

# 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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### B. 《佛說佛名經》

《佛說佛名經》，列在《大正藏》中佛名經類編號0440與0441兩部；兩部同名，但是篇幅相差甚大。0440經有十二卷，就是我們目前出版使用的這一版本；0441經長達三十卷，上面也未註明翻譯者。這兩部經有同有異，限於篇幅關係，我們不深入探討。

法總出版的《佛說佛名經》，與《大藏經》中的佛名在組織上有些差別，這也使得在查找電子版的《佛說佛名經》時遇到一些困難與障礙。卷數同為十二卷，佛名應都是一萬一千九十三尊佛菩薩；第一尊佛都是「南無東方阿閼佛」，最後一尊都是「南無過一切道佛」，其他的各卷開頭佛名號都不一樣。

另外一些差別，是法總的《佛說佛名經》內容不只是佛名，在每一卷之卷首、卷末還加上一段讚佛偈頌，以及三稱「南無某某地菩薩摩訶薩」。十二卷經文，就有從初地菩薩到十地菩薩，再加上等覺、妙覺菩薩，共成十二卷。每一百尊佛名結束，

### B. *The Buddha Proclaims the Names of Buddhas Sutra*

The serial numbers of *the Sutra of the Buddha Proclaiming the Names of Buddhas* are #0440 and #0441 in *the Tripitaka*. Those two sutras share the same title, but they contain different texts. The one with the serial number #0440 has twelve scrolls in total, and it is the version that was published by DRBA and currently being used in our ceremonies. The one with the serial number #0441 has thirty scrolls in total, but the original translator's name is missing. Those two sutras have some identical Buddhas' names, along with other similarities, but they also differ in many ways. We won't go into the discussion too deeply because of the limitations of this introduction.

The version of *the Sutra of the Buddha Proclaiming the Names of Buddhas* that we published has some minor differences in the arrangement of the Buddhas' names from *the Tripitaka* version. That is the problem and obstacle that we faced when we searched in the electronic version of this sutra. Both versions have twelve scrolls and the same 11,093 Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; the very first Buddha is Namō East Akshobhya Buddha; the very last Buddha is Namō Passing All Paths Buddha. For the rest of the rolls, the Buddhas' names appearing in the beginning of each roll are all different.

The arrangement of the Buddhas' names is not the only difference in published versions of *the Sutra of the Buddha Proclaiming the Names of Buddhas*. In the DRBA version, there is a Buddha-praising verse attached to the beginning and the end of each sutra scroll followed by the three recitation of Namō Such-and-Such Ground Bodhisattva Mahasattva. In the sequential order, the title of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva at the end



又配上一項佛的三十二相及諸隨形好，再三稱「南無普賢菩薩」。原本的經文並沒有這樣每一百尊的分割，估計是為了方便拜懺以及查找。

每天一共拜六炷香，另加大迴向；所以若將所有這些佛加起來，我們拜的就遠不止這一萬一千零九十三尊佛。這樣的配置是原經文所無，乃後人所加；這估計也是上人早期為什麼選這部經做為拜懺內容，並慢慢演變成萬佛聖城招牌法會的原因。因為這樣的配置非常有條理，非常循序漸進，從初地到妙覺地，從佛之一相好到多相好。

### C. 譯者——菩提流支三藏法師

有關於菩提流支法師的傳記，主要依據的是唐道宣律師所著的《續高僧傳》中的〈譯經篇〉，取其高僧十德之一的「譯經」而列入傳中。另外一書是，南宋景定年間四明的東湖寺沙門志磐法師所撰得的《佛祖統紀》卷第二十七的〈淨土立教志篇〉，則將菩提流支法師歸入淨土高僧。

傳記中提到：菩提流支法師，是北印度人，精通三藏；後至北魏洛陽，深受皇室禮遇，其譯經也得到皇家的支持。在〈歷代三寶紀〉中提到沙門菩提流支三藏翻譯經典三十九部，共計一百二十七卷經、論、錄。這是菩提流支大師在譯經方面的貢獻。

