藏，五十：四三七C）。

⑪道宣，「大唐內典錄」，卷四（大正藏，五五：二六二C）。

⑫分見僧叡，『鳩摩羅什譯「大品經」序』，載於「出三藏記集」卷八（大正藏，五五：五三b）；僧肇，「註維摩經」（大正藏，三八：三二七b）及慧皎，「高僧傳」，卷二（大正藏，五十：三三二bc）。

⑬見康慈 Edward Conze，「佛教：論其要旨及發展 Buddhism：Its Essence and Development」附錄（牛津，一九五一）。

⑭季羨林，「論梵本妙法蓮華經」，載於「中印文化關係史論叢」（北京，一九五七），頁二四—三〇。

⑮郝理庵，頁三一九，註一。這種差錯會不會是由他前言中所提到的日本資料引起的呢？資料來源可能影響研究者自己的判斷及專門學識。高楠順次郎教授曾獨出心裁地把「觀自在」解爲「凝視之主 Gazing lord」。見哈斯庭 James Hastings 編，「宗教及倫理百科全書 Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics」，共十三册（紐約，一九一五），七：七六三b，「觀音 kwan-yin」條；參較鄭僧一：「觀音：半個亞洲的崇拜對象 kuan-yin：The Cult of Half Asia」，載於「宗教學史 History of Religions」，卷十六，二期（一九七六年十一月份），一四八頁以下。

⑯見靈耀（一六七八前後），「觀音經普門品膚說」（續藏經，第二編，五五函，二：一五二b）。參較智顗：「空觀是般若，假觀是解脫，中觀是法身。」（「法華文句」卷一上，〔大正藏，三四：七b〕）。關於天台三諦，也可看陳觀勝 kenneth D.S. Chén，「佛教：亞洲之光 Buddhism：The Light of Asia」（Woodbury, N.y.，一九六八），頁一六二及狄百瑞編，「印度、中國及日本的佛教傳統 The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan」（紐約，一九六九），頁一五六。

⑰那連提耶舍（四九〇—五八九）譯，「施灯功德經」（大正藏，十六：八〇三—八）

音啊），廣大智慧凝視（的觀音啊），悲凝視及慈凝視（的觀音啊）。」（頁三一八）（譯按：原文爲「眞觀清淨觀，廣大智慧觀，悲觀及慈觀。」這充其量祇能算是不清楚的譯文。誠如郝氏在其傑作中所確認的，觀指「觀心」、禪思、或知見。透過洞察的智慧以認識自己與眞理之同一，並「以自心探究煩惱（道德的缺憾）而消除之」。（註十五）

智顗未及見觀音偈而逝；智顗之後的天台高僧以觀音的「眞觀清淨觀」爲觀一切法之眞空的絕待眞理（譯按：即「空觀」）；他們以「廣大智慧觀」爲觀中道（譯按：即「中觀」）；他們又以「悲觀及慈觀」爲觀暫存的現象眞理（譯按：即「假觀」）。這就切合了他們的「三諦」之理（三即一，一即三）：相對存於絕對之中；反過來，絕對也存於相對之中，存於涵容萬法的一心之中。空觀除幻相，假觀除業力，中觀除無明。幻相，業力及無明是到涅槃的三大阻力，分別爲涅槃三特性的般若（智慧）、解脫及法身所對治。（註十六）

一件有關油燈的事可以順便一提。用於浸入灯油而有名於維摩經及別的許多經典裏的薝蔔花（頁三〇〇及三二四），按諸中國的本草綱目及閩南方言乃是我們熟知的梔子花。油灯是對佛的六種供養——象徵六波羅密——之一，油灯代表其第六，即般若波羅密，而爲「施灯功德經」的主題。（註十七）

整個說起來，此經是大乘佛教的基本經典，由法華經及天台思想的行家以其特具學識專心致志地譯爲英文。此譯應推薦給所有佛家傳統的研究者。

【註】

①見郝理庵，「智顗（五三八—五九七）：一位中國佛教僧人的生平及思想導論」，mélanges chinois et bouddhiques，第十二册（Bruxelles，一九六二）

②佛教以爲「一物只是一種力量，一種因素，一種條件（助緣），名之爲 dharma（法）。」（拉達克利須南 S.Radhakrishnan，「印度哲學 Indian philosophy」，兩册〔倫敦，一九五一〕，一：三七一）。當 dharma（法）大寫時，指的是普遍之法或究竟的眞理。

