

Acknowledgments

In August 1991, an SGI (Soka Gakkai International) youth delegation (the Yüeh-chih Group, consisting of forty-nine members) visited India at the invitation of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) with the object of promoting goodwill and cultural exchange between the youths of the two countries. This was the second SGI youth delegation to India, following a visit by a similar delegation the previous year. As one of the members, I stayed in India for eleven days and attended various cultural events and goodwill meetings. On the third day of our visit (August 20), an India-Japan joint symposium was held in commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP) in New Delhi. The focus of the symposium was the Lotus Sutra, and Dr. Lokesh Chandra, director of the International Academy of Indian Culture, delivered a lecture. During the luncheon after the morning session, I had a chance to talk with Dr. Lokesh Chandra and our conversation gravitated toward the topic of Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra. The next day, he entrusted me with a microfilm to present to President Daisaku Ikeda of the Soka Gakkai International. This was a very valuable microfilm of a paper manuscript of the Lotus Sutra that is said to have been preserved at the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences (presently the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences). While the whereabouts of the manuscript is presently unknown, Dr. Lokesh Chandra published a facsimile edition of it in 1984.¹

In 1992, I published an article on this paper manuscript in the *Tōyō Tetsugaku Kenkyūsho kiyō* (Bulletin of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy), vol. 8, 1992, and I sent an offprint to Prof. Hirofumi Toda of the University of Tokushima. It was, to the best of my memory, on December 29 or 30, 1992, that he kindly telephoned me. “Why don’t you come over to Tokushima to take a look at my research?” he said. Perhaps he had looked over the offprint and quickly perceived the immaturity of my discipline. On February 4, 1993, I visited him for the first time at his office on the university campus and was able to receive his valuable instruction on how to carry out research on Sanskrit manuscripts, as well as his insights into the history and current state of the discipline. Since then, I have visited his office several times in a private capacity and he extended the courtesy of allowing me to read and borrow the various materials that he owns.

In January 1994, the Soka Gakkai formed a committee for the publication of Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra as well as other texts of the sutra and the committee entrusted details regarding the research and editing procedures to the IOP. At

such time, I was very fortunate to receive training from Professor Toda in reading Lotus Sutra manuscripts, as a researcher commissioned by the IOP to undertake manuscript studies with the institute's support. A paper manuscript from University of Tokyo General Library (no. 414; herein abbreviated as "T8") was chosen as the main text for the "study meetings" (as I called them), which took place at his office. Though this manuscript appears to have been copied in a much later period than the Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts, it is one of the most valuable Nepalese manuscripts—worthy, among many other Nepalese manuscripts, of priority consideration for study and romanization since it was used as one of the original texts for the Kern-Nanjio edition.² The two-day study meeting sessions were held three times a year, with the first session beginning on June 15, 1996, and the ninth and last ending on June 17, 1999.

This edition is a product of those study meetings undertaken by Professor Toda and myself. Thanks to the recommendation of Professor Toda and with the approval of the Soka Gakkai's committee for publications, the edition has been prepared for publication. This T8 text is the very manuscript that the "group studying the Nepālī recension" (aka, "Nepalese Texts Study Group") of the Institute for the Comprehensive Study of [the] Lotus Sutra, Rissho University, had once attempted to romanize.³ I heartily admire the members of the group for their pioneering attempt and their recognition of the true value of this manuscript.

I would like to acknowledge the following people. First, I would like to express my utmost and heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Soka Gakkai International. He first visited India's Buddh Gaya in February 1961 and founded the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (formed in January 1962 and incorporated as a foundation in December 1965) as a materialization of the vision he conceived there. Furthermore in 1990, he proposed sending SGI youth delegations to India. These initiatives, therefore, were the seed of this present publication.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Professor Toda, who trained me, a middle-aged man in his late forties, to read Sanskrit manuscripts. With remarkable patience, he taught me the fundamentals of Buddhist studies as well as imparting advanced knowledge about Sanskrit grammar. It is his magnanimity and warm encouragement that made this difficult task possible.⁴ I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to IOP researcher Noriyoshi Mizufune, a capable editor and my colleague in Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscript studies, who kindly undertook the complicated editorial work and provided me with precious advice and both official and private support.

Furthermore, for their enthusiastic support of the publication, I would like to

express my heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Einosuke Akiya, president of the Soka Gakkai, and all the IOP staff, particularly Mr. Yasuo Morita, chairman of the Board of Trustees; Mr. Yoichi Kawada, director of the IOP; Mr. Toru Shiotsu, former chief of the research department of the IOP and presently professor at Soka University; and Mr. Yoichi Ichikura, secretary-general of the IOP. I am also grateful to Mr. Shinjirō Yoshinaga, professor at Akita University, who first introduced me to the IOP, Mr. Hiromu Yamaguchi, director of the International Publications Department of Soka Gakkai's Office of International Affairs, Mrs. Yoshiko Kawamura, president of Sessen International, who encouraged me to continue my research, and Mr. Anthony George, member of Soka Gakkai's Office of International Affairs, who kindly edited English portions of this volume. Furthermore, I wish to thank my family and those people who understood my efforts and gave me support and encouragement. Last but not least, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to those at University of Tokyo General Library who kindly granted permission for the publishing of this manuscript as a romanized text.

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November 18, 2002

Postscript

Sadly, Professor Toda passed away at his home on August 25, 2003, without seeing the completion of the present volume. I sincerely pray for his peaceful repose.

The editor
August 30, 2003

Notes

1. Lokesh Chandra (1984); herein described as "StP." For further details, see Toda (2000, p. 363; 2001, pp. 5-11, note 1). Abbreviations for Nepalese manuscripts appear in "Abbreviations of Saddharmapundarīka Manuscripts" in the present volume (pp. xxxiii-xxxiv). (Hereafter referred to as "Abbreviations.")
2. This manuscript (T8) is described as "K" in Kern and Nanjio (1908-1912).
3. A project to transliterate this paper manuscript (T8) and the palm-leaf manuscript at The Toyo

Bunko (Oriental Library) (K) had been attempted once previously. However, the task appears not to have been completed. See Yuyama (1971, p. 8; 1972a, p. 8), “tanshin” (brief article) on the “group studying the Nepālī recension”; Institute for the Comprehensive Study of [the] Lotus Sutra (1977-1982, vol. 1, p. v); and Yuyama (1968, p. 108).

4. Professor Toda retired from office at the University of Tokushima in March 2002. He left Tokushima where he had lived for thirty-four years and returned to his hometown, Chikushino, Fukuoka.