

Preface

When I was a student at Kochi University, I attended a lecture by Prof. Eiichi Sawamura (who passed away in January 2011) on the history of the English language. If my memory is correct, he explained that major languages in Europe, including English, German, and French, belong to a family called the Indo-European, which can be traced to the Proto-Indo-European language (PIE) and that Sanskrit is one of the languages that preserve many linguistic characteristics of the PIE.¹ As I joined the Soka Gakkai, a leading Buddhist organization, when I was a senior high school student, I became aware of the fact that many of the Chinese Buddhist scriptures were translated from Sanskrit, but that the existence of the language was something like a story about a remote world which I had little to do with. From his lecture, however, I came to take interest in the fact that Sanskrit, one of the Buddhist languages, is related to European languages. From my 20s through my mid-30s, I poured my energy into developing a command of English so much so that I was only vaguely cognizant that Sanskrit existed.

In May 1987, after being introduced by an acquaintance, I began to participate in a class on Sanskrit taught at The Eastern Institute by Dr. Katsuhiko Kamimura (1944-2003), professor at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia of the University of Tokyo, on Saturdays. I made up my mind to start a new language before my memory would begin to deteriorate. Similar to many language classes, by the end of the year, nearly all of my classmates had dropped out, but I was somehow able to complete the junior class. Though I advanced to the intermediate class, I was barely able to follow it with the help of an English translation of that day's Sanskrit text. I remember that I attended the institute for about seven years. I think I achieved a minimum level at which I was able to use the Sanskrit-English dictionary and grammar books and read the Devanāgarī script.

In November 1991, Ms. Yoshiko Kawamura, president of Sessen International, and Mr. Kazunori Kosaka, photographer, visited Kathmandu, Nepal, and took photographs of five fragment folios of a palm-leaf Lotus Sutra manuscript preserved at the Āśā Archives, and provided me with printed copies. I managed to identify the text portions in the Kern-Nanjio edition and transliterated them into roman letters. In August 1992, I visited Kathmandu so as to reconfirm the original text. The romanized text I rendered was published in December 1992 in the *Bulletin of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy*, no. 8.² Upon receiving an offprint I sent, Dr. Hirofumi Toda (1936-2003), professor at the University of Tokushima, kindly called me, asking, "Why don't you come to Tokushima? I'll explain the outlines of manuscript studies."

On 12 and 13 July 1993, I visited Professor Toda's office. He enthusiastically

related a brief history of Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscript studies since the 19th century and explained about the problems to be solved in the discipline. He also elaborated on his research of more than 30 years. Since then, our communication through letters, telephone, and fax continued until his death in 2003. I appreciate having encountered a good teacher in this field. I remember our first encounter in Tokushima. As if telling a joke, Professor Toda said, “Scholars involved in the Lotus text studies seem to die earlier [than others].” In retrospect, he might have suggested that if one is squarely involved in the task of manuscript studies, one needs to tackle mountains of materials and will exhaust oneself before achieving satisfactory results. But I never thought that would turn out to be the case for him.

Meanwhile, the Soka Gakkai’s engagement with Lotus Sutra manuscripts originated from the fact that Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) had been presented with various materials of Lotus Sutra manuscripts from several overseas institutions. He proposed to start a project on Lotus Sutra manuscripts, and in January 1994 the Soka Gakkai formed a publication committee for the Lotus texts, which entrusted details regarding the research, editing, and publishing procedures to the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP). Having been appointed a project researcher for IOP towards that year, I became deeply involved in the project from the beginning.