③窺基（六三二—八二），瑜伽論略纂，卷十二（大正藏，四三：一五四C）。

④贊寧（九一九—一〇〇一）「宋高僧傳」，卷二，「善無畏傳」（大正藏，五〇：六一四C）

⑤蘇西爾譯，「妙法蓮華經 The Lotus of the Wonderful Law」（牛津，一九三〇），頁五三。

⑥慧皎（五五二前後），「高僧傳」，卷十二（大正藏，五〇，四〇五ac）

⑦分見慧琳（四三一—五〇四），「竺道生誄」，載於道宣編，「廣弘明集」，卷二三（大正藏，五二：二六五c）及竺道生，「法華經疏」，卷二（續藏經，第二編，二三函，四：四一二a）。

⑧智顗，「法華玄義」，卷二上（大正藏，三三：六九八b）。

⑨慧觀（四一〇前後），「法華宗要序」，載於僧佑（四四五—五一八），「出三藏記集」，卷八（大正藏，五五：五七b）。

⑩見闍那笈多傳，載於道宣，「續高僧傳」，卷二（大正藏，五十：四三三c）。參較闍那笈多及達摩笈多譯，「添品妙華蓮華經」之序言（大正藏，九：一三四C）；又道宣，「彥琮傳」（大正

多品與觀音偈的譯者爲誰，只說在羅什本中所未見的資料爲前賢所出而補入經文；我認爲這前言是印度學專家彥琮（五五七——六一〇）所寫；彥琮曾校定不同的譯本，據說還爲所有新譯的經典寫序。不過闍那笈多傳的作者把觀音偈歸到闍那笈多名下(註十)；而提婆達多品則爲法獻於四七五年從于闐帶回，令他的弟子法意譯爲中文，完成於四八三年到四九三年之間(註十一)。

鳩摩羅什的譯本，連同其中未見而經後人加入的品偈，今所通行，並爲七十餘種現存的中文註疏之所本，這些註疏多出天台宿學之手。郝氏以爲「羅什極不可能於中文會讀寫一字」（頁ix）；事實不然：與羅什同時的著名人物及合作者中可以舉出僧叡（三五五一四三九）與僧肇（三八四一四一四），還有（後來）爲他作傳的慧皎（五五二前後）對羅什之能說善寫衆口一詞（註十二）

法華經中，陀羅尼品顯然是後出的，經後的某些部分可能也是附加到全書之中的。除此之外，法華經在文體上相當一致。傳統上大家認爲此經著成的年代約當基督紀元之始(註十三)。不過克恩和南條的收藏中有兩部現存的來自卡什加爾及尼泊爾的梵文手寫本，季羨林教授對它們作過語言學上的比較以後，認爲此經成書的年代甚至更要早些，他又指出中印度古摩竭陀國——佛陀及佛教的老家——爲此經的出處；然後他以經中原來的摩竭陀國普拉克利特語Prakrit（佛陀所用的口語）成份之逐漸減弱及梵文化之不斷增強乃至語尾的—am之轉成—u找出佛教向西北傳播的路線。語尾的—u是西北方言的特色。佛教從印度西北又進入中亞，最後達於中國及日本（註十四）

郝氏流暢而細心的譯文是克恩氏枯燥專門及蘇西爾氏大而化之的譯法間的一個可喜的中庸之道。他對現今梵文經本（和羅什譯本）中的相異所作洋洋六十七頁的詳盡註解對專家學者不啻恩物。如果竺法護二八六年的譯本也在參考之列，這註解就更有用了；竺譯所據梵文本要比現存梵文本早了好幾個世紀，郝氏十八頁的前言對他三百一十一頁的譯文來說，應該好好地擴充一下（試比較蘇西爾的五十八頁對二〇八頁及克恩的三十四頁對四四二頁），以提供讀者（所需的）一個整體形象及深入領悟，姑且說是對這部微妙精深的宗教傑作的一種「陀羅尼」吧！。（因爲）以鳩摩羅什的話來說，任何翻譯對此經都是「嚼飯與人」。

