago), which began with reading Leon Hurvitz's masterful monograph on Zhiyi as background to Nichiren Buddhism. Moving forward, my PhD dissertation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the early 1980s focused on Zhiyi's *Fahuaxuanyi* (Jpn. *Hokkegengi*; the *Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra*) and the Tiantai/Tendai idea of the threefold truth (of emptiness, conventionality, and the middle path), but this naturally required attention to many passages in the *Mohezhiguan*. Technically the project to translate the *Mohezhiguan* began with a phone call from a representative of Kosei Publications in 1990, proposing a grand scheme to translate the *Mohezhiguan* into English, French, German, and modern Japanese within ten years. (Sad to say, only the English translation reached full fruition.) I realized immediately that completing the translation within ten years was an overly optimistic hope but, as fools rush in where angels fear to tread, I began the long quest to finish an annotated translation of the complete text.

In the meantime, I had earlier submitted a translation of Gishin's *Collected Teachings of the Tendai Lotus School* (*Tendai Hokke shūgi shū*) for the BDK English Tripitaka (published in 1995), which contained many quotations from the *Mohezhiguan*. There was talk of translating the *Mohezhiguan* for the BDK series, but at the time I felt that the text required heavy annotation and that a straight translation would be confusing for the general reader. After working on this project for over thirty years, with breaks for times of administrative duties and other academic projects (such as editing the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* and publishing various articles on Tiantai/Tendai Buddhism), the fully annotated translation was published in three volumes by University of Hawai'i Press in 2017/2018 as *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight*, and was awarded the 2019 Toshihide Numata Book Award. At this time I was kindly approached again by representatives of the BDK to consider publishing a version of the *Mohezhiguan* in the BDK English Tripitaka, and since there were now detailed annotations and studies available for those interested in such matters, I agreed that publishing a non-annotated version in the BDK series would make good sense.

Preparing a non-annotated version of the *Mohezhiguan* for the BDK series, however, involved more than just deleting extraneous matters such as the notes, Chinese characters in the text, supplementary materials, and so forth. Dropping the annotation meant reworking the translation to make

sense on its own, so I went through the entire text rewriting, rewording, polishing, and adding information (sometimes in parentheses) to provide the reader with an English text that, as much as possible, read smoothly and made sense. (By the way, comparing the differences between a translation that is fully annotated and a limited straight translation provides an interesting study on the possibilities and limitations of the art of translation.) This process, as it turned out, provided some advantages. Not only was this an opportunity to rewrite the translation in more accessible prose (compared to a more technical or literal and hence stiff rendition), but it allowed for using different translations for terms that carried numerous nuances that could not be captured in a single English term. To give just one example, for the Chinese character 開 (“open,” “uncover,” “expose,” “disclose,” and so forth) that appears frequently in the text with various nuances, I chose the more literal “expose” for the annotated version, and the broader “reveal” or “disclose” for the non-annotated version. As a result, readers who access both translations can be exposed to various possible English expressions, rather than be limited to a single standard translation.

I am now working with the BDK to publish a non-annotated version of the complete text of Zhiyi’s *Fahuaxuanyi* (Jpn. *Hokkegengi*), and a three-volume fully annotated version with University of Hawai‘i Press. Unlike the case of the *Mohezhiguan*, for which the BDK version was prepared after finishing the fully annotated version, I was able to prepare the two versions of the *Fahuaxuanyi* in tandem. I look forward to continuing to work with the BDK to bring these Tiantai/Tendai works to the English-reading public.

Essay:

UNESCO “Memory of the World” International Registration for Zōjō-ji Temple’s “Three Great Tripitakas (*Sandaizō*)”

SODEYAMA Eiki
Secretary and Director of Academic Affairs
at Grand Head Temple Zōjōji

At the beginning of the Edo period, TOKUGAWA Ieyasu, the first shogun of the Edo shogunate, donated three Tripitaka collections (Buddhist canons) to Zōjō-ji Temple, which was designated as the TOKUGAWA family temple. These Tripitaka collections, originally printed and published using the finest woodblock-printing techniques of their respective times—the Song and the Yuan dynasties in China, and the Goryeo dynasty of Korea—were eventually brought to Japan and acquired by TOKUGAWA Ieyasu. These are collectively called the “Three Great Tripitakas (*Sandaizō*)” and they have been carefully preserved at Zōjō-ji Temple to this day.

