

# The *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan Buddhist History and Culture, Part 1

James B. Apple

The *Lotus Sutra*, an important Mahāyāna Buddhist scripture, influenced many East Asian Buddhist traditions such as the Tiantai School in China and Korea, its Japanese Tendai derivative, and Nichiren based traditions in Japan. A recent paper argued that the *Lotus Sutra* had a significant place in the history of Indian Buddhism (Apple 2016). This essay examines the place of the *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan Buddhist history and culture. Part 1 outlines the initial Tibetan translations of the *Lotus Sutra* in the late eighth century and highlights Tibetan Buddhist understandings of the *Lotus Sutra* in the early history of Buddhism in Tibetan culture. Part 2 examines the Tibetan understanding of the *Lotus Sutra* among scholarly commentators from the twelfth century up to the present day.

# The *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan Buddhist History and Culture, Part 1

James B. Apple

## Introduction

The *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* (hereafter, *Lotus Sutra*) has been a significant Mahāyāna Buddhist scripture in the history of South, Central, and East Asia. A recently published, and well-regarded, dictionary on Buddhism claims that the *Lotus Sutra* is “perhaps the most influential of all Mahāyāna sūtras” (Buswell and Lopez 2014). Certainly, East Asian Buddhist schools such as Tiantai in China and Korea, its Japanese Tendai offshoot, and Japanese traditions based on Nichiren centered their teachings around the *Lotus Sutra*. What of the place of the *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan forms of Buddhism? A recent publication claims that “the sūtra is of little importance in Tibet” (Lopez 2016:28). Is this claim accurate? Part 1 of this essay outlines the place of the *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan Buddhist history and culture. Part 2 examines the Tibetan understanding of the *Lotus Sutra* among scholarly commentators from the twelfth century up to the present day. The essay concludes that the *Lotus Sutra* has a place in Tibetan Buddhist history and culture that is more than commonly acknowledged.

## The *Lotus Sutra* in the Tibetan Imperial Era (6th–9th centuries)<sup>1</sup>

The appearance of the *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan culture is intimately related to the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet and the subsequent translation of a great amount of Buddhist scriptures sanctioned by imperial decree and financial support. According to indigenous Tibetan

---

1 This section appropriates material found in Apple 2014b.

historians, Buddhism (*sangs rgyas kyi chos*) first appeared in Tibet around the fourth century CE. Although modern scholars consider these early accounts to be legendary, they may indicate plausible historical developments where some knowledge of Buddhism came to Tibet in the latter phases of its prehistory, as Buddhism was already well established in all surrounding geographical areas, including China to the east, India and Nepal to the south, and in the Central Asian city states to the north. Along these lines, the *Lotus Sutra* was present in all these surrounding areas by this time as Dharmarakṣa's translation of this Mahāyāna scripture, the *Zhengfahua jing* 正法華經 (T.263) had been translated in 285 CE with Indian and Kuchean collaborators (Boucher 2006), and Kumārajīva, a native of Kucha, completed his translation, the *Miaofalianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (T. no.262, 9), in 406 CE. Be this as it may, it would be several centuries before a translation of the *Lotus Sutra* would appear in Tibetan.

Tibet enters recorded history during the reign of the Emperor (*btsan-po*) Srong-btsan sgam-po (c. 605–649), the thirty-third ruler of Yarlung, who is considered by traditional Tibetan historians as the first “ruler of the [Buddha]dharma” (*chos rgyal*). Traditional Tibetan scholars credit Srong-bstan sgam-po with introducing a system of writing, the systemization of a law code, and the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet. Even though there is not much historical evidence to support the claims that Srong-btsan sgam-po actively promulgated Buddhism, he at least granted some degree of toleration to this foreign system of beliefs and practices. Legendary accounts describe how the emperor sent his minister Thon-mi-saṃ-bho-ta to Kashmir and India in order to develop a script for the Tibetan language, ostensibly for the translation of Buddhist scriptures.<sup>2</sup> Importantly, early historical sources mention that Thon-mi-saṃ-bho-ta brought back with him a number of texts of dharma (*chos*) including the *Pad ma dkar po*, “the White Lotus,” or *Lotus Sutra*. Later sources will list twenty-one texts that Thon-mi-saṃ-bho-ta brought back to Tibet, all of which were affiliated with the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (see Part 2). However, the earliest sources mention that he only brought back a few texts, that the Tibetans were unable to

---

2 Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 26–27; Sørensen 1994: 167–176.

translate or read them, and that the texts were sealed and placed in a treasury within the ancient royal castle of Phying-ba stag-rtse.<sup>3</sup> As this account illustrates, the cultural conditions were not yet suitable for the full importation of Buddhism and the translation of Buddhist texts into Tibet.

