

THE PHILOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE BUDDHIST MANUSCRIPTS IN THE CHUSON-JI COLLECTION 中尊寺經

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ABSTRACT

The Buddhist manuscripts stored in the collection of the Chūson-ji Monastery were written in the first half of the 12th century in gold and silver ink on dark blue paper. They rank only second to the Nara Period manuscripts in their faithful preservation of the original text. By carefully collating the entire Chūson-ji collection of 4,396 scrolls (much in the same way as the editors of the *Taishō Canon* did with the Shōsō-in manuscripts), we could reconstruct not only the Buddhist Canon as recorded by the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* (which comprised in 1,076 texts in 5,058 scrolls) but also a large part of the Canon described in the *Zhenyuan Catalogue* (totalling 1,238 works in 5,351 scrolls). The reason why such a collation makes the reconstruction possible springs from the fact that there are important differences existing between the printed Canons and the manuscript Canons, differences which cannot be neglected. Let me give three examples.

(1) In the case of the *Scripture of the Wise and the Foolish*, the number of scrolls and the order of chapters in the manuscript versions are totally different from the printed text of the *Korean Canon* and the Song edition. Collating the ancient Japanese manuscript versions, the Chūson-ji collection included, will no doubt reveal many crucial aspects in the formation of the Chinese translation of the text.

(2) Scroll VII of the Chūson-ji manuscript of the *Śūrangamasamādhisūtra* is considerably different from the Taishō version. A careful study of the Chūson-ji manuscript will similarly contribute to casting more light on the formation of the text.

(3) Xuanzang's translation of the *Vimśatikāvijñaptimātratāsiddhi* in the Chūson-ji collection contains a Postface by Jingmai (dates unknown). The Postface seems to have been attached to the text from the beginning, but by the time of the Korean edition of the Canon, appears to have been deleted.

If we wish to obtain a clearer picture of the basic texts of the Tang Buddhism, it is not sufficient to check only the printed editions of the Canon, as done hitherto. The Dunhuang collections, on the other hand, preserve only about 30% of the entire Buddhist Canon. The only way to satisfy our scholarly curiosity as to how the complete Canon looked is to give more attention to the

ancient Japanese collections copied during the Nara and Heian periods. Amongst them, the Chūson-ji Collection is particularly noteworthy not only for the fact that it contains about 80% of the Canon recorded in the *Zhenyuan Catalogue* but its manuscripts also represent very faithful versions of the originals. It is therefore a desideratum to make full use of the Chūson-ji Collection in order to obtain better reconstructions of the basic Buddhist scriptures in East Asia.

Key Words: Buddhist manuscripts in Japan, Chūson-ji Collection, *Zenyuan Catalogue*.

The Buddhist Canon, known in East Asia as the *Yiqiejing* 一切經 (Japanese, *Issaikyō*) or *Dazangjing* 大藏經 (Jp. *Daizōkyō*), represents an immense collection of texts, from early sermons to late commentaries and philosophical treatises, which were regarded as having scriptural authority. Its content and structure varied during the ages. Its full-fledged or classical form came to be based upon the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* 開元錄 Ch. *Kaiyuan lu*; Jp. *Kaigen roku*) compiled by the Chinese scholar-monk Zhisheng 智昇 in year 18 of the Kaiyuan 開元 Dynastic Era, i. e. 730 C. E. A full set of manuscripts of the entire Canon compiled according to the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* was brought to Japan by the monk Genbō 玄昉 (d. 746). This became the basis for a state-sponsored enterprise of producing copies of individual scriptures or full sets of the Canon, enterprise which reached its peak in the Nara 奈良 Period (710-794) and was continued throughout the Heian 平安 Period (784-1192).

A major technical innovation was to change the picture considerably. Between 972 and 983, the first woodblock print edition of the Canon was produced in China. This is known as the *Kaibao Era Canon* 開寶藏 or the *Edition [Printed] by the Imperial Order of the Northern Song Dynasty* 北宋勅版. A copy of this canon was brought to Japan by the monk Chōnen 喬然 (938-1016), and manuscripts based on this edition can be found amongst the copies made during late Heian Period.

By the end of the Heian Period, we see manuscript Canons and woodblock print Canons circulating side by side. The latter, however, was much easier to use and enjoyed the privilege of being sanctioned as an official version on the Continent. This eventually made the printed editions of the Canon occupy a dominant position. And the situation has continued into our times. The world

famous *Taishō Canon* 大正新脩大藏經, compiled in Japan between 1922 and 1933, is based on the *Korean Canon* 高麗版. In the footnotes it contains a text critical apparatus with the readings of various other editions, mostly and consistently those of the Song 宋, Yuan 元, and Ming 明 Canons.

