

Acknowledgements

Einosuke Akiya

IN January of 1994 the Soka Gakkai, hoping to make available to scholars of Buddhism throughout the world facsimile editions of important fragments of the original Sanskrit text of the Lotus Sutra, along with romanized versions of the texts, set up a committee for the publications of such facsimile editions. This marked the start of the present project. The committee entrusted details regarding its researches, public relations and editing procedures to the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP) in Tokyo.

Since then, eight years have passed. In May, 1997, *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Fragments from the Lüshun Museum Collection* (Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 1) was published, followed in November of 1998 by *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Facsimile Edition* (Series 2-1), in May of 2000 by *Fragments of a Manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarikāsūtra from Khādaliq* (Series 3), and in May of 2001 by *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Romanized Text I* (Series 2-2). Much to our gratification, these publications were well received by scholars throughout the world who are concerned with Indian and Buddhist studies and matters pertaining to Buddhist bibliography, and the initial objective of our series was thus achieved. As sponsors of the project, we are deeply grateful to all those who contributed to this success.

The project to produce the present publication, *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscripts from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1682 and Add. 1683)*, originated from this background, and proceeded in the following manner.

Shortly after the initiation of the project, members of IOP or its affiliated centre in Europe, Institute of Oriental Philosophy European Centre (IOPEC), paid a number of visits to Craig Jamieson, keeper of Sanskrit manuscripts, Cambridge University Library, and were shown the manuscripts of the Sanskrit Lotus Sutra in the library's collection. In May of 1998, a representative of IOP responsible for the facsimile project visit-

ed Cambridge and arranged for the publication of facsimiles of manuscripts Add. 1682 and Add. 1683. In May of 2000, the arrangements for the actual photographing of these manuscripts were made by trained personnel of both parties. In August of that year, colour photographs of the two manuscripts were produced by the library's Photography Department and sent to Japan the following month. In the latter part of 2000 and the first part of 2001, the photo plates were made, and the whole process was completed in 2002.

Cambridge University Library preserves in its collection and makes available to the public a number of highly important materials, including many Sanskrit texts found in Nepal in the 1870s by Daniel Wright (1833–1902) and later by Cecil Bendall (1856–1906). Bendall's Catalogue constitutes a fitting monument to the importance of these labours. The texts reproduced in the present volume, *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscripts from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1682 and Add. 1683)*, are among the oldest of the Nepalese-Tibetan manuscripts in the library's collection and are of vital importance for textual studies of the Lotus Sutra. Add. 1682 and Add. 1683 were used as the original texts for the Hendrik Kern translation of the Lotus Sutra, *The Saddharmapundarika, or The Lotus of the True Law*, Sacred Books of the East 21 (Oxford 1884), and Add. 1683 was used for the collation of the Kern-Nanjio edition of the Sanskrit text, Hendrik Kern and Bunyiu Nanjio, eds., *Saddharmapundarika*, Bibliotheca Buddhica 10 (St Petersburg 1908–12). The publication of facsimile editions of these important texts in the initial years of the twenty-first century is an event of deep significance and a cause for congratulations.

During the period leading up to publication, we were fortunate in having the warm support and cooperation of Deputy Librarian D. J. Hall, Craig Jamieson, and others associated with Cambridge University Library. The members of the Photography Department in particular, in spite of their busy schedule, obliged us by producing beautiful colour photographs of the manuscripts. I wish to express special thanks for their help. In addition, Professor Hirofumi Toda of the University of Tokushima in Japan, an authority in Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscript studies, undertook the task of editorial supervision for us. The notations appearing at the lower right of the facsimile edition indicating the corresponding page and line in the Kern-Nanjio edition are all based on materials provided by Professor Toda, for which we offer sincere thanks.

I would like to close by once more acknowledging the debt of gratitude we owe to all those who contributed to the success of this project. I

might add that, as a continuation of the project, we are now making plans to publish a volume entitled “Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the University of Tokyo General Library (No. 414), Romanized Text”, and another entitled “Tangut Lotus Sutra from the St Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences”.

26 January 2002

*This article is reprinted from the *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscripts from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1682 and Add. 1683), Facsimile Edition* (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2002).