Buddhism would become firmly established in Tibet during the reign of Khri-srong lde-bstan (755-c. 800 CE) and for this reason later Tibetan historians considered him the second “ruler of the [Buddha] dharma” among the early Tibetan monarchs. The reign of this monarch marked the rapid expansion of Tibetan military power concomitant with the adaption and assimilation of Buddhism. At the beginning of his reign, by 755 CE, Tibetan military forces had expanded the empire into Bengal, and they even briefly occupied the Chinese capital of Chang’an in 763 CE. The young emperor officially converted to Buddhism at the age of twenty (762 CE) (Kapstein 2006: 67–68). The emperor then made the decision to build Bsam-yas (“inconceivable”), Tibet’s first Buddhist monastery, in consultation with the erudite Indian monk Śāntarakṣita (723–787 CE), a Mahāyāna scholar from Bengal. Slightly before the final consecration of Bsam-yas in 779 CE, seven “most awakened” men (*sad-mi-mi-bdun*) were chosen for ordination as the first monks (*dge-slong*) in Tibet. At the time of Bsam-yas’s final consecration, several hundred people, including female nobles, took monastic vows (Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 73). From this point forward in Tibetan Buddhist history, monastic communities within Tibet followed the monastic code (*vinaya*) of the Indian Mūlasarvāstivāda order.

With the establishment of monastic communities, early translation teams and study units were formed for the translation of Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit and Chinese, and probably Central Asia languages such as Khotanese as well (Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 69–71). Translation procedures mostly likely were initiated by Śāntarakṣita and his translators as early as 763 CE, based on terminological lists drafted from the translation of Mahāyāna sūtras such as the *Ratnamegha*, *Lankāvatāra*, and possibly the *Lotus Sutra*. The emperor established a Buddhist council at his court and a committee for

---

3 Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 27.

the translation of dharma (*dar ma bsgyur ba'i lo cha pa'i sgra*) (Scherrer-Schaub 2002). At the time of Bsam-yas monastery's consecration (779 CE), the emperor issued an edict (*bka'gtsigs*) and authoritative statement (*bka'mchid*) regarding the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet and its Imperial support.

In the 780s, Tibetan military expansion extended into northwest China up into the Ordos region (Beckwith 1987: 148–156), including areas along the Silk Route and the major Buddhist oasis-state of Dunhuang. These martial activities prompted exchanges between various currents of Buddhism in central Tibet, Silk Route border areas, and Dunhuang. As mentioned, the rapid expansion of the Tibetan empire was connected with the adaptation of Buddhism, which as Kapstein (2000:59) has suggested, “promoted a particular, well-ordered, cosmological framework,...the ethical and ritual mastery of the cosmos it promoted... and the institutional mastery of techniques...which conformed with the bureaucratic requirements of empire.” One of these techniques for the bureaucratic requirement of Tibetan empire, I wish to suggest, was the distribution and forced copying of early Tibetan translations of Mahāyāna sūtras in the border areas of the Silk Route and Dunhuang during this period. Recovered from the border region of Endere, for instance, were fragments of the Old Tibetan version of the *Śālistambasūtra* (Barnett and Francke 1907) as well as a large manuscript of the Old Tibetan version of the *Lotus Sūtra* (Karashima 2007). Old Tibetan fragments of the *Lotus Sūtra* (IOL Tib J 190, 191, 192; Stein T 193.2) were recovered from Dunhuang as well. In addition to the distribution and copying of Tibetan translations of sūtras, the Tibetans also sought out important Buddhist teachers in these regions.