郝氏嚴格遵行把羅什的中譯一字一句翻爲英文的辦法；這誠然可佩，然而吃力不討好：多寶如來因此成了「如是來者衆多珠寶Thus Come One many Jewels（頁一八四），還有別的許多「如是來者Thus Come Ones」。當鳩摩羅什音譯「如來」一詞時，他並不寫「Tathagada」（頁xxiv）。反之，他用五個中國字音以表達梵文的連音變化——多陀阿伽度（＝Tathāgata）。如來是一切諸佛的稱號，他以永恒眞理或究竟空性（「如」）之身，出現於現象世界（「來」）以救度一切衆生。在天台哲學裏，這就表達了三諦的原理：以法爲究竟的空上現象的有，而空有並存於中道第一義諦中。

當然，一些明顯的疏失在所不免。例如，中國的名物「油灯」或譯爲「炬」（頁三百）或譯爲「燭」（頁三二四）；在觀音偈中，「觀」譯爲「凝視」gaze：「眞凝視（的觀音啊），清淨凝視（的觀

九九）。因此，經文重行肯定佛性遍在的原則而推翻「婦身不淨」又「非法器」的傳統觀念（頁二〇〇）．「陀羅尼」（來自語根 dhr．，「持」）在這段文字及他處（包括頁一）的意思是對萬法的絕對控制或對一切煩惱及情境的主宰而有別於陀羅尼品及詞彙註釋中狹義的「曼陀羅——陀羅尼」或「咒語」。陀羅尼有四個範疇，即：護持正「法」的能力；護持正法的無數「義」涵；在禪定中藉助「咒」的力量定心；在實相中不退轉（「忍」）。（註三）。因此，善無畏（六三七—七三五）作了那概括一切的敍述：「三藏之教在內是戒、定、慧，在外是經、律、論；陀羅尼者乃兼內外而有之。」（註四）

郝氏依西方傳統譯中國的「龍」字爲德拉根 dragon 雖然未可厚非，我們要爲他的詞彙註釋進一解以澄清其中（把龍與德拉根相提並論）的說法：「那伽 nāga 是一蛇魔，中國人幾乎一成不變地把這個字譯爲〖龍〗（德拉根）。」從字源上說，中國的龍字在甲骨文裏作倒寫的A形，一條扭曲多鱗的尾巴從倒A之橫劃的中間昇起，落下於倒A的一旁，這顯然是一條爬蟲的樣子。在字義上，它與深淵及甘霖之降相關連，因此是中國農業社會的施惠者，又是帝王的象徵。當中國人寫「龍」字時，心中並沒有西方觀念中（凶惡）的「德拉根」；「龍」只是一條神秘的爬蟲，和印度傳統中的半神那伽相類。

蘇西爾教授寫道：「啓示的文學必然是神秘的，甚至是矛盾與奧妙的。依文解經的人不是被這神秘吸引就是被這神秘排斥」，同時，「他們有如西方那些對聖經依文解義的，鮮能透視舞台及戲劇的究竟。（註五）藥王菩薩之自焚是空觀理想的戲劇化；所謂「空」，就是要離我執與法執。此二執乃是一切痛苦的根源，並爲涅槃最大的障碍。同時，藥王菩薩是法身摩訶薩，他無形的身體被舖張地描述爲燃燒了「一千二百年」，而慧紹以一介凡夫於四五一年效之自焚，另一僧人曇弘又於四五五年在越南步其後塵（註六）；他們顯然未嘗經心於「方便品」所說法華經僅意在敍述故事以開示佛理的話。

竺道生（卒於四三四年）有言：現象所以示理，執象則惑；教言所以啓悟，執言則愚。佛曾訴諸一切方法，包括奇蹟及方便立名，以啓悟衆生（註七）。法華經中，一切諸佛都被視爲理體——法身——之佛的種種名稱及種種形相。法身佛是無名而無形的，所有的菩薩都是他的德性之人格化。觀音代表大悲，文殊師利代表大智，普賢代表大行，智顗寫道：「唯以智慧之眼與實行之足乃能達於涅槃。（註八）法華的作者於諸菩薩的歷史性無所關懷；如第五世紀的佛教註釋家佛鳴所見，法華的作者把時間看爲權宜方便之故而從這樣那樣的事件中得到的抽象觀念，並把整個「生生」（的過程）視爲「無生」的開顯，一而無別的眞理之外象。

