

**Research on the *Ekottarika-āgama*
(Taishō 125)**

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(Taishō 125)**

edited by Dhammadinnā

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Dharma Drum Buddhist College Series

In 1994, Master Sheng Yen (1931–2009), the founder of Dharma Drum Buddhist College, began publishing the Series of the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies. The purposes of publishing this series were: to provide a venue for academic research in Buddhist Studies supported by scholarships from the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies; to encourage top-quality Buddhist research; and to cultivate an interest in Buddhist research among the readership of the series. Moreover, by encouraging cooperation with international research institutions, he hoped to promote the domestic status of the academic study of Buddhism.

In keeping with Master Sheng Yen's vision, in order to promote different aspects of exchange in academic research, we at Dharma Drum Buddhist College have begun to publish three educational series:

- Dharma Drum Buddhist College Research Series (DDBC-RS)
- Dharma Drum Buddhist College Translation Series (DDBC-TS)
- Dharma Drum Buddhist College Special Series (DDBC-SS)

The Research Series (DDBC-RS) is primarily intended as a venue for academic research in the field of Buddhist Studies in general and of Chinese Buddhism in particular. The Translation Series (DDBC-TS) will present English renditions of Chinese canonical works as well as other important works, or else Chinese translations of academic publications on Buddhism that have appeared in European languages or Japanese, etc. The Special Series (DDBC-SS) will accommodate works which require special publication formats.

Among our future goals is the extensive development of Buddhist digital publishing and information to adapt to the interactive and

hyper-connective environment of the Web 2.0 age. This will allow research outcomes to be quickly shared and evaluated through the participation of individual users, through such media as blogs, shared tagging, wikis, social networks and so on. Our hope is to work towards developing an open environment for academic studies (perhaps called Science 2.0) on Buddhist culture that will be more collaborative and efficient than traditional academic studies. In this way, Dharma Drum Buddhist College will continue to help foster the availability of digital resources for Buddhist Studies.

Bhikṣu Huimin

President, Dharma Drum Buddhist College

Dharma Drum Buddhist College, 26 July 2010

Introduction

On April 20, 2012, an impromptu but well-attended and well-received workshop was convened at the Library and Information Center of Dharma Drum Buddhist College under the title “增壹阿含經 — The Chinese Translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*: Research Perspectives and Collaboration”. The text in question is the Chinese translation of an Indian *Ekottarika-āgama* or ‘Collection of texts increasing by one’, the *Zengyi ahan jing* (增壹阿含經), now found as entry no. 125 in the Taishō edition of the Chinese canon.

The event was quickly organized to coincide with a visit by Jan Nattier to Dharma Drum Buddhist College. She had already published (2010) on the translation corpus of Zhu Fonian (竺佛念), the translator of Taishō 125. Her findings on the problematic ‘track record’ of Zhu Fonian’s (竺佛念) translation activities with regard to another work, the *Shizhu duanjie jing* (十住斷結經, Taishō 309), pointed to new directions for the further investigation of the problems of language and content of the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama*.

The integration of later elements into the *Ekottarika-āgama*, often related to Mahāyāna thought, distinctly distinguishes it from the other Chinese *Āgamas* as well as their counterparts, the Pali *Nikāyas*. When, where, how and why did this early Buddhist collection and its translation undergo such striking transformations? A survey of the intricate and multi-layered problems regarding the formation, transmission and translation of this *Āgama* is beyond the scope of this introduction. The research papers collected in this volume – arranged alphabetically by authors’ name – address and touch on most questions that bedevil the collection.

Bhikkhu Anālayo opens the volume with a close investigation of two versions of the tale of King Mahādeva included in the extant *Ēkottarika-āgama*. His findings make it fairly certain that the second version of this tale (*Ēkottarika-āgama* discourse no. 50.4) became part of the collection only after the translation of the collection had been completed. This discovery in turn suggests that other late elements found elsewhere in Taishō 125 could derive from revisions or additions effected in China. Anālayo's findings do not in themselves exclude the possibility that some of the changes had already occurred before the *Āgama* reached China, as Tse-fu Kuan (關則富) indicates later in the volume. The coexistence of possible trajectories in this manner points to the need for more detailed case studies of the apparently incongruous materials present in the collection, in order to analytically clarify its processes of modification and transformation. The origin and layering of these more developed parts – questions as to *which* of the textual incongruities entered the collection, *when*, and *where* during the transmission in India, Central Asia, and China – promises fascinating avenues for future research.

Hiraoka Satoshi's (平岡 聡) investigation of the problem of the 'school affiliation' of Taishō 125 is a revised English version of two articles previously published in Japanese (2007 and 2008). Hiraoka was not among the original participants at the 2012 workshop at Dharma Drum Buddhist College, but his recent research was frequently quoted during the workshop, and he kindly agreed to provide a new English version for inclusion in these proceedings. He uses 'narrative analysis' to examine the question of 'school affiliation', which yields useful clues and, once again, highlights the difficulties in tracing the collection back to a consistent lineage of transmission. The problems inherent in the fluctuation and cross-contamination of narrative materials compound with the pos-

sibly contaminated nature of Taishō 125 itself.