One such individual was Tankuang 曇曠, a well-regarded Yogācāra master who had studied in the Ximing-si temple and then arrived in Dunhuang, at the latest, in 763 CE.<sup>4</sup> During the Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang, Tankuang composed his *Dasheng ershi'er wen* 大乘二十二問 (“Twenty-two questions concerning Mahāyāna”), a dialogue in which he responds to twenty-two questions of the Tibetan King Khri-srong lde-btsan. In his response to question eighteen, Tankuang discussed the

---

4 Ueyama 2012:20–23; Rong 2013:70–72.

doctrine of the single vehicle (一乘, Ch. *yisheng*, Skt. *ekayāna*) while making reference to the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>5</sup> This text demonstrates that the Emperor, as well as his Tibetan translators, must have had sufficient knowledge of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Lotus Sutra* to comprehend the detailed doctrinal points that Tankuang elucidates. In his discussion, Tankuang outlines the Yogācāra position of three separate vehicles as opposed to the single vehicle (*ekayāna*) position of the *Lotus Sutra*. According to Tankuang, the difference between these doctrines is due to the fact that, for him, the *Lotus Sutra* was taught after the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*. Although Tankuang emphasized differences among sutras concerning three separate vehicles and the one single vehicle, he concluded that the one single vehicle is the ultimate truth.

In addition to seeking out instructions from Chinese teachers such as Tankuang, Khri-srong lde-bstan requested an arrangement with China (781 CE) to send two Buddhist monks, replaced every two years, for teaching Buddhism (Demiéville 1952: 184n2). During this time as well, Khri-srong lde-bstan brought a Chinese Chan master known as *Heshang* 和尚 (monk) Moheyan (摩訶衍), or *hva shang* Mahāyāna in Tibetan, to central Tibet. Moheyan taught a system of meditation (*dhyāna*) that was current in the Dunhuang region at this time and gained as many as five thousand Tibetan followers (Demiéville 1952: 25, 154), including noble ladies from prominent clans residing at the royal court (Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 76–77). Moheyan’s teachings were controversial in that he advocated a spontaneous path to Buddhahood (*cig car pa* or *ston mun pa*; Ch. *dunmen*) involving sudden awakening (*dunwu*). These teachings and the patronage they generated troubled Indian scholar-monks residing at Bsam-yas who taught a path of gradual attainment (*rim gyis pa* or *btsen min pa*; Ch. *jianmen*). As a result of these ostensive doctrinal differences, along with underlying factional socio-political factors (Richardson 1998: 198–215), Moheyan and his followers became involved in a discussion or debate (ca. 792–794 CE) with Śāntarakṣita’s disciple Kamalaśīla, who had been invited by the

---

5 W. Pachow, *A study of the Twenty-two dialogues on Mahāyāna Buddhism*. Taipei, Taiwan: [publisher not identified], page 65.

emperor to settle the disputes. Chinese and Tibetan sources differ as to whether Heshang Moheyan or Kamalaśīla emerged victorious in this dispute. Whatever may be the exact historical events that occurred at this debate in Tibet, if the debate even happened at all, the literature associated with the figures in this debate indicate several interesting points. Based on Dunhuang documents, Heshang Mohoyen relied primarily on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and *Prajñāpāramitā* as proof texts to authorize his viewpoints while Kamalaśīla relied upon the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* (see his *Bhāvanākrama* works). At the same time, both scholars cited the *Lotus Sutra* as a proof text in regard to the doctrine of the single vehicle (*ekayāna*).<sup>6</sup> In addition to this, in a work that Kamalaśīla explicitly composed for the Tibetan king Khri-srong lde-btsan (Keira 2004:7–8), the *Madhyamakāloka*, the *Lotus Sutra* is cited five times in its final section where he advocates the future buddhahood of all beings and defends the theory of *ekayāna*.<sup>7</sup> An example of Kamalaśīla's influence upon the Tibetans for understanding the *Lotus Sutra* will be indicated in Part 2 when Pad-dkar bzang-po (15th century) classifies the *Lotus Sutra* as evincing Yogācāra-Madhyamaka views. By the end of Khri-srong lde-btsan's reign, the *Lotus Sutra* had been officially translated and was known to the court and the Imperially supported monastic community.