鳩摩羅什二十八品的譯本清晰而明白；這是由一個擁有二千餘位僧人的譯場於四〇六年譯自中亞的龜茲經文。（註九）在三本現存的法華經裏，這是第二本。第一本由竺法護於二八六年譯自梵文，樸素而質直；其突出處在於把陀羅尼品意譯而不採一般的音譯。在六〇一年由闍那笈多和達摩笈多譯出的「添品法華」是法華經的最後一譯。顧名思義，這是鳩摩羅什譯本的擴充，其中所增爲提婆達多品及觀音偈部分。「添品法華」的前言中不曾說及提婆達

法華經最新英譯評介

鄭僧一原作
唐　龍中譯

「Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma」

本書是郝理庵 Leon Hurvitz 就鳩摩羅什的中文經文所作的英譯，其中包括前言、詞彙註釋、梵文經文校注及引得。一九七六年紐約哥倫比亞大學出版社出版。頁數 xxviii＋421 。精裝本十五美元，平裝本七美元。（譯按：本文原載芝加哥大學「宗教學史 History of Religions」十九卷四期，一九八〇年五月出版）

天台大師智顗綜合諸家所建立的教派與哲學以法華經爲其基礎（註一）。郝理庵教授在此經與大師的生平及思想中浸淫日久，他的專門才學在爲中文本法華經所作的英文新譯中表露無遺；這一新譯之加入原來已有的（西方語言的）譯本是件可喜的事，舊有的譯本包括本諾夫 Burnouf 譯本（一八五二年巴黎出版）及克恩 kern 譯本（一九〇九年牛津出版），兩者都是以十一世紀的梵文手寫本爲根據的學術性譯述；還有蘇西爾 Soothill 譯自鳩摩羅什四〇六年本的中文經文之節譯本（一九三〇年牛津出版）以及加藤的全譯本（一九七一年東京出版）。這一文學傑作及有力的精神戲劇是「大乘佛教教義完美及生動的陳述」（狄百瑞 Wm. Theodore de Bary 序言），對整個遠東的生活，藝術及文學有深遠的影響。

法華經以無與倫比的詞采及形像敍述大乘佛教的中心意旨，其中把菩薩道描述爲進入如來普爲衆生的大悲之寶，穿著如來的忍辱之衣，坐於如來一切法空的寶座上（頁一八〇）（註二）。佛性遍在的觀念乃見於諸佛對其弟子未來成就的記別，而爲常不輕菩薩（以行動）表現。這位菩薩是佛的前身；他於他所遇到的一切人——僧尼及男女居士——總對他們的潛能耳提面命，說道：「我深敬汝等，不敢輕慢；所以者何？汝等皆……當得作佛。」（頁二八〇）檀那或無私之施——菩薩的六度之首——的原則獲致生動的表達，當龍（那迦，「蛇」）女把她的寶珠獻給佛陀時（頁二〇一），當觀音把無價的頸練（瓔珞）裂而爲二，分別獻給久已入滅的多寶如來佛及釋迦牟尼佛時（頁三一六），又當藥王菩薩自焚以供養時（頁二九五）。

觀音的行持再度強調了佛的永恒，有涅槃非絕滅自身的涵義；涅槃只在絕滅無盡的輪迴因果並止息現象及暫時的存在。龍女據說「得陀羅尼」而立證佛位（頁一

[14] Chi Hsien-lin, "Lun Fan-pen Miao-fa lien-hua ching" [On the Sanskrit version of the Lotus Sutra], in *Chung Yin wen-hua kuan-hsi-shih lun-ts'ung* [Essays on the history of Sino-Indian cultural relations] (Peking, 1957), pp. 24–30.

[15] Hurvitz, p. 319, n. 1. Could it be possible that the discrepancies were due to the Japanese sources indicated in the preface, which might influence the exercise of the investigator's own judgment and expertise? Professor Takakusu Junjiro has, remarkably, interpreted *Kuan-tzu-tsai* (Avalokitesvara) as "Gazing lord." See *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* ed. James Hastings, 13 vols. (New York, 1915), 7:763*b*, s.v. "Kwan-yin"; cf. C. n. Tay, "Kuan-yin: The Cult of Half Asia," *History of Religions* 16, no. 2 (November 1976): 148 ff.