This year, on April 17th, which happens to be the anniversary of TOKUGAWA Ieyasu’s death, the UNESCO Executive Board decided to grant international registration for Zōjō-ji Temple’s “Three Great Tripitakas” (*Sandaizō*) in the Memory of the World Register, upon the nomination by the Japanese government. The applicants were the Jōdo-shū sect and the Grand Head Temple Zōjō-ji. This marks the

ninth such registration in Japan. The “Memory of the World” program is one of UNESCO’s World Heritage projects, and its purpose is to preserve, make accessible, and raise awareness of the existence and significance of important documentary heritage worldwide.

After the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa* (passing), his Teachings were preserved in the memories of his disciples and followers. These were orally repeated, eventually becoming scriptures, and later recorded in writing and transmitted from India to many lands. In China, over five thousand fascicles of translated scriptures came to be organized as a collection called the *Issaikyō* (Complete Buddhist Canon). From the tenth century onward, with the development of woodblock-printing in China, more than a dozen different collections of the complete canon were compiled and published using woodblock-printing. These came to be known as the *Daizōkyō* (大藏經, Tripitaka or Great Buddhist Canon).

The production of woodblocks, securing printing paper, printing, and binding—all of these required a vast amount of labor and enormous expense. The compilation and publication of the Tripitaka were truly monumental undertakings. There is no doubt that it was a massive project. The aspiration was to comprehensively compile and transmit the teachings of the Buddha to future generations, and to entrust hopes for peace in the world to the publication of the Tripitaka. Such dedication among Buddhists was what drove the compilation and publication of the Tripitaka.

As the Jōdo-shū sect and Zōjō-ji Temple approach the 850th anniversary of the founding of Jōdo-shū in 2024, we have proposed the preservation of Zōjō-ji Temple’s “Three Great Tripitakas” through digital imaging and their publication on the web. This has been incorporated as one of the commemorative projects, and concrete work on this initiative has been carried out by the Jōdo Shū Research Institute. In the course of their work, the researchers came to realize that what they were doing perfectly aligned with the aims of UNESCO’s “Memory of the World” program. At first, the idea of international registration in the “Memory of the World” Register seemed like little more than a dream. However, upon reflecting on history—such as the publication of the *Dai Nihon Kōtei Shukusatsu Daizōkyō* (大日本校訂縮刷大藏經) based on the Zōjō-ji Temple’s Three Great Tripitakas during the anti-Buddhist persecutions at the start of the Meiji period, and the later publication of the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (大正新脩大藏經) in the Taishō era, both of which contributed to the flourishing of Buddhism and the advancement of Buddhist studies—they were also inspired by the history of the Tripitaka’s publication in China and Korea, as well as by those who brought them to Japan, including TOKUGAWA Ieyasu. They were moved by the aspiration of earlier Buddhists to preserve and transmit the Buddha’s Teachings in their entirety. Sharing this aspiration and wishing to honor those who came before, they resolved to seek international registration in the “Memory of the World” Register. Through their appeals to the Jōdo-shū sect and Zōjō-ji Temple, and with the endorsement of the Japanese government in both the 2022–2023 and 2024–2025 cycles, international registration was successfully achieved on the second attempt.

Preserving and faithfully transmitting the teachings of the Buddha in their entirety—this very endeavor of Buddhists, I believe, lies at the heart of this “Memory of the World” international registration.

Essay:

Research Musings: Scenes Observed at a Post-COVID Chinese Academic Conference

YANAGI Mikiyasu

An associated Professor, Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, The University of Tokyo

The spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) since late 2019 had long restricted in-person activities. Fortunately, its intensity has subsided, allowing participation in overseas academic conferences once more. The scenes I witnessed at a Chinese conference I attended after a long absence felt quite different from before. This is not a report based on research, but merely my personal impressions. I would like to share my thoughts on this.