The Tibetan support of Buddhism spread widely among the educated classes and was continued by Khri-srong lde-btsan's successors Mu-ne btsan-po, Khri-lde srong-btsan, alias Sad-na-legs (r. 804–815 CE), and Khri-gtsug lde-btsan, alias Ral-pa-can (r. 815–838 CE) (Sørensen 1994: 404–427). Translation activity that had begun under Khri-srong lde-btsan expanded with increased royal support. Teams of Indian paṇḍitas and Tibetan translators (*lo-tṣā-ba*) worked together to translate hundreds of Buddhist texts. These teams included Indian scholars such as Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Prajñāvarman, as well as Tibetan master translators such as Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan, Ska-ba Dpal-brtseg, and Ye-shes-sde (Jñānasena). The extensive translation activity included works from the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya, texts of Abhidharma,

---

6 See the analysis of Dunhuang documents in Dar rgyas, 2015:187ff, 216, 228.

7 *Madhyamakāloka*, D 237a4ff, D 238b2.

commentaries on Cittamātra and Madhyamaka thought, as well as Mahāyāna sūtras and Buddhist Tantras.

In 812 CE Dpal-brtseg and Gnubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po compiled an authoritative catalog (*dkar-chag*) of Buddhist text translations in the palace of Lhan-kar-ma in Stong-thang. The inventory of 736 translations provided an early prototype for what would become the massive collections of the Tibetan translation canon of the Kanjur (bka'-gyur, "translation of the [Buddha's Word]") and Tanjur (*bstan-gyur*, "translation of the commentarial works").

The *Lhan kar ma* catalog lists the *Lotus Sutra* among its fourth division of various Mahāyāna sūtras (*theg pa chen po'i mdo sde sna tshogs*) as the 'Phags pa dam pa'i chos padma dkar po (Skt.: *ārya-sad-dharma-puṇḍarīka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*) in 3,900 ślokas or 13 bam po (*shlo ka sum stong dgu brgya ste/bam po bcu gsum*) (Herrmann-Pfandt 2008:44–45). The *Lhan kar ma* catalog also lists two commentaries that were affiliated with the *Lotus Sutra*. The 'Phags pa pu ṅda ri ka'i don bsdu pa (Skt.: \**Ārya-Puṇḍarīka-pindṛtha*), a brief work listed as 100 ślokas in length, was lost by the time of Bu-ston rin-chen in the fourteenth century (Herrmann-Pfandt 2008: 308). The other commentary, the extensive 'Phags pa puṅda ri ka'i 'grel pa (Skt. *Ārya-saddharma-puṇḍarīka-vṛtti*) in 6,000 ślokas, was attributed to Pṛthivibandhu (Sa'i rtsa lag) in its colophon yet translated from Chinese. Lopez (2016:28–29) claims Pṛthivibandhu (Tib. Sa'i rtsa lag) is Kuiji 窥基 (632–682), the famous disciple of Xuanzang. Moreover, the Tibetan translation includes only part of Kuiji's commentary, ending at Chapter Eleven. Nevertheless, this commentary influenced later Tibetan scholars in their understanding of the *Lotus Sutra* (see Part 2 on Lama 'Phags pa).

Tibetan emperors also sponsored two other catalogues of Buddhist texts in addition to the *Lhan-kar-ma*, the *Mchims-phu-ma* and the 'Phang-tha-ma. While the *Mchims-phu-ma* catalogue is still missing, the 'Phang-thang-ma Catalogue, long considered lost, has recently been recovered and has 960 titles among which the forty-third entry is the *Lotus Sutra* listed as the 'Phags pa dam pa'i chos pad ma dkar po also in 13 bam po (see Herrmann-Pfandt 2008). These catalogues demonstrate the extensive translation work conducted in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth century and indicate that the *Lotus Sutra* had a place in



early Tibetan canonical catalogs.