[16] See Ling-yao (fl. 1678), *Kuan-yin-ching p'u-men-p'in fu-shuo* [Comments on the Kuan-yin chapter] (Zokuzokyo, pt. 1, case 55, 2:152*b*). Cf. Chih-i: "Contemplation on emptiness is Prajna. Contemplation on phenomenal existence is emancipation. Contemplation on the Mean is Dharmakaya" (*Fa-hua wen-chu* [Glosses of the Lotus Sutra], chuan la [Taisho Daizokyo, 34:7*b*]). On the threefold truth of T'ien-t'ai, see also Kenneth D. S. Ch'en, *Buddhism: The Light of Asia* (Woodbury, N. Y., 1968), p. 162; and Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan* (New York, 1969), p. 156.

[17] *Shih teng kung-teh ching* [Pradipadaniya Sutra], trans. Narendrayasas (490–589) (Taisho Daizokyo, 16:803–8).

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(2)「往生淨土論」讀後。
(3)「楞嚴經」讀後。
(4)「成佛之道偈頌講記」讀後。
(5)「藥師經」讀後。
(6) 印順導師著「初期大乘佛教之起源與開展」讀後。

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three attributes of nirvana.[16]

It might be noted in passing, with regard to the oil lamps, that the "campaka-flower" (pp. 300 and 324, *c* pronounced as *ch*) used in steeping the oil, and celebrated in the Vimalakirti Sutra and many other Buddhist writings, is our familiar gardenia flower, according to the Chinese *Materia medica* and usage in the southern Fukien dialect. The oil lamp is one of the "six offerings to the Buddha," symbolizing the six *paramitas*, with lamp offering representing the sixth, *prajna-paramita*. It is the subject of the Sutra on the Merit of Lamp Offering.[17]

All in all, this is the basic sutra of Mahayana Buddhism, rendered with expertise and application by a specialist of the Lotus and T'ien-t'ai thought. It is to be recommended to all students of the Buddhist tradition.

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Notes:

1 See Leon Hurvitz, *Chih-i (538–597): An Introduction to the Life and Ideas of a Chinese Buddhist Monk*, Melanges chinois et bouddhiques, no. 12 (Bruxelles, 1962).

2 Buddhism holds that "a thing is only a force, a cause, a condition. It is called a dharma" (S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 2 vols. [London, 1951], 1:371). When capitalized, Dharma denotes the universal law or ultimate reality.

3 K'uei-chi (632–82), *Yu-ch'ia-lun lueh-tsuan* [Commentary on the Yogacaryabhumi Sastra], chuan 12 (Taisho Daizokyo, 43:154*c*).

4 Biography of Shan-wu-wei (Subhakarasimha), in Tsan-ning (919–1001), *Sung kao-seng chuan* [Biographies of eminent monks compiled in the Sung dynasty], chuan 2 (Taisho Daizokyo, 50:614*c*).

5 W. E. Soothill, *The Lotus of the Wonderful Law* (Oxford, 1930), p. 53.

6 Hui-chiao (fl. 552), *Kao-seng chuan* [Biographies of eminent monks], chuan 12 (Taisho Daizokyo, 50:405*ac*).

7 See, respectively, Hui-lin (431–504), "Chu Tao-sheng lei" [Eulogy of Chu Tao-sheng], in *Kuang hung-ming chi* [Expanded collection of essays on Buddhism], ed. Tao-hsuan, chuan 23 (Taisho Daizokyo, 52:265*c*); and Chu Tao-sheng, *Fa-hua-ching su* [Commentary on the Lotus Sutra], chuan 2 (Zokuzokyo, pt. B, case 23, 4:412*a*).

8 Chih-i, *Fa-hua hsuan-i* [Profound meaning of the Lotus Sutra], chuan 2*a* (Taisho Daizokyo, 33:698*b*).

9 Hui kuan (fl. 410), "Fa-hua tsung-yao hsu" [Preface to essentials of the Lotus Sutra], in Seng-yu (445–518), *Ch'u-san-tsang-chi chi* [Collected records on the Tripitaka], chuan 8 (Taisho Daizokyo, 55:57*b*).

10 See the biography of Jnanagupta in Tao-hsuan, *Hsu kao-seng chuan* [A continuation of the biographies of eminent monks], chuan 2 (Taisho Daizokyo, 50:433*c*). Cf. the preface to *T'ien-p'in miao-fa lien-hua ching* [The Lotus Sutra with supplementary chapters], trans. Janangupta and Dharmagupta (Taisho Daizokyo, 9:134*c*); also the biography of Yen-tsung in Tao-hsuan (Taisho Daizokyo, 50:437*c*).