The third paper, by Jen-jou Hung (洪振洲), is an in-house product of the newly formed (2012) Āgama Research Group at Dharma Drum Buddhist College, the result of a collaboration between scholars trained in early Buddhist comparative philology with an expert in computational linguistic and text analytics applied to Chinese Buddhist texts. Taking Anālayo's findings as his point of departure, Hung parsed the second version of the tale of King Mahādeva with the procedures of quantitative text analysis and automated translatorship attribution, confirming that this discourse stands alone vis-à-vis the rest of the collection. A by-product of this research was that significant differences were discovered between T 125 and a group of twenty-four individually transmitted *Madhyama-āgama* (中阿含經) translations included in the Taishō edition which had previously been studied by Kōgen Mizuno (水野弘元) (1989). This ascription of different authorship stands in contrast to Mizuno's hypothesis that these individually transmitted discourses are remnants of the first translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* carried out by Zhu Fonian (竺佛念) and Dharmanandin. Further computational research of this nature is especially promising, where the quantitative approach is at its best in collaboration with textual scholars.

The contribution by Tse-fu Kuan (關則富) aims to strengthen the hypothesis of a Mahāsāṅghika affiliation for T 125. His study also offers a closer look at elements of the collection that previous scholars have categorised as 'Mahāyāna features'. The two parts of this contribution add new evidence to the old scholarly debate on the trends of the Mahāyāna that may be related to developments and transmission within Mahāsāṅghika communities. The definition of typically Mahāyāna content as against that of early and Middle Period Indian Buddhism is one of the most hazardous ter-

rains in Buddhist studies, as is the need to differentiate between the emergence of Mahāyāna trends within the early transmission of the canonical collections and passages that reflect the development of a fully-fledged Mahāyāna ideology. Thus the difficulties in categorising and identifying ‘Mahāyāna’ elements and motifs are nothing but pointers to the complexity of pinpointing clear-cut redefinitions of terminologies which have been recycled and imbued with new meanings.

Ken Su (蘇錦坤) closes the volume with a contribution on the summary stanzas, or *uddānas*, of Taishō 125. These summary stanzas, employed in the transmission of Buddhist scriptural collections, provide an essential key to understanding the structural aspect of the early Buddhist *Āgamas* and *Nikāyas*. This is the first typological and systematic study of the *uddānas* of Taishō 125 to be made available to English-language readership. Ken Su also takes up structural discrepancies between Dao’an’s (道安) preface to the *Ekottarika-āgama* and the extant T 125, and inspects passages identified as quotations from (an) *Ekottarika-āgama* in the *Jinglü yixiang* (經律異相, T 2121) that are not found in the received collection. These investigations sound a note of caution regarding the use of catalogues, prefaces and scriptural quotations for the reconstruction of the history of Taishō 125. Making available in European languages more such contributions is highly desirable.

To conclude this introduction to the volume, I must briefly comment on my own role as editor. I am neither a Sinologist by education nor an *Āgama* specialist. However, the intrinsic lure of these scriptures inspires me to serve the cause of *Āgama* scholarship by supporting collaboration and by making the research conducted in Taiwan more widely known. Above all the desire to make the results of our local workshop available to the wider academic community led me to take up this editorial task.

While the papers were peer-reviewed, the authors were left free to make their own final decisions and to draw their own conclusions. The individual contributions have not been standardised editorially to any excessive degree, and the perspectives and conclusions reached by the authors at times do not always agree. The diversity of perception is a genuine reflection of the ‘works in progress’ of research on Taishō 125. Clearly, a convincing overarching model which can account for the *Ekottarika-āgama*’s fascinating blend of coherence and incoherence has yet to emerge, but my goal will be fulfilled if the volume inspires further questioning and exploration. I am certain that all of the contributors will welcome suggestions or criticism on research that remains naturally *in fieri*.

I thank Jan Nattier for the initial inspiration, and all of us regret that in the end her inspiring contribution could not be included in this volume. We look forward to its future publication. My gratitude goes to the many friends and colleagues who have contributed to the coming into being of this volume: Bhikṣu Huimin (釋惠敏), President of Dharma Drum Buddhist College, and Jen-jou Hung (洪振洲), Head of the Library and Information Center, for having allowed me the space and the support needed for the event; the staff of the Library and Information Center for their continuous selfless help; the students of Dharma Drum Buddhist College and those who attended the workshop for participating and engaging; Kuo-ping Chuang (莊國彬), responsible for our publications, for readily endorsing the volume proposal; Pei-shin Lo (羅珮心) of the publications section for her gentle liaising with Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation; Shen Yihua (沈宜樺) of Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation for her patience with us; the reviewers for their feedback; all authors for their patience; Bhikṣu Changrui (釋長叡), Lina Chen (陳莉娜) and Luke Gibson, graduate students at Dharma Drum Buddhist College, for having kindly offered varied assis-

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We would like to dedicate the merits of this work to the memory of John R. McRae.

Sāmaṇerī Dhammadinnā

Director, Āgama Research Group

Dharma Drum Buddhist College

Dharma Drum Buddhist College, 6 July 2013