During the reign of Khri-lde srong-btsan (798–800, 802–815 CE), alias Sad-na-legs, in 814 CE, a culminating authoritative decision (*bkas bcaad*) was issued regarding translation procedures and terminological standardization that was initiated during the reign of Khri-srong lde-btsan. The authoritative decision certified the standardization of “dharma-language” (*chos kyī skad*), regulated the rules for the translation of Buddhist texts, and provided guidelines for the coining of new terminology. The decisions of the emperor are preserved in the lexicographical commentary of the *Two Fascicle Lexicon* (*sGra-sbyor bam-po nyis-pa*) and the accompanying register (*dkar-chag*) of over nine thousand Sanskrit terms with Tibetan equivalents known as the Mahāvvyutpatti (*bye-brag-tu rtogs-pa chen-po*). In addition to the over nine thousand terminological entries, the *Mahāvvyutpatti* also contains 283 semantic rubrics. As Pagel (2007: 154) suggests, these rubrics may be divided into three genres. The first genre is based on established specific lists from preceding Indian Buddhist scriptural sources, the second consist of specific lists but are from a wide variety of sources, and the third is without Indian Buddhist precedent. In brief, for our purposes here, an important rubric within the third genre is the list of 104 titles of Buddhist holy texts (*saddharmanāmāni*) found in the sixty-fifth rubric of the *Mahāvvyutpatti*. The tenth text listed is the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>8</sup> This prominent listing demonstrates that the *Lotus Sutra* was considered one of the most important of Buddhist holy texts for the Indians and Tibetans who compiled the *Mahāvvyutpatti* in the early ninth century.

Although this category of scriptural classification needs further investigation, the trajectory of this classification for Tibetan Buddhist culture will be that all Mahāyāna scriptures among these 104 titles are considered part of Śākyamuni’s proclamation of sacred teachings (*dam pa’i chos, saddharma*). Tibetan commentators throughout the history of Buddhism in Tibet will utilize a variety of hermeneutical techniques and arguments to differentiate interpretable (Tib. *drang ba’i don*, Skt. *neyārtha*) from definitive (*nges pa’i don, nītārtha*) teachings between, and even within, Buddhist scriptures. For the most part, the *Lotus Sutra* will

---

8 *Mahāvvyutpatti* #1335 (Sakaki 1962:102); #1339 (Ishikawa 1990:71).

be considered a definitive teaching for Tibetan scholars. This differs from the historical reception and interpretation of Buddhist scriptures in East Asian Buddhist traditions. In general, Buddhist texts came to China in a haphazard manner over a period of decades and centuries. An exegetical practice that developed, particularly after the fifth century in China, was *jiaoxiang panshi* 教相判釋, the “classification and interpretation of the characteristics of the doctrine.”<sup>9</sup> Chinese Buddhists sought to organize the different teachings found in the variety of Buddhist texts coming into East Asia. Chinese Buddhist traditions developed different points of analysis to organize Buddhist scriptures, some based on chronological order, others based on classification of content, but one trajectory of this development was the emphasis on a specific scripture as the apex of a particular tradition. For example, the Tiantai school placed emphasis on the *Lotus Sutra* while Huayan placed emphasis on the *Avatamsakasūtra*. In brief, this type of emphasis on one particular scripture, particularly among Mahāyāna sūtras, did not develop among Tibetan traditions.<sup>10</sup>

The officially sanctioned Tibetan translation of the *Lotus Sutra* was carried out by the translation team comprised of the Indian Surendrabodhi (Tib. *lha'i dbang po byang chub*) and the great Tibetan editor sNa-nam Ye-shes-sde. Surendrabodhi is listed second among the list of translators at the beginning of the *Two Fascicle Lexicon* after Jinamitra. Surendrabodhi and sNa-nam Ye-shes-sde translated the *Lotus Sutra* from Sanskrit into Tibetan according to the revised dharma-language certified by the Emperor's authoritative decision. Surendrabodhi worked on a number of translations found in Tibetan Kanjurs, including the *Vaiśālīpraveśa-mahāsūtra* and the *Adbhutadharmaparyāya*, among numerous other works.<sup>11</sup> As Skilling has noted, Surendrabodhi, who may have been from Kashmir, often worked

---

9 s.v. *jiaoxian panshi*, Buswell & Lopez 2014.

10 As Kapstein (2006:232) has remarked, “Institutional, lineage-based, and philosophical or doctrinal ways of thinking about religious adherence in Tibet were thus complementary, and to varying degrees intersected with or diverged from one another.” The exact classification of schools in Tibetan Buddhism has been a complex problem for both traditional and modern scholars.

11 See Skilling 1994, 166–169 for a listing of the translations Surendrabodhi completed.

with Ye-shes-sde and they were most likely active sometime in the first decade of the ninth century (804 to 816 CE).