11 Tao-hsuan, Ta T'ang *nei-tien lu* [T'ang dynasty catalog of the Tripitika], chuan 4 (Taisho Daizokyo, 55:262*c*).

12 See, respectively, Seng-jui, "Ta-p'in-ching hsu" [Preface to the Mahaprajnaparamita Sutra], trans. Kumarajiva, in *Ch'u-san-tsang-chi chi*, chuan 8 (Taisho Daizokyo, 55:53*b*); Seng-chao, *Chu Wei-mo ching* [Commentary on the Vimalakirti Sutra] (Taisho Daizokyo, 38:327*b*); and Hui-chiao, *Kao-seng chuan*, chuan 2 (Taisho Daizokyo, 50:332*bc*).

13 See the appendices in Edward Conze, *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development* (Oxford, 1951).

lect. From Northwest India, it entered central Asia and finally reached China and Japan.[14]

Hurvitz's readable and meticulous translation strikes a happy balance between Kern's technical and Soothill's general approach. The extensive notes on variants in the current Sanskrit text, totaling an impressive 67 pages, are a boon to the specialist and would have been even more useful if Dharmaraksa's version of 286, based on a Sanskrit original which antedates the current Sanskrit text by many centuries, had also been consulted. The 18-page preface to a translation of 311 pages (compared with Soothill's 58 to 208 and Kern's 34 to 442) might be expanded appreciably to give the reader an overall picture and inner grasp, a sort of Dharani, so to speak, of this subtle and profound religious masterpiece, of which any translation, in Kumarajiva's words, is like "scratching an itch through the boot."

Hurvitz's strict adherence to the policy of translating into English where Kumarajiva translates into Chinese is painstaking and admirable, but unrewarding, producing as a result "Thus Come One Many Jewels" (p. 184) for Tathagata Prabhutaratna, and many other "Thus Come Ones." When Kumarajiva does transcribe Tathagata, he does not "write tathagada" (p. xxiv). Instead, he used five Chinese syllables to accommodate the sandhi—*Ta-tha-a-ga-ta* (= *Tathagata*), the "Thus-Come," an epithet of all Buddhas, who, in the manner of eternal reality or ultimate emptiness ("Thus"), appear in the phenomenal world ("Come") to help all beings. This exemplifies, in T'ien-t'ai philosophy, the principle of the threefold truth of viewing the dharmas as ultimately empty and phenomenally existing, and both empty and phenomenal in the absolute truth of the mean.

There are, to be sure, a number of apparent oversights. The Chinese term, *yu-teng* ("oil lamp"), for instance, is variously rendered "torches" (p. 300) and "cancles" (p. 324). The word *kuan* is construed as "gaze" in the metrical section of the Kuan-yin chapter, to wit, "O you of the true gaze, of the pure gaze, / Of the gaze of broad and great widom, / Of the compassionate gaze and the gaze of good will" (p. 318), which is, at best, unclear. As Hurvitz has acknowledged in his magnum opus, *kuan* denotes "viewing the mind," contemplation, knowledge, or insight (*Budh*), "to realize one's own identity with reality through perceptive wisdom," and "to probe the klesas [moral afflictions] with one's mind and thus annihilate them."[15]

T'ien-t'ai luminaries after Chih-i, who died before the Kuan-yin *gatha* was made available, identify Kuan-yin's "true and pure insight" with contemplation on the noumenal truth of the ultimate emptiness of all dharmas. They identify "insight of broad and great wisdom" with contemplation on the mean or middle path. And they see "insight of compassion and good will" as contemplation on the phenomenal truth of temporary existence. Thus, they abide by the principle of the threefold truth (one in three and three in one), the relative in the absolute and vice versa, in the one mind that embraces all dharmas. Contemplation on emptiness destroys delusion. Contemplation on temporary existence destroys karma. Contemplation on the middle path destroys *avidya* or fundamental ignorance. Delusion, karma, and *avidya* are the three impediments to nirvana, being opposed, respectively, to prajna (wisdom), emancipation, and Dharmakaya, the

solute—the Dharmakaya—which is nameless and formless. All the Bodhisattvas are the personification of his moral attributes: Kuan-yin reifying compassion, Manjusri wisdom, and Samantabhadra practice. "With the eyes of wisdom and the feet of practice," writes Chih-i, "nirvana is reached."[8] Their historicity is of no concern to the author of the Lotus, who views time, as the fifth-century Buddhist commentator Buddhaghosa has observed, as "a notion abstracted by mere usage from this or that event," and sees the whole creation as the revelation of the uncreated, the marks of reality, one and undifferentiated.