What happened to the manuscript Canons in China and Japan? In China no entire manuscript Canon has survived. The Dunhuang Collection preserves only about one third of the Buddhist Canon of its time. As to the manuscript Canons brought from China to Japan as well as to the local copies produced during the Nara and Heian Periods, some are indeed extant and the question is whether modern philology has carefully assessed and made use of them. The answer to the latter question is, I am afraid, close to negative.

Virtually, the only large-scale modern project involving ancient Japanese Buddhist manuscripts is the *Taishō Canon*. Actually, a large part of the Nara manuscripts were collected in the Imperial Collection of Shōsō-in 正倉院, the so-called *Shōsō-in Treasure of Sacred Words* 正倉院聖語藏. The editors of the *Taishō Canon* planned from the beginning to collate this manuscript collection with other available editions for their magnum opus. Work was already in progress at the Museum of the Imperial House (present Tokyo National Museum) when the Great Kantō Earthquake struck Tokyo area on 2 September 1923 with devastating effects. The collection was unaffected but had to be rushed back to Nara in Western Japan. Unavoidable as it was at that time, this meant, however, that the collation and study of the Shōsō-in collection had to end too early and was insufficient.

Following decades have not brought much change, and meticulous philological research of this as well as other ancient collections is still in its infancy. General surveys or detailed individual studies of the transmission lineages of the Nara manuscripts are virtually inexistent. For quite a few of years, I have been personally involved in the codicological and philological research of the ancient manuscript Canons in Japan, and this has led me to a number of interesting findings. My investigations are increasingly pointing to the following conclusion: the greater part of the late Heian copies in such collections as the Nanatsu-dera Canon 七寺一切經 (Important Cultural Asset of Japan), amounting to 4,954 scrolls 卷, and the Kongō-ji Canon 金剛寺一切經, containing 4,500 scrolls, is based on Nara manuscripts.

Last January, I had the chance to conduct a sampling of the Chūson-ji Collection of Buddhist Scriptures 中尊寺經, which consists of 4,396 scrolls. Chūson-ji is a temple situated in North Eastern Japan (modern Iwata Prefecture),

which was founded and flourished in the late Heian Period under the lavish patronage of the Fujiwara 藤原 family. Most of the manuscripts of the Collection date back to the 12th centuries, and our preliminary findings show that many of them are copies of Nara manuscripts. The *Chūson-ji Collection Survey Catalogue*, compiled by the Kyoto National Museum, leads to a similar conclusion: a large part of the Collection appears to be based on Nara manuscripts.

The Chūson Collection, with its masterfully decorated and illustrated manuscripts, is famous mainly as a masterpiece of Buddhist art. It has actually been designated as National Treasure of Japan. The scriptures are written on dark blue paper with columns in gold ink alternating with columns in silver ink. What has been largely overlooked so far is the high philological value of the Collection, which ranks only second to the Nara manuscripts. A careful process of collation of all the 4,396 scrolls of the Chūson Collection with the corresponding texts in the *Taishō Canon* will allow the reconstruction of most of the classical Tang Canon as reflected not only in the *Kaiyuan Catalogue*, which registers 1,076 texts in 5,048 scrolls, but also in the *Zhenyuan Catalogue* 貞元錄, which registers 1,238 works in 5,351 scrolls.

Such a process will yield more than a handful of variant readings. It has already become clear that the differences in the structure and content between the printed editions, traditional or modern, and manuscript versions of many texts are too important to be ignored or relegated to the status of philological curiosities. In what follows, I should like to present very briefly the preliminary findings of the sampling of twenty-six texts of the Chūson Collection (as available in microfilms stored at the Kyoto National Museum) which have been undertaken by the research team which I lead. The following data reflects the state of research as of September 2nd, 2007.

Samplings studied by MIYAKE Tetsujō 三宅徹誠 (PhD student)

1. *Xian yu jing* 賢愚經: The order of its chapters is different from the printed editions. It has 17 scrolls. It is a copy based on Nara manuscript(s).

2. *Qi zhi jing* 七知經: The text represents the same lineage as the Nara Manuscript (Important Cultural Asset) now belonging to the Dannō hōrin-ji 檀王法林寺. It is obviously based on Nara manuscript(s).

3. *Pinpishaluo wang yi Fo gongyang jing* 頻毘娑羅王詣佛供養經: represents the same lineage as the Nara Manuscript now belonging to the Dannō hōrin-ji; obviously, based on Nara manuscript(s).