The Tibetan version of the *Lotus Sutra* belongs to the Gilgit-Nepalese recension of the *Lotus Sutra*, rather the Central Asian recension. This also includes the earlier translations from Dunhuang and Khotan (Ruegg 1979). The colophon of the canonical Tibetan version provides interesting information about how the *Lotus Sutra* was revered by the Indo-Tibetan tradition at the time of its translation. The colophon reads:

Sons of good family should go to wherever this *sūtra* exists, even crossing over a trench of burning embers or a deep pit full of razors.

The Noble great extensive Dharma-discourse of the White Lotus of the True Dharma—instruction to bodhisattvas, upheld by all buddhas, the great secret of all buddhas, in the possession of all buddhas, the lineage of all buddhas, the secret abode of all buddhas, the essence of awakening of all buddhas, a turning of the wheel of Dharma of all buddhas, the unified body of all buddhas, demonstrating the single vehicle—the great skill-in-means, indicating attainments of the ultimate—is concluded.

Translated and edited by the Indian master Surendrabodhi and the great editor translator Venerable Ye-shes-sde.<sup>12</sup>

This colophon, comprised of an initial verse which mentions embers and razors followed by a series of praises regarding the special qualities of the *Lotus Sutra*, is not found among other translations of *sūtras* in the Tibetan Kanjur. The antiquity of the initial verse found in

---

12 //gang na mdo sde 'di yod par/ /me mar mur gyi dong 'bogs shing/ /spu gri gtams las 'dzegs nas kyang/ /rigs kyi bu dag 'gro bar bya/ /'phags pa dam pa'i chos pad ma dkar po'i chos kyi rnam grangs yongs su rgyas pa chen po'i mdo ste byang chub sems dpa' rnam la gdams pa/ sangs rgyas thams cad kyi yongs su bzung ba/ /sangs rgyas thams cad kyi gsang chen/ /sangs rgyas thams cad kyi sba ba/ sangs rgyas thams cad kyi rigs/ sangs rgyas thams cad kyi gsang ba'i gnas/ sangs rgyas thams cad kyi byang chub kyi snying po/ sangs rgyas thams cad kyi chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba/ sangs rgyas thams cad kyi sku gcig tu 'dus pa/ thabs mkhas pa chen po theg pa gcig tu bstan pa/ don dam ba bsgrub pa bstan pa'i mdo rdzogs so/ rgya gar gyi mkhan po su ren dra bo d+hi dang/ zhu chen gyi lo tsA ba ban+de ye shes sdes bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa/ (D180b; P205a).

the colophon of the *Lotus Sutra* is demonstrated by its modified citation among tantras and tantra commentaries attributed to late eighth/early ninth century rNying-ma authors and translators.<sup>13</sup> This unique colophon demonstrates the sanctity the *Lotus Sutra* had at the time of its translation into Tibetan. Once officially translated, no further Imperially supported translations were carried out for the *Lotus Sutra* in Tibetan history. Rather, manuscripts were copied by hand or printed through carved block prints throughout the centuries. This Imperially supported Tibetan translation of the *Lotus Sutra* has been preserved up to the present day among twenty-one extant editions of the Kanjur.<sup>14</sup> This official Tibetan translation of the *Lotus Sutra* also served as the base text for Tibetan scholars who studied and cited this Mahāyāna scripture as outlined in Part 2.

## Conclusion

The *Lotus Sutra* does have a place in the history and culture of Tibetan Buddhism. Officially translated during the Imperial Era, the *Lotus Sutra* has been copied and honored as part of the Kanjur, the collected teachings of the Buddha translated into Tibetan. As illustrated in Part 2 of this essay, the *Lotus Sutra* was utilized by traditional Tibetan Buddhist scholars over the centuries for exegetical points to authenticate their commentarial viewpoints.

## References

Apple, James B. 2014a. “The Single Vehicle (*ekayāna*) in the *Avaivartikacakrasūtra* and *Lotus sūtra*.” 東洋哲学研究所紀要 *Bulletin of the Institute of Oriental*

---

13 See *gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa*: *gang na gsang chen 'di yod par/ /me ma mur gyi dong 'bogs la/ /spu gri so ni gtams pa la/ /dzegs nas bu dag 'gro bar byos/*. Also Cantwell and Mayer (2007:141, 235): *gang na mya ngan 'das yod par/ /me mar mur gyi 'obs rgal zhing/ R1 55v /spu gri so ni gtams pa las/ /dzegs nas bu dag 'gro bar bya'o/* See also: *sgyu 'phrul dra ba lhan cig skyes pa'i ye shes snang ba/ [44–420] gang na gsang chen 'di yod par/ /me ma mur gyi dong 'bigs shing //sru gri nags tshal gtams pa la/ /dzegs nas bu dag 'gro bar byos/*.

