

Acknowledgements

Being published by the Soka Gakkai as number 10 of the Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series, this book is a romanized text of the Sanskrit palm-leaf manuscript from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1684). The publications issued in this series so far are as follows:

1. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Fragments from the Lüshun Museum Collection, Facsimile Edition and Romanized Text*, 1997.
- 2-1. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Facsimile Edition*, 1998.
- 2-2. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Romanized Text 1*, 2001.
- 2-3. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Romanized Text 2*, 2004.
3. *Fragments of a Manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra from Khādaliq* (presently the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China), 2000.
4. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscripts from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1682 and Add. 1683), Facsimile Edition*, 2002.
5. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from University of Tokyo General Library (No. 414), Romanized Text*, 2003.
6. *Xixia Version of the Lotus Sutra from the Collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, 2005.
7. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (No. 6), Romanized Text*, 2007.
8. *Manuscript sanscrit du Sūtra du Lotus de la Société asiatique (N° 2), Texte romanisé*, 2008.
9. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204), Facsimile Edition*, 2009.

In 2011, “Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204), Romanized Text” is scheduled to be published as number 11 of the Series.

I am so fortunate to have been in charge of editing the publications of numbers 5, 7, 8, and 10. This is entirely due to the academic benefit that Dr. Hirofumi Toda (1936-2003) kindly granted to me. Here I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to him.

A fundamental desire to prove that the classification of the Nepalese manuscripts is possible, which Dr. Toda advocated, underlies my work for this manuscript series.

I understand that the romanization of manuscripts is an arduous undertaking: first, to read original texts as they are without preconception, avoiding simple miscopying or miscopying due to assumptions or misreadings by the copyists, and not being confused by complicated text portions that enable multiple variant readings if one adopts different interpretations, and second, to reconstruct the most relevant readings after determining the respective variants' appropriateness.

One cannot always judge all text portions so clearly, saying, "Such and such reading is correct (or incorrect)". Rather, more often are cases with complicated or confused variant readings that require subjective decisions by the editors of romanized editions when the copyists' intentions are hardly understandable from the texts themselves. Such cases, however, are often of much philological importance.

Some cases include illegible letters due to damage or defacement. The editors transliterate them as they are, adding "*sic*". Though not all cases, the description *sic* is added as a result of choosing to respect the original reading. Copyists in the past might have suspended their own judgment and sought to maintain the texts they copied as contemporary editors of the romanized editions do today. These undertakings are performed by contemporary experts as if they carried out dialogues with copyists from some one thousand years ago, whose names and identities are unknown. From the description *sic*, those who tend to take things easy may inadvertently consider that the texts are just transliterated as they are without surmising such delicate treating of the texts. As a matter of course, nothing can guarantee that the decisions of today's editors who read the texts are the best ones. There is still the possibility that the editors could repeat misreadings by making mistakes or erring due to false perceptions in the same manner as copyists in the past. Furthermore, today's editors might also create new misreadings. All they can do is seek to provide better romanized texts through faithful reading.

In this regard, the present writer, living in the 21st century, is nothing more than a "copyist" holding a humble seat in the long tradition of copying and transmitting Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscripts. The romanized text in this book is, therefore, just a copy of the Sanskrit Lotus Sutra text interpreted by himself, a contemporary "copyist". The only thing the current copyist can say confidently is the fact that he enjoys the privilege of using more voluminous data than copyists in the past.

Regarding one of the most important themes in this discipline, is it possible to

classify the Nepalese manuscripts of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*? I intend to answer the question by presenting the four samples in the Introduction and Appendix, “A New Classification of the Nepalese Manuscripts of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* (1)”. Those who read them are kindly requested to judge if the classification is valid or not.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people who encouraged me and supported this project for 13 years from 1997 to 2010.

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), who has wholeheartedly dedicated himself to the cause of world peace and the well-being of humanity. Without him, this project itself could not have materialized, and it would have been very difficult for us to achieve the scheduled goals due to various obstacles. The guidelines for life offered in his occasional speeches have encouraged me and enabled me to advance step by step. His words urged me to challenge myself though I often lost heart as a result of difficulties that arose in my daily life. From the bottom of my heart, I sincerely hope that the fruits of this project will become seeds that will be being carried into the tide of world peace created by the SGI leader and that they bloom large flowers of culture all over the world.

Next, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Minoru Harada, president of the Soka Gakkai, and other people from related sections of the Gakkai’s Headquarters. Furthermore, I extend my sincere gratitude to the people concerned at the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP), in particular, Dr. Yoichi Kawada, IOP director and chairman of the IOP Board of Trustees, Mr. Yasuo Morita, adviser and former chairman, Mr. Naoki Hagimoto, managing director, and Mr. Hirofumi Koseki, IOP secretary-general.

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