Since studying at Nanjing University from 2008 to 2010, I have participated in Buddhist studies conferences held in China. What struck me back then was the large number of researchers focusing on Chinese Buddhism, particularly Chan Buddhism, and how their research methodologies differed from those in Japanese Buddhist studies. Japanese Buddhist studies tends to emphasize textual research, focusing on empirically analyzing the content of texts and the contexts in which they were written. In contrast, what I witnessed in China at that time was Chinese Buddhist scholars using Buddhist texts and ideas to deepen their own philosophical reflections. Of course, some scholars leaned toward textual studies like in Japan, but I recall their numbers were not large.

In contrast, after the pandemic, when I began participating in Chinese academic conferences again from late 2023, I noticed that the research subjects of young Chinese scholars had diversified, and their research methods had changed. This impression was particularly strong at a conference I attended in the summer of 2025. True to its name, the “Young Scholars Symposium,” the presenters were primarily young academics, with over 60 people presenting over two days. Though I am already over forty and hardly what one would call “young,” I was somehow invited to participate in this meeting.

The presentations at this conference covered a wide range of topics, including not only Zen Buddhism but also Tendai, Hua Yen, Vinaya, Pure Land Buddhism, and even Indian Buddhism. Although I did not present a research paper at this conference, I learned that studies on Buddhism in various languages are increasing—not only Chinese and Sanskrit, but also Pali, Tibetan, and even Tangut script. This reaffirmed how widely Buddhism spread, leaving behind numerous texts in local languages, while also showing how the capabilities of researchers studying these texts have rapidly advanced in recent years.

Moreover, the research methodologies employed were all based on empirical analysis of texts and their content, meticulously referencing not only Chinese and English but also Japanese prior studies.

Surprised by how different the scene was from what I had seen 15 years ago, I asked one participant. They explained that young researchers who had studied abroad in Japan or the West were conducting research based on the philological methodologies they had learned there. Naturally, there is no inherent superiority between philological research analyzing Buddhist texts and philosophical research using Buddhism to deepen philosophical inquiry; the difference lies solely in their direction. However, witnessing philological research continuously building upon the accumulated achievements of previous studies from that perspective was immensely stimulating for me, as someone conducting research using the same methods.

What further astonished me was the sheer number of Buddhist studies conferences held in China. From what I could gather with my limited Chinese, approximately 200 conferences were held within China last year alone. Hearing that some scholars attend dozens of conferences annually, I, a rather unproductive researcher, could only marvel. A mid-career researcher who kindly assisted me at another conference remarked, “I no longer have a concept of a specific specialty. I write new content each time to match the theme of the conference I’m attending.” I was also overwhelmed by the breadth of his research.

Finally, I’d like to conclude this humble essay by sharing a memorable scene from the 2025 Summer “Young Scholars Symposium.” One participant was a young Korean monk who had previously studied in Japan, presenting research on Chinese Vinaya. After greeting the audience in Chinese, he delivered his presentation in Japanese. Discussions unfolded in both Chinese and Japanese, facilitated not only by the interpreter but also with the help of friends and acquaintances from his time studying abroad. The atmosphere was warm and friendly, with straightforward, unguarded questions being asked. Witnessing this scene, I distinctly remember feeling deeply moved, as if the history of Chinese Buddhism spreading throughout East Asia was condensed right there. While not unique to East Asia, Buddhism has transcended national borders and language barriers to reach various regions, continuing to this day. This achievement was not the work of a single individual, but rather the collective effort of countless people spanning generations. Witnessing the Korean monk who studied in Japan and presented in China, along with the people around him participating as interpreters and in discussions, I felt as if I were seeing the future of Buddhist studies unfolding. Just as Buddhism itself spread through the cooperation of many people, so too will future Buddhist studies progress through the collaboration of many. And I was deeply happy to be present there as one of those people.

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