14 The extant editions include the main groups of the Tshal pa (Berlin, Cone, Derge, Lithang, Peking, Ragya Kanjur, Urga), the Them spangs ma (Stog, Tokyo, Ulaanbaatar, Shey), and other canonical collections (Mustang, Hemis, Basgo, Lhasa, Narthang, Phugbrag, Dolpo, Newark, Tabo, and Gondlha).

- Philosophy*, No. 30, pp. 13–43.
- Apple, James B. 2014b. “Buddhism in Tibetan History.” In Mario Poceski, ed. *Blackwell Companion to East and Inner Asian Buddhism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 104–123.
- Apple, James B. 2016. “Candrakīrti and the *Lotus sutra*.” *東洋哲学研究所紀要 Bulletin of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy*, 31: 97–122.
- Barnett, L. D. and August Hermann Francke. 1907. “Tibetan Manuscripts and Graffiti Discovered By Dr. M. A. Stein At Endere.” In *Ancient Khotan*, edited by M. A[urel] Stein. 548–69 (Appendix N).
- Beckwith, Christopher I. 1987. *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia: A History of the Struggle for Great Power among Tibetans, Turks, Arabs, and Chinese during the Early Middle Ages*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Boucher, Daniel. 2006. “Dharmarakṣa and the Transmission of Buddhism to China,” *China at the Crossroads: A Festschrift in Honor of Victor H. Mair. Special Issue of Asia Major*, 3rd ser., 19.1–2: pp. 13–37.
- Buswell, Robert E and Donald S Lopez, Jr. 2014. *The Princeton dictionary of Buddhism*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Cantwell, Cathy, and Robert Mayer. 2007. *The Kīlaya Nirvāṇa Tantra and the Vajra Wrath Tantra: Two Texts from the Ancient Tantra Collection*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- D = *Dergé Kanjur*. 1976–1979. Edited by Chos kyi 'byung gnas. Bka' 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*). Tibetan Buddhist Resources Center, TBRC W22084. 103 vols. Delhi: delhi karmapae chodhey gyalwae sungrab partun khang. <http://tbrc.org/link?RID=W22084>.
- Dar rgyas, Khyung phrug blo bzang. 2015. *Bsam yas chos rtsod lta grub kyi dpyad pa byis pa dgod pa'i rdzun rkong*. Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrung khang.
- Demiéville, Paul. 1952. *Le concile de Lhasa; une controverse sur le quiétisme entre bouddhistes de l'Inde et de la Chine au VIII. siècle de l'ère chrétienne*. Bibliothèque de l'Institut des hautes études chinoises, v. 7. Paris: Impr. nationale de France.
- Herrmann-Pfandt, Adelheid. 2008. *Die Lhan kar ma: ein früherer Katalog der ins Tibetische übersetzten buddhistischen Texte*. Wien: Verl. der Österr. Akad. der Wiss.
- Ishikawa, Mie 石川美恵, ed. 1990. *A Critical Edition of the sGra sbyor bam po gñis pa: An Old and Basic Commentary on the Mahāvīryūtpatti*. Studia Tibetica 18. Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko.