4. Scroll I of the *Nanhai gui ji neifa zhuan* 南海歸寄內法傳: represents the same lineage as the Nara Manuscript now property of the Tenri Library 天理図書館.; obviously, based on Nara manuscript(s).

5. *Wu bai wen shi jing* 五百問事經: different from the printed editions; based on Nara manuscript(s).

Samplings studied by HAYASHIDERA Shōshun 林寺正俊 (PhD)

1. *San fa du lun* 三法度論: different from the printed editions; represents the same lineage as the Nanatsu-dera and Kongō-ji manuscripts; based on Nara manuscript (s).

2. *Wu wang jing* 五王經: different from the printed editions; represents the same lineage as the Nanatsu-dera and Kongō-ji manuscripts; based on Nara manuscript(s).

3. *Wu ku zhang ju jing* 五苦章句經: different from the printed editions; based on Nara manuscript(s).

4. *Fa ju piyu jing* 法句譬喻經: the main text is based on Nara manuscript(s).

5. *Zeng yi ahan jing* 增一阿含經: the main text is based on Nara manuscript(s).

6. *Si di jing* 四諦經: different from the printed editions; it is possible that the text may have been based on Nara manuscript(s).

Samplings studied by MINOURA Naomi 箕浦尚美 (PhD)

1. *Yiqiejing yin yi* 一切經音義: based on Nara manuscript(s).

2. *Guan jing* 觀經: different from printed versions; probably, based on Nara manuscript(s); the main text is close to the Dunhuang 敦煌 manuscript lineage.

3. *Da zhou lu* 大周錄: different from the Korean Canon and Song edition; probably, based on Nara manuscripts(s) (?).

4. *Maming pusa zhuan* 馬鳴菩薩傳: completely different from the printed versions; based on Nara manuscripts(s); same lineage as the Nanatsu-dera manuscript.

5. *Hu jing jing* 護淨經: different from printed versions; same lineage as the Kongō-ji manuscript; based on Nara manuscript(s).

Samplings studied by CHI Limei 池麗梅 (PhD)

1. *Egui baoying jing* 餓鬼報應經: different from printed versions; same lineage as the Kongō-ji manuscript; based on Nara manuscript(s).

2. *Qi nü jing* 七女經: probably a copy of a Song printed edition (?).

3. *Xü gao seng zhuan* 續高僧傳: different from printed versions; based on Nara manuscript(s); rare edition.

Samplings studied by LIN Min 林敏 (PhD student)

1. *Shoulengyan jing* 首楞嚴經: different from printed versions; same lineage as the Kongō-ji manuscript; based on Nara manuscript(s).

2. *An zhai shen zhou jing* 安宅神呪經: different from printed versions; probably based on the early stratum of Nara manuscripts (?).

3. *Zhenyuan lu* 貞元錄: different from printed versions; based on the old version of the *Zhenyuan lu*; represents the lineage of the *Hiei-zan hōonzō issaikyō* 比叡山報恩藏一切經 and the *Shimizu-dera gokyōzō mokuroku* 清水寺御經藏目錄.

4. *Xü gu jin yi jing tu ji* 續古今譯經圖記: different from printed versions; same lineage as the Kongō-ji manuscript; based on Nara manuscript(s).

5. *Ji zhu jing li chan yi* 集諸經禮懺儀: different from printed versions; same lineage as the Kongō-ji manuscript; based on Nara manuscript(s).

Samplings studied by UESUGI Tomofusa 上杉智英 (PhD student)

1. *Shi zhu piposha lun* 十住毘婆沙論: number of scrolls and text different from printed versions; based on Nara manuscript(s).

2. *Weishi ershi lun* 唯識二十論: contains a Postface 後序 by Jingmai 靖邁; same lineage as the Nanatsu-dera Canon; based on Nara manuscript(s).

Remarks on the samplings

I shall add a few more words about three of the most important texts mentioned above.

(1) In the case of the *Xian yu jing* or the *Scripture of the Wise and the Foolish* 賢愚經, the number of scrolls 卷 and the order of chapters 品 in the Chūson manuscript is totally different from the printed text of the *Korean Canon* 高麗藏 and the Song edition of the Canon 宋版. The collation of all ancient Japanese manuscript versions, the Chūson Collection included, will no doubt reveal many important aspects in the formation of the Chinese translation of the text. More about this will be presented in Mr Miyake's presentation at this Conference.