For the 17 years since then, I have single-mindedly exerted myself to make the project successful. Almost all data from the publication have passed through my Macintosh computers, which have been upgraded four different times. With this new book, the Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series counts 11, and the total of the published items counts 13 as Series 2 consists of one facsimile edition and two romanized texts. The following is the breakdown of the Series:

1. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Fragments from the Lüshun Museum Collection, Facsimile Edition and Romanized Text* (3 May 1997).
- 2-1. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Facsimile Edition* (18 November 1998).
- 2-2. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Romanized Text 1* (3 May 2001).
- 2-3. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No.4-21), Romanized Text 2* (25 March 2004).
3. *Fragments of a Manuscript of the Saddharmapundarikasūtra from Khādaliq* (3 May 2000).
4. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscripts from Cambridge University Library (Add.*

- 1682 and Add. 1683), Facsimile Edition (26 March 2002).*
5. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from University of Tokyo General Library (No. 414), Romanized Text (25 November 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 (25 March 2005).*
 7. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (No. 6), Romanized Text (30 March 2007).*
 8. *Manuscript sanscrit du Sûtra du Lotus de la Société asiatique (N° 2), Texte romanisé = Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the Société Asiatique (No. 2), Romanized Text (31 March 2008).*
 9. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204), Facsimile Edition (31 March 2009).*
 10. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1684), Romanized Text (31 March 2010).*
 11. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204), Romanized Text (31 March 2011).*

The research concept on Nepalese Lotus manuscripts, which composes the nucleus of the Series, was formed on the basis of Professor Toda's preceding studies. Playing the most substantial role, Mr. Haruaki Kotsuki brought the concept into reality by publishing four romanized texts. The Series includes the following three facsimile editions of four Nepalese manuscripts:

- 2-1. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No.4-21).*
4. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscripts from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1682 and Add. 1683).*
9. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204).*

And it includes the following seven romanized texts of six Nepalese manuscripts:

- 2-2. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No.4-21), Romanized Text 1.*
- 2-3. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No.4-21), Romanized Text 2.*
5. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from University of Tokyo General Library (No. 414).*
7. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the Royal Asiatic Society of Great*

Britain and Ireland (No. 6).

8. *Manuscrit sanscrit du Sûtra du Lotus de la Société asiatique (N° 2).*

10. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from Cambridge University Library (Add. 1684).*

11. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204).*

It has been decided that the Series continue, and the details will be worked out in the very near future.

Next, I will explain about the background of the publication of the *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the British Library (Or. 2204), Romanized Text*. In the autumn of 2006, the publication committee decided to publish nos. 7-11 as the second round of the Series. I was signed to share no. 11, the manuscript from the British Library (B). I had tried 10 folios in the autumn of 2005 and began to transliterate them extensively in the autumn of 2008, However, I have been involved in editing and managing Series 7-10 while half of my daily work consists in translating the monthly *SGI Graphic* magazine into English. This required me to slow down with my task of romanizing manuscript B. From April 2010 on, I was able to concentrate my efforts on transliterating manuscript B when I was not working on the graphic magazine. Nevertheless, the romanized text has completed just before the publication. This book became an *étude*, or a trial study, for me.

The outline of this manuscript is as follows:

(1) This palm-leaf manuscript, formally kept in the British Museum, is now preserved in the British Library (catalogue no: Or. 2204, 175 folios). Though the copy date is unknown, it is assumed to fall between the 11th and 13th centuries. This palm-leaf text was used as one of the original texts for collating the Kern-Nanjio edition (hereafter “KN”). The manuscript is referred to in KN’s footnotes under the abbreviation of “B.” According to Professor Toda, this is an important manuscript representing a text lineage of what is called “B Group,” which is one of several palm-leaf manuscript groups.

(2) Folio 28 is omitted, but the scribe erroneously wrote “29” in the place that should have been written “28,” thereby skipping one number. Someone in a later age added the correct numbering in Arabic numerals on all folios from 1 to 175. This facsimile edition adopts the number written by the scribe at the beginning. In addition, there is no text omission in this instance.

(3) There is a fairly long text omission from the end of 125b6 to the beginning of 126a1, which corresponds to the portion from 319.6 to 350.3 of KN. Though the types of script are nearly the same, handwritings are different between the portions before and

after the omission. The number of scribes appears to be two or more.

(4) Texts 8a1 (17.3-6), 35b5 (81.10-13), 42b3 (101.4-7), 49a4 (117.3-6), 85a6 (211.3-6), 103a6-103b1 (258.13-259.2), 126a3 (350.9-12), 129b2 (360.9-12), 137a1 (379.6-9), 138a4 (382.2-5), 163b5 (450.6-9), and other minor portions are also omitted. For further details, please see the romanized text.