Kumarajiva's lucid and discerning version in twenty-eight chapters, rendered from the central Asian text of Kucha in 406 with a team of "more than two thousand monks conversant with the Doctrine,"[9] is the second of the three extant Chinese translations of the Lotus. The first is Dharmaraksa's rustic, verbatim rendition of 280 based on the Sanskrit, with the Dharani chapter, notably, in translation instead of the usual phonetic transcription. Jnanagupta and Dharmagupta's Lotus, "with supplementary chapters," in 601 is the last of the three, which is, as its name implies, an expansion on Kumarajiva's work with the addition of the Devadatta chapter and the Kuan-yin *gatha* (metrical) section. The translators of the Devadatta chapter and the Kuan-yin *gatha* are not mentioned in the 601 preface, which was presumably written by the Indologist Yen-tsung (557–610), who collated the different versions and is said to have "authored the prefaces of all newly translated sutras." It only states that the material missing in Kumarajiva was subsequently "produced [*ch'u*] by former worthies and supplemented." Jnanagupta's biographer, however, gives him the credit for the Kuan-yin *gatha*.[10] The Devadatta chapter was brought back from Khotan by Fa-hsien (literally, "Dharma-offering," to be distinguished from the homophonous "Dharma-manifest" and famous monk-traveler to India) in 475 and translated at his request by his protege Dharmamati (Fa-i) between 483 and 493.[11]

Kumarajiva's version, with the missing material subsequently added, is in current use and is the basis of more than seventy Chinese commentaries still extant, mostly by the pandits of the T'ien-t'ai school. Contrary to Hurvitz's suggestion that "it is extermely improbable that he could read or write Chinese at all" (p. ix), Kumarajiva's famous contemporaries and collaborators, Seng-jui (355–439) and Seng-chao (384–414) among others, as well as his biographer Hui-chiao (fl. 552), are unanimous on his oral and written proficiency.[12]

With the exception of the obvriously later Dharani chapter and some parts of the final section that were probably also appended to the corpus of the work, the Lotus Sutra is fairly homogeneous in composition. By convention, it has been dated at about the beginning of the Christian era.[13] However, in his linguistic comparison of two extant Sanskrit manuscripts from Kashgar and Nepal in the Kern-Nanjio collection, Professor Chi Hsien-lin suggests an even earlier date and the provenance of ancient Magadha in central India, the home base of the Buddha and Buddhism. He then traces its northwestward transmission through the gradual diminution of its original Magadhi prakrit (the dialect spoken by Sakyamuni) elements and increasing Sanskritization, and the transformation of some final *-am* to *-u*, which is a characteristic of the northwestern dia-

Kuan-yin's act reemphasizes the eternity of the Buddha, with the implication that nirvana is not extinction per se, but only the extinction of the cause and effect of unending reincarnation and the cessation of phenomenal and temporary existence. The Dragon girl is said to have "gained Dharani" and instantly attained Buddhahood (p. 199). Thus, the sutra reasserts the principle of universal Buddhahood and overturns the traditional conviction that "a woman's body is filthy" and "not a Dharma-receptacle" (p. 200). "Dharani" (from the root *Dhr,* "to hold") means, in this context and in other places including page 1, "absolute control" of the dharmas, or mastery over all passions and influences, and is different from the limited sense of mantra-dharani or "magical formula" used in the Dharani chapter and given in the glossary. There are four categories of Dharani, namely, the ability to hold and keep the Dharma (*fa*) or doctrine; to retain its innumerable meanings (*yi*); to fix one's mind with the aid of mantra (*chou*) in concentration; and to hold one's ground (*ksanti* or *jen*) in the marks of reality.[3] Hence, the sweeping statement of Subhakarasimha (637–735): "The teaching of the Tripitaka [Buddhist scriptures] is, intrinsically, morality, concentration, and wisdom; and, externally, sutra, discipline, and commentaries. It is all included in Dharani."[4]