至於他在淨土宗方面的造詣與修為，可以從另一位淨土高僧——曇鸞大師——窺得一斑。曇鸞大師於洛陽遭遇菩提流支法師，並請益以長生不老之法。菩提流支法師授以《佛說觀無量壽經》，曇鸞大師回去後，就將所藏的仙經焚毀，晝夜專攻淨土觀門；得成就後，名聞遐邇，被北魏皇帝敕詔住持玄中寺（中國淨土宗南北各有一個祖庭，南方我們熟知的是江西省廬山東林寺，北方的祖庭較少人知，即玄中寺）。記載上說，曇鸞大師往生西方極樂世界時，天樂鳴空。

of each roll matches one of the twelve stages, spanning from the First Ground up to the Tenth Ground, plus another two: the Equal Enlightenment and the Wonderful Enlightenment. Moreover, after every hundred Buddhas' names, there are descriptions of one of the Thirty-two Hallmarks or various fine subsidiary physical features of a Buddha, which are then followed by three recitations of "Namo Universal Worthy Bodhisattva." In the Tripitaka's version, there are no divisions of each hundred Buddhas' names; thus, I believe it is for convenience's sake that DRBA's version includes these divisions.

Every day we bow for the period of six incense burnings, which is six hours. Then we have the Great Transference of Merit at the end of the day. Therefore, if we add up all of the extra Buddhas that are bowed to, the total is more than 11,093 names. This kind of arrangement is not in the original sutra; it was modified by later people. This is possibly the reason why Venerable Master Hsuan Hua made bowing to this sutra an annual repentance ceremony starting from the early years. Gradually, the 10,000 Buddhas bowing ceremony became a signature Dharma event of CTTB's. This kind of arrangement is extremely organized, step-by-step, gradually progressing from the first ground to the Wonderful-Enlightenment, and also introducing a single hallmark of a Buddha to many hallmarks, from one fine feature to many features.

### C. Translator—Tripitaka Dharma Master Bodhiruci

Regarding The biography of Dharma Master Bodhiruci is mainly based on *the Sutra Translation Chapter* in a book called *The Extended Biographies of Eminent Buddhist Monks*, written by the Dharma Master Dao Xuan in the Tang Dynasty. According to the book, Master Bodhiruci is categorized as a prominent monastics-translator. Moreover, in another book called *Record about the Three Gems in Each Dynasty*, written by Dharma Master Zhipan of Donghu (Eastern Lake) Monastery in Siming, during the Southern Song Dynasty in the year of Jingding, one finds Roll 27, *Record of Establishing the Pure-Land Teachings*, which categorizes Master Bodhiruci as an eminent monk of the Pure Land School.

Based on the biography, Master Bodhiruci was from northern Indian and was well versed in Tripitaka. Later, during the Northern Wei Dynasty, he traveled to Luoyang and received a courteous and respectful welcome from the emperor. His translation work had the full support of the royal family. In *The Past Records of the Triple Jewel*, it is mentioned that Tripitaka Master Bodhiruci translated a total of 127 scrolls, which includes 39 sutras, along with commentaries, and side notes. Those are the great contributions from Great Master Bodhiruci regarding Buddhist translation.

We can gain a glimpse of this Master's accomplishment in Pure Land practices and study from the story of another Pure Land master, Great Master Tanluan. Master Tanluan sincerely sought advice from Master Bodhiruci about a way to attain immortality after their meeting at Luoyang. Master Bodhiruci taught him about *the Sutra on the Contemplation of Buddha Amitayus*. After Master Tanluan returned home, he burned all the Taoist immortality teachings in his collection. Thus, he sincerely practiced Pure Land contemplation day and night nonstop. He gained great fame everywhere when he mastered the technique. The Emperor of Northern Wei decreed that he become the abbot of Xuanzhong Monastery (In the

#### D. 《事儀》——明心法師唯一一部留名青史的著作

那麼《佛說佛名經》本身具足序分、正宗分以及流通分，可以直接用來拜懺。可是古來的高僧擔心我們眾生只知拜，不知如何拜、如何發願、如何作觀，於是明朝的雲南省南部的一位沙門——明心法師，很慈悲幫我們寫了一部禮佛懺悔的指導手冊，就是我們所熟悉的《禮佛名經卷首事儀》。