(2) Scroll VII 卷七 of the Chūson manuscript of the *Shoulengyan jing* (Skt. *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*) or the *Sutra on the Concentration of the Heroic March* 首楞嚴三昧經 is considerably different from the Taishō version. A careful study of the Chūson manuscript will similarly contribute to casting more light on the formation of the text. Mr Lin is now working on this subject, and his findings will certainly reveal more details.

(3) Xuanzang's 玄奘 translation of the *Weishi ershi lun* (Skt. *Viśitikājñapti-mātratāsiddhi*) or the *Treatise on the Twenty Verses on Cognition-only* 唯識二十論 in the Chūson Collection contains a Postface 後序 by Jingmai 靖邁 (dates unknown). The Postface seems to have been attached to the *Treatise* at a very early date in Tang China, but it was apparently deleted by the editors of the *Korean Canon*. More research will be needed in order to reach a definitive conclusion concerning this historical detail, but the fact of its deletion from the *Korean Canon* is clearly stated in the *Emendation Catalogue* 校正錄 appended to this edition:

丹藏此論有後序 三十余行，沙門靖邁製者。今件檢之，彼乃慈恩 述記之後序耳。非爲論本所製，故今不取。

In the *Khitan Canon* 丹藏, this *Treatise* has a Postface of over 30 columns, which was written by the Śramaṇa Jingmai 靖邁. Now, an examination of this [text leads us to conclude that] this is nothing but a Postface to Cien's 慈恩 *Exposition* 述記 [of the *Treatise*]. Since it is not written for the *Treatise* proper, [we] do not include [it in] the present [edition of the Canon].

This ‘Postface of over 30 columns’ seems to fit well with the testimony of the Chūson Collection and the Nanatsu-dera Canon. In both witnesses, Jingmai’s Postface has 31 columns (without counting its title). We can thus be certain that the Postface in question is the same text as the one surviving in the Japanese manuscript witnesses. All this appears to indicate that Jingmai’s Postface was deleted by the scholar-monk Sugi 守基, author of the *Emendation Catalogue* as well as the editor-in-chief of the *Korean Canon*.

But was Sugi’s decision correct in this case? The aforementioned *Exposition* refers to the *Exposition of the Treatise on the Twenty Verses on Cognition-only* 唯識二十論述記 by Ji 基 (632-682), Xuanzang’s foremost disciple and successor. Ji was also known as the Great Master Cien 慈恩大師, the name used in Sugi’s remark cited above. It is true that in his Postface, Jingmai mentions and praises Ji’s *Exposition of the Treatise on the Twenty Verses on Cognition-only*.¹ This, however, does not mean that the Postface was written for the latter text. On the contrary, it is very likely that Sugi made the wrong decision when he decided to delete the Postface.

Three additional reasons also seem to point in the same direction:

- (a) The Postface is quite similar to other works authored by Jingmai 靖邁 (*var. lec.* 靜邁).
- (b) The manuscripts in the Chūson Collection and the Nanatsu-dera Canon clearly append this Postface to the *Treatise on the Twenty Verses on Cognition-only*.
- (c) Huilin’s 慧琳 encyclopedic work *Yiqiejing yin yi* 一切經音義 contains entries on the pronunciation and meaning of difficult terms from this Postface.

If we wish to obtain a clearer picture of the basic Buddhist sacred corpus established in Tang China, it is not sufficient to check only the printed editions of the Canon, as it has been done hitherto. And although we have in the Dunhunag Collection the testimony of a partial Canon, the number and the state of preservation of the extant texts are insufficient. The only way to reconstruct

¹ The text of Jingmai’s Postface runs as follows: 筆受基法師。師、三藏入室之神足也。族貴五陵、名高三輔。大龜諸滅之歲、落綵玄門。鷲鷲悟正之年、研機至理。智津三筐、藝冠九流。雖相應對法、並洞玄微然於唯識之指、特精其邃。是以釋成唯識為琮義之林、文開十軸。解茲唯識二十為述妙之紀。詞文兩卷。其於至理幽槃、玄根沖澹。皆蒙大師函杖之訓、指掌之規。恐有聞之未行、懼瓶受之斯漏。遂染翰墨、式擬書紳。余以閱譯之暇序之、云爾。(唯識論後序)

the complete Tang Canon is to give more attention to the ancient Japanese collections copied during the Nara and Heian Periods. Amongst them, the Chūson Collection is particularly noteworthy not only for the fact that it contains about 80 % of the Canon recorded in the *Zhenyuan Catalogue* but also because its manuscripts represent very faithful versions of the originals. The reconstruction of the basic corpus of Buddhist sacred literature in traditional East Asia, a strong philological and cultural desideratum, will, therefore, require the meticulous study and collation of the Chūson Collection.

