

Insight from Translating the Sutra of the Buddha Proclaiming the Names of Buddhas (continued)

從翻譯佛說佛名經說起 (續)

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既然這麼難翻譯，為什麼還要翻譯呢？就因為如果我們現在不翻譯，以後西方人拜萬佛懺怎麼辦？總不能一直隨著我們中文佛號拜懺拜到老。眼睜睜看著上人早期西方老弟子的子女們長大，一直參與拜萬佛寶懺，他們一路「無怨無悔」地隨我們拜下來，委實難為他們了。我們將心比心地替他們想一想，假如我們現在拜懺用的語言是一種非洲國家的語言，我們能堅持多久？

因此，法總裡邊早就有一些先行者，陸陸續續地在做這項翻譯工作。茹果民（Roger Kellerman）居士，他們是最早期在萬佛城參加萬佛懺後，回來就拿起筆來翻譯，先譯的是《禮佛名經卷首事儀》；譯完之後的若干年，基於種種原因，譯稿已佚失難尋。

當年女界方面就有比丘尼恒蓮和恒在等人也在翻譯，她們也曾經就一些佛名去請示上人。如果中文佛名之詮釋可進可退，那翻譯成英文要如何翻譯？上人當時說，那就在英文詞彙裡找一些具有同樣靈活性的來翻譯，使之保存其彈性一話是這樣講，何其難也！一將來講經的人、解釋的人可以往好的方向去解釋。

另一次是在2009年四、五月間，比丘尼近祥師與近柔師寄來十幾個文件，全是《佛說佛名經》的英文翻譯，問我有沒有興

Since translating the Sutra is so challenging, why are we still persistent in translating the Sutra? If we do not start now, how are Westerners in the future going to bow in the Repentance? We should not expect them to bow using the Chinese translation for their whole lives. A new generation of Westerners, many of whom are the offsprings of Venerable Master Hua's early Western disciples, always participate in the Repentance; yet, we have not heard complaints about the lack of an English translation of the Sutra and should not wait until we hear their complaints. Rather, we should put ourselves in their shoes and be more considerate. If we are in a situation of bowing to a Sutra using a foreign language such as an African language, how much do you think we can endure and how long do you think we can last?

For these reasons, there were many pioneers in the translation of this Sutra and other related materials. For example, Roger Kellerman, an early disciple who participated in the Repentance in the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, started translating the Preface to Bowing the Ten Thousand Buddhas Repentance shortly thereafter. Unfortunately for various reasons, the manual of his translation was lost after some years.

HengLian Shi and HengZai Shi, as well as many members of the women translation team, also contributed to the translation of this Sutra. In the past, they had asked Venerable Master Hua for the proper translation of some ambiguous names. If some of the names have multiple meanings in Chinese, how should they be translated into English? Venerable Master Hua said in reply, "Find words in English that are as well flexible to retain the meanings of their names." Although we know this in principle, it is much more difficult to put it into practice. There is always room for future Dharma

趣幫忙校閱訂正。我查收文檔，做了一陣子，發覺實在有多重困難，使得這一翻譯校訂工程也不了了之；這一拖，就是兩三載。就在那時候，我電腦感染病毒，重新裝機，裡邊的所有檔案也沒有備份，所以這已經完成的校訂資料因之也盡失無遺。

過了兩年多，在2011年，我們秋天做完《華嚴經·離世間品第三十八》正文的翻譯，在韓步思居士（Brooks Hansard）的鼓勵之下又重拾「舊業」——開始校訂《佛說佛名經》。我們在做〈離世間品〉那時，已經形成了一個翻譯班底，就以同樣這個班底開始校譯這部經。早期做此經的困難依舊在，但人多時這種痛苦無助的感覺就被沖淡不少。

開始啟動萬佛寶懺的英譯，張福麟居士就在《佛說佛名經》的封面內側註明：「開始翻譯：2011年10月4日」。參與英譯者，借助於網路之便，來一起從事翻譯這部經典。所有參與者若不能說遍佈五湖四海，至少也有三湖兩海，從亞州、到歐洲、到美州，幾個佛弟子在同一種理念下走到一起。有部分佛名的英譯，一時懸而未決，隨著時間的沉澱及更多人的投入，就慢慢被解開；可是依舊還有一些佛名是中文也難解，英文也難譯，這種佛名就雙難。如「南無迭共華佛」，我們翻時只是勉強譯出來，暫先放著。

我們使用Skype互聯通話，以及谷歌的文件共享，因為使用文件共享，所以每個人都有機會作編輯。通過科技，有利就有弊，因為我們一直往前做，但往往一時我們自己也亂了，分不清楚哪些是做的校訂，哪些是沒做過的？在一次文件遺失之後，譯經小組的骨幹及協調員林果富居士就開始採用兩個制度：一是索引制，就是將每一尊佛名，每一個讚佛偈，每一個相好，都一一標示一個數字；這一數字不需要人去標，而是通過谷歌的網上文件分享的電子表格自動標數。二是簽名制，每次參與的人名與日期都記錄下來，才知道到底哪些人做的翻譯。

到今年（2012）一月底，我們已經將卷三譯完，但是感覺如果能將這三千尊佛號好好弄通，那麼我們今後的工作就會順利許多。

☞待續

lecturers and commentators to strive towards better interpretations of these Buddhas' names.

In April or May of 2009 I received a batch of files from Jin Xiang Shi and Jin Rou Shi and was asked whether I was interested in reviewing the primary translation. I started the review efforts for some time and found difficulties were mounting. Frustrated, I paused the project without further pressing forward. Two or three years passed and during that period my computer was infected with viruses and upon re-formatting, all the translation work was lost.

In the spring of 2011, after we had finished our translation of the Sutra texts of Chapter 38 of the *Avatamsaka Sutra—Transcending the Worlds chapter*, Brooks Hansard encouraged me to renew my efforts at translating the *Sutra of the Buddha Proclaims the Names of Buddhas*. Since a translation team was already formed when we did the *Transcending the Worlds chapter*, the same translation team started to move to this new project. Although the same challenges still existed, my feelings of helplessness when encountering obstacles became much diminished.

After we started the English translation review project, Fulin Chang wrote a short note on the back of the Sutra: “Starting date for our translation: Oct., 4, 2011.” Those who participated in the English translation worked together taking advantage of the convenience of the Internet. Many of them are from different continents—Asia, Europe, or the Americas. People came together sharing the same belief. With the contribution of more and more people, the challenges in the translation of the Buddha's name slowly dissolved over time. However, some names that were difficult to interpret in Chinese still remain unsolved questions. For example, the name “Namo Flower of Succession Buddha” we render is only a tentative translation.

Our team used Skype for communication and Google Shared Documents for online document collaboration. Because of this, each team member now has the opportunity to do editing directly. Technology always has its pros and cons. As we progressed in the translation work, we became confused and lost as to what had been revised or what had not. After a major incidence where the translation file was lost, James Lin (Guo Fu), our team's key member and coordinator, adopted a new system of storing, backing-up, and updating files—Online Spreadsheet. When each phrase of the Buddha's name is keyed in, an index number automatically associated itself with each phrase. This allows reference and cross-examination to be done effortlessly. A new procedure where each translator signed the date along with his or her name was also introduced. Now, there is less confusion as to what each translator did.

By the end of January this year (2012), we have finished translating the first three rolls. We were optimistic that if the first three thousand Buddha names could be translated well, then the rest could be completed relative easily.

☞To be continued