有關明心法師的史料等於沒有，這一事儀成為我們一窺法師風骨的唯一資料。從其文筆，我們知道他是以十門分義，如：一）淨三業，二）嚴道場，三）立弘誓……，所依循的是天台的懺儀為藍本，由此可知明心法師必定通達天台教觀。且讀事儀中的一些文句，可以感受法師的文筆造詣不淺。茲舉1984年宣公上人從佛殿看望大眾出來時，隨口吟誦的一段為例：

圓明四智，高昇於第一義天；  
 滿足萬德，影散於十方剎海。  
 為大施主，方隨意之寶珠；  
 作大醫王，等善見之藥樹。  
 有請必應，若空谷以傳聲；  
 等益群生，似春光而散彩。

在這個十門分義中，個人覺得最重要的是第九「懺悔發願」與第十「修觀門」，這是關鍵到能否在拜懺期間有效懺悔的一個重要因素。如果說我們在拜每尊佛號時的懺叫「別懺」的話，那每天四點多從往生堂回來到佛殿後的懺悔，就可稱為「總懺」。這一總懺是從《佛說佛名經》卷九節錄出來，亦是我個人印象最深刻的一段，深刻到可以用「刻骨銘心」來形容。

願滿足一切菩薩諸波羅蜜，

Chinese Pure Land School, there are two monasteries well-esteemed for having housed their patriarchs: the one in the south is called Donglin (Eastern Grove) Monastery on Mount Lu, Jiangxi, and the other in the north, called Xuanzhong Monastery, is less well-known.) According to biographic records, auspicious music rang throughout the sky when Master Tanluan passed away and took rebirth in the Western Pure Land.

#### D. The Preface— Master Mingxin's only masterpiece passed on for generations

*The Sutra of the Buddha Proclaiming the Names of Buddhas* is already complete in itself with its three divisions of preface, the text proper, and the circulation, and can be used alone for the bowing ceremony. However, those great, virtuous monks of the past worried that we would only bow without understanding the purpose, and without knowing how to make vows, contemplate, or transfer the merit during the practice of this Dharma. Master Mingxin, a Ming-Dynasty monk in southern Yunnan, out of compassion, wrote a manual to instruct us on the essentials of bowing before the Buddhas in this repentance ceremony, which is the current book we are using and familiar with—*A Preface and Ritual Manual for the 10,000 Buddhas Bowing Repentance*.

So far we have been unable to find any historical record other than the Preface and Ritual Manual we are currently using, which is the sole piece of his works that exists and which could help provide insight into his background as well as his character. Based on the Tiantai's format of repentance rituals, he divided the contents into ten sections: Purifying the Three Karmas; Adorning the Bodhimandala; Making Great Vows, etc. From this book, we can tell that he had mastered the Tiantai Teachings, and from the beauty of his writing, we can also sense the strength of his writing skills. We now use an example—an excerpt from this book that Ven. Master Hua effortlessly recited from memory when he walked out of the Buddha Hall to see the disciples (during the 10,000 Buddhas Bowing Session in 1984):

*Flawless in the Four Wisdoms,  
 the Buddha ascends to the heaven of ultimate truth.  
 Complete in myriad virtues,  
 his manifestation spreads throughout lands in the ten directions.  
 A great giver, he everywhere fulfills wishes with his precious pearl.  
 A king of doctors,  
 he is compared to a Medicine Tree King called Wholesome Views.  
 He responds to every prayer, like an echo reverberating from a valley.  
 He equally benefits every being, like spring sunshine spreading all its colors.*

Among the ten parts, I feel that the 9<sup>th</sup>, “Repentance and Making Vows,” and the 10<sup>th</sup>, “The Door of Practicing Contemplation,” are the most important parts. Those are the key factors that determine whether we can effectively bow and repent during the ceremony. During the session, we say that the repentance before each Buddha is called “specific repentance,” and the repentance we conduct after we come back from the Rebirth Hall can be considered “overall repentance.” This “overall repentance” has a far-reaching and amazing influence on me; its text is excerpted from Roll 9 of *The Buddha Proclaims the Names of Buddhas Sutra*,