- Kamalaśīla (8th century). *Madhyamakāloka (Dbu ma snang ba)*. Tōh. no. 3887. Dergé Tanjur, vol. Sa, folios 133v.4-244r.7. Tr. by Śilendrabodhi and Dpal brtsegs rakshi ta.
- Kapstein, Matthew. 2000. *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation, and Memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kapstein, Matthew. 2006. *The Tibetans*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.
- Karashima, Seishi 辛嶋静志. 1992. *The Textual Study of the Chinese Versions of the Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra in the Light of the Sanskrit and Tibetan Versions*. Tokyo: Sankibo.
- Karashima, Seishi 辛嶋静志. 2005. “An Old Tibetan Translation of the *Lotus Sutra* from Khotan.” *Annual Report of The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 8: 105–190.
- Karashima, Seishi 辛嶋静志. 2007. “An Old Tibetan Translation of the *Lotus Sutra* from Khotan: The Romanised Text Collated with the Kanjur Version (3).” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University for the Academic Year 2006*, vol. 10, pp. 213–324.
- Keira, Ryusei 計良龍成. 2004. *Mādhyamika and Epistemology: A Study of Kamalaśīla's Method for Proving the Voidness of All Dharmas*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien Universität Wien.
- KN = *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, ed. by Hendrik Kern and Bunyiu Nanjio 南條文雄, St. Petersburg 1908–12: Académie Imperiale des Sciences (Bibliotheca Buddhica X); Reprint: Tokyo 1977: Meicho-Fukyū-Kai.
- Lopez, Donald S., Jr. 2016. *The Lotus Sūtra A Biography*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Pagel, Ulrich. 2007. “The Dhāraṇīs of Mahāvīyutpatti # 748: Origin and Formation.” *Buddhist Studies Review*, 24 (2), pp. 151–191.
- Richardson, Hugh Edward, and Michael Aris. 1998. *High Peaks, Pure Earth: Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*. London: Serindia Publications.
- Rong, Xinjiang 榮新江, and Imre Galambos. 2013. *Eighteen Lectures on Dunhuang*. Boston: Brill.
- Ruegg, David Seyfort. 1979. “[Untitled].” In *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 99 , no. 2: 343–345. American Oriental Society. Review of *Saddharma-Puṇḍarika-Sūtra (Kashgar Manuscript)*, edited by Lokesh Chandra, and *Note on the Kashgar Manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarika* by Hirofumi Toda.
- Saddharmapuṇḍarika-nāma-mahāyānasūtra (Dam pa'i chos padma dkar po zhes*

- bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*). Tōh. no. 113. Dergé Kanjur, vol. JA, folios 1v.1–180v.7. Tr. by Surendrabodhi and Sna nam Ye shes sde.
- Sakaki, Ryōzaburo 榎亮三郎. 1962. *Bonzō Kanwa shiyaku taikō hon'yaku meigi daishū (Mahāvīyutpatti with four translations in Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese)* 梵藏漢和四訳対校 翻訳名義大集, 2 vols. Kyōto: Suzuki Research Foundation. Originally published Tokyo: Shingonshū Kyōto Daigaku, 1925. Sanskrit index compiled by Kyōo Nishio 西尾京雄, 1936.
- Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina Anna. 2002. “Enacting Words: A Diplomatic Analysis of the Imperial Decrees (*bkas bcad*) and Their Application in the *sGra sbyor bam po gñyis pa* Tradition.” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 5.1–2, pp. 263–340.
- Simonsson, Nils. 1957. *Indo-Tibetische Studien: die Methoden der Tibetischen Übersetzer, untersucht im Hinblick auf die Bedeutung ihrer Übersetzungen für die Sanskritphilologie*, 1. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells.
- Skilling, Peter. ed. 1994. *Mahāsūtras: Great Discourses of the Buddha*. Volume I: Texts. Oxford: The Pali Text Society.
- Sørensen, Per K. 1994. *The Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies: Tibetan Buddhist Historiography: An Annotated Translation of the XIVth Century Tibetan Chronicle : rGyal-Rabs Gsal- Ba'i Me-Long*. Asiatische Forschungen, Bd. 128. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Sparham, Gareth. 2008-2013. *Golden Garland of Eloquence. Four Volumes*. Fremont, Calif: Jain Pub. Co.
- Stoddard, Heather. 2004. “Rekindling the Flame.’ A Note on Royal Patronage in Tenth Century Tibet,” In Christoph Cüppers (ed.), *The Relationship between Religion and State (chos srid zung 'brel) in Traditional Tibet*. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, pp. 49–104.
- Ueyama, Daishun 上山大峻. 2012. *Zōho Tonkō bukkū no kenkyū* 増補 敦煌佛教の研究 [Study on Buddhism in Dunhuang, An enlarged edition]. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.
- Wangdu, Pasang, Hildegard Diemberger, and Per K. Sørensen. 2000. *DBa' bzhed = Dba' bzed : the royal narrative concerning the bringing of the Buddha's doctrine to Tibet*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.