(5) This manuscript includes several kinds of corrections:

a) Corrections apparently made by the scribe and written with bold lines, the same as the main text.

b) Corrections by fine lines, probably by the scribe or one of his contemporaries, or someone in later years.

c) Corrections with red ink by someone else in later years. Many of them are irrelevant as he wrote his corrections by copying from another manuscript belonging to a different lineage.

As I regard a) as the genuine text of the manuscript, it is treated as the ordinary writings. Corrections belonging to category a) written in the margins are neglected but relevant ones are included in (). If relevant, b) and c) are adopted and included in ().

(6) Confusion between similarly shaped *akṣaras* occurs frequently in this manuscript:

g- / m- / s- (ग म स), ṭ- / d- (ढ द), t- / n- / v- (न न व), tv- / ndh- (न्व ण्), th- / dhv- / ṣ- (थ ष ष), p- / y- / ṣ- (प य ष), dhv- / bdh- / vv- (ष व व), bh- / c- / r- / v- (च न न व), ga / cā (ग ञ), gha / pā (ग ञ), etc.

(7) A color illustration is found in the center of 1b. Under the Bodhi Tree stands a stūpa, in which Shakyamuni (Śākyamuni) Buddha and Many Treasures Thus Come One (Prabhūtaratna Tathāgata) are seated. Beautiful illustrations are drawn on the inside of the binding boards, though somewhat damaged. For further details, please see the Bendall catalogue.³

(8) Lineage of Manuscript B

The copy nearest this manuscript is no. 3-678 preserved at the National Archives of Nepal (N2), and the next is no. 4079 at The Asiatic Society, Kolkata (Calcutta) (A1). The portion that makes up the first half resembles no. 2197 at Cambridge University Library (C6), as does a sizable text from within the last half portion with no. 0004 at the Library of the Cultural Palace of the Nationalities, Beijing (Pe). Due to time restrictions, I was unable to investigate this relationship in detail. However, I was able to enjoy solving many problems, but not all, facing the difficulties related to variants by consulting with manuscripts with similar readings. In many cases when I came upon

portions with variants, I found manuscripts divided into two or three groups. I reprint the list Professor Toda prepared⁴ and the list and comment Mr. Kotsuki printed in the *Manuscrit sanscrit du Sûtra du Lotus de la Société asiatique (N° 2), Texte romanisé*⁵ as follows:

(Professor Toda's list)

Nepalese Manuscripts (Palm Leafs)

Group I C3, N1 (Chaps. I-II?), C4 (fols. 1-107, 118-140), Pe (1b-18(?) = C1, 2, except 106-129 = Group III), K (fols. 20-181).

Group II C5, C6 (fols. 76-78, 83-131).

Group III T2, T6, C4 (fols. 108-117), C6 (fols. 1-75, 79-82), B, T7, N2, N3, K (fols. 1-19).

*Group 1 is comparatively near Gilgit manuscripts and the Tibetan translation. Therefore, it can be said that the group belongs to older textual strata.

Nepalese Manuscripts (papers)

Group I R, T9, 5, 4.

Group II A2, 3, P3.

Group III C1, 2 → Pe (chaps. 1-2).

Group IV P1, 2 → T2.

Group V T3 → T6 (first half?).

Group VI T8 → N3 (excluding chap. 1), W (in KN).

Group VII A1 → N1, Pe, C4.

Group VIII StP → N2?

(Mr. Kotsuki's list and comments)

Palm-leaf manuscripts (c. 11th-13th centuries)

(1) C3, C4, Pe, N1;

(2) B, C6, T6, T7, N2;

(3) C5;

(4) K;

(5) N3;

(6) T2

Among these manuscripts, palm-leaf texts (1) appear to record the oldest readings to a comparatively good extent. The readings of these texts bear strong resemblance to the Gilgit manuscripts. Also, the readings of (1) are assumed to bear some relationship with

those of the Tibetan translation as indicated in Toda's papers. Palm-leaf texts (2) belong to what Toda termed "B Group." Palm-leaf texts (3), (4), (5), and (6) are manuscripts which do not display proximate accordance with palm-leaf texts (1) or (2).