Although Hurvitz is not at fault in rendering the Chinese term *lung* as "dragon" according to Western convention, a note of explanation is in order to clarify the statement in the glossary: "*naga* A serpent-demon. The Ch. almost consistently render this with *lung*, 'dragon.' " Etymologically, the Chinese word *lung* was written in early oracle inscriptions with an inverted *A* with a wiggling, scaly tail projecting upward and down the side from the middle of the horizontal component, the apparent image of a reptile. Semantically, it is associated with the depths and with rain giving, hence, the benefactor of an agricultural society and the imperial emblem in China. When the Chinese write *lung*, they do not have in mind the "dragon," which is a Western conception, but a mythical reptile, analogous to *naga*, a semigod in Indian tradition.

"Apocalyptic literature is necessarily mystical," writes Professor Soothill, "even paradoxical and occult. The literalist will either be repelled or attracted by the mystery" and, "like the literalist interpreter of the Bible in the West, rarely gets within sight of the stage and the play."[5] The self-immolation of the Bodhisattva Medicine King is a dramatization of the ideal of viewing as empty, that is, detachment from ego and dharmas which are the cause of all sufferings and the greatest impediments to nirvana. The Bodhisattva Medicine King is, moreover, a Dharmakaya Mahasattva, whose formless body burned, hyperbolically, for "a thousand two hundred years." But Hui-shao, a mere mortal, set himself ablaze in emulation in 451; and T'an-hung, another monk, followed suit in Vietnam in 455,[6] apparently undeterred by the whole chapter on "Expedient Devices," serving notice that the Lotus is a story meant to teach a principle.

As Chu Tao-sheng (d. 434) has said, "The phenomenon represents a principle. By holding on to the phenomenon one is deluded. Teaching leads to edification. Holding on to the letter of instruction makes one ignorant." To lead the beings into the light, the Buddhas have "resorted to all means including miracles and provisional names."[7] All the Buddhas in the Lotus are the many names or aspects of the Buddha conceived as the ab-

The Lotus Sutra in Its Latest Translation

by C.N. Tay

Translated into Chinese

by Long Tang

Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma. **Translated from the Chinese of Kumārajiva with preface, glossary, notes on the Sanskrit text, and index by LEON HURVITZ. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976. Pp. xxviii+421. $15.00 (cloth); $7.00 (paper).**

In his new English translation from the Chinese, Professor Hurvitz brings to bear the expertise of a long-time student of the Lotus and the life and thought of Chih-i (A.D. 538–97), the T'ien-t'ai Master (Japanese, Tendai) whose eclectic school and philosophy were founded on the sutra.[1] It is a welcome addition to the preceding translations, which include the scholarly undertaking of Burnouf (Paris, 1852) and Kern (Oxford, 1909) based on the Sanskrit manuscripts of the eleventh century, as well as Soothill's abridged rendering (Oxford, 1930) and Kato's unabridged edition (Tokyo, 1971) from Kumarajiva's Chinese version of 406. This literary masterpiece and powerful spiritual drama is "a comprehensive and effective statement of the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism" (foreword by Wm. Theodore de Bary), with far-reaching influence in the life, art, and literature of the whole Far East.

The central ideas of Mahayana are expressed with unexcelled pageantry and imagery in the Lotus. The path of the Bodhisattva is depicted as entering the Tathagata's chamber of compassion for all beings, donning the Tathagata's cloak of forbearance, and sitting on the Tathagata's throne of the emptiness of all dharmas (p. 180).[2] The concept of universal Buddhahood is depicted in the Buddha's many predictions of the future attainments of his disciples and by the Bodhisattva Never-Disparaging, a former incarnation of the Buddha, who in his obeisance to all he meets—monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen—always reminds them of their potential by saying, "I dare not hold you in contempt, since you are all to become Buddhas!" (p. 280). The principle of *dana* or selfless "giving," the first of the six *paramitas* ("perfections") of the Bodhisattva, comes to life as the Dragon (*naga*, "serpent") girl offers her precious pearl to the Buddha (p. 201); when Kuan-yin splits the priceless necklace in two, giving the parts to the long-extinct Buddha Tathagata Prabhutaratna and the Buddha Sakyamuni (p. 316); and again when the Bodhisattva Medicine King offers himself in self-immolation (p. 295).