Paper manuscripts (c. 17th-20th centuries (?))

- (1) A1;
- (2) A2, A3;
- (3) T8, P3;
- (4) C1, C2;
- (5) R, T9;
- (6) T4, T5;
- (7) P1, P2;
- (8) T3;
- (9)W;
- (10) StP

... It can be safely said that paper text (1) is a paper manuscript that is in many respects within the lineage of B Group. Consequently, it can be said that A1 is a paper duplicate of a palm-leaf manuscript in the B Group. T8 is a manuscript that has been copied from palm-leaf manuscript N3, faithfully reflecting N3's reading. The lost portions of the palm-leaf text (N3) —which constitute more than half of the text—have been supplemented in T8 with the readings of some paper manuscripts. In addition, it is certain that five palm-leaf folios preserved at the Āśā Archives, Kathmandu, Nepal, are portions separated from N3.

I think that the most important guidelines for Nepalese Lotus manuscript studies are demonstrated in the above quotations. Through the task of romanizing the manuscript B, I was able to clearly reconfirm how strong and reliable for researchers the framework Professor Toda and Mr. Kotsuki have constructed is.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people who helped and supported the completion of this book.

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI). It was he who first proposed that the Manuscript Series undertaking begin, and it is under his kind supervision that the work has been carried out and that today's successful results have been achieved. Without

him, this project would not have materialized. By developing further research on the Lotus Sutra manuscripts, I would like to repay my great debt of gratitude for everything he has done for the sake of the project.

Next, I would like to note Prof. Hirofumi Toda and Prof. Katsuhiko Kamimura, who taught me what carrying out basic study actually means. About eight years have passed since their passing in 2003. Recently I feel increasingly grateful for the academic benefit they kindly granted me.

I should 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 those persons who have supported the project at the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP), in particular, Dr. Yoichi Kawada, IOP director and chairman of the IOP Board of Trustees, Naoki Hagimoto, managing director, Mr. Yasuo Morita, former chairman and councillor, Mr. Hirofumi Koseki, IOP secretary-general, and Mr. Hiroya Ouchi.

I am very deeply indebted to Mr. Haruaki Kotsuki, an IOP researcher, who is my colleague and forerunner in manuscript studies of our project. He has encouraged me in every possible way. I am also grateful to Mr. Dylan Scudder, who kindly edited the English portions of this volume. I express my deepest thanks to Mr. Masao Yamauchi, chief of the Translation Department, Soka Gakkai's Office of International Affairs and all other colleagues.

Next, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Susan Whitfield, director of the International Dunhuang Project of the British Library, and all the members of its photographic department, who kindly and quickly provided clear color photo data of the manuscript (Or. 2204). Furthermore, I would like to extend my utmost appreciation to Dr. Michael O'Keefe, former keeper of Sanskrit manuscripts at the British Library, who for many years has striven to preserve the voluminous manuscripts.

I express my deepest thanks to Mr. Robert Samuels, general director of the SGI-UK, Mr. Kazuo Fujii, vice general director, and all other SGI-UK staff members, in particular Mr. Jamie Cresswell, who for many years have made efforts to establish a good relationship with the British Library.

Last but not least, I extend my appreciation to Ms. Yoshiko Kawamura and Mr. Kazunori Kosaka. Without their generous supply of text photos, my present dedication to the Manuscript Series would not have been realized.

Little by little, I conduct my work every day.

Such are the days—

You, clad with ancient letters of a thousand years old,
change your clothes in roman letters
and appear as a modern manuscript.
The eternal life you have
becomes public knowledge shared by humanity
of the twenty-first century.

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Note:

1. In actuality, there are several languages including Vedic, Classical Greek, and Lithuanian that preserve more characteristics of the Proto-Indo-European language (PIE) than Sanskrit.
2. Mizufune (1992). Professor Toda published a more precise romanized text of the Āśā manuscript in 1997. See Toda (1997).
3. Bendall (1902, p. 225).
4. Toda (1997a, p. 16).
5. Kotsuki (2008, pp. xlii-xliii).