*I vow to accomplish all Bodhisattva Paramitas.  
 From this day onwards, I will practice the ultimate selfless sacrifice of the Bodhisattvas*

從於今日，我學過去、未來、現在菩薩摩訶薩，修行大捨：  
 破胸出心施於眾生，  
 如智勝菩薩及迦尸王等；  
 捨妻子等布施貧乏，  
 如不退菩薩及阿翅羅那王，  
 須達拏及莊嚴王等；  
 久於地獄救苦眾生，  
 如大悲菩薩及善眼天子等，  
 救惡行眾生，  
 如善行菩薩及勝行王等；  
 捨頂上寶天冠，  
 並剝頭皮而與……

這是因為菩薩在求佛道過程中所做的布施。每次在佛殿隨大眾唸到這一段，我幾乎都會感覺到地在震。地之動，乃因我的心被動了。一人之心動，不足動地；多人心動，地乃為之震動，可見這段文字的感人。其實，文字本身不足以感人，感人者乃在於菩薩往昔生中作種種布施的那種卓絕。

第十的「觀行」綱要如下：此經乃諸佛之名號。名號依佛身而立，佛身要由觀來明白。身有法身、報身、化身，觀有空觀、假觀、與中觀。作觀頂禮已，思惟三身平等而立，萬德悉皆成就。佛身功德不可思議，就看我們眾生的信根是利，還是鈍。信心多大，從禮佛名所得的功德就有多大。觀行若能成就，我們就能成就諸佛現前三昧，而後又代一切眾生懺悔。

### E. 名依身立——佛名的來歷

中國人取名是一門很深的學問。古來人以姓別血緣，以氏別貴賤，名以正體，字以表德。姓與氏後來合而為一，名與字到現代也合二為一。現代人一般不會想到自己應有一名，再有一個字。

☞待續

*Mahasattvas of the past, future, and present.*

*I will cut open my chest and donate my heart to beings in need,  
 like Wisdom Victory Bodhisattva, King Jiashi, and others such as these.  
 I will give away my wife, children, and valuables to poor beings,  
 like Irreversible Bodhisattva, King Achiluona, Sudana,  
 King Adornment, and others such as these.  
 I will stay in the hells for all eternity to relieve the beings' suffering,  
 like Great Compassion Bodhisattva,  
 Prince Proper Eye, and others such as these.  
 I will rescue and teach immoral beings,  
 like Proper Behavior Bodhisattva, King Victory Action,  
 and others such as these.  
 I will offer the heavenly jeweled crown on my head,  
 and peel my scalp if they need it...*

Bodhisattvas make these kinds of selfless sacrifices and donations as they pursue progress on the Buddha Path. Every time I recited this part together with the assembly in the Buddha Hall, I could almost feel the ground shaking. Why is this? It is because my heart was truly moved. The ground won't shake if only one person is moved. However, it will shake if everyone is touched. We can see how emotionally moving this writing can be to people. Actually, the words themselves don't affect people; what truly moves and inspires us is the spirit that these words convey—the exceptional spirit that those Bodhisattvas embodied. When they practiced the Bodhisattva Path in their past lives, they gave away all they had and sacrificed themselves to the ultimate.

The guideline of the tenth section's contemplation is as follows: This sutra is a compilation of the Buddhas' names, and those names are based on their Buddha bodies. Understanding of their bodies comes from contemplation. Buddhas have three kinds of bodies (Trikaya): the Pure Dharma Body (Dharmakaya), the Perfect Reward Body (Sambhogakaya), and the Myriad Transformation Bodies (Nirmanakaya). There are three forms of contemplations: the contemplation of emptiness, contemplation of the nominal, and the contemplation of the Middle Path. After bowing in worship to the Buddhas, a practitioner contemplates the equality of the three bodies, along with the accomplishments of myriads of virtues. Also, the merit and virtue of the Buddhas' bodies is inconceivable, and the degree to which a person can comprehend them depends upon the strength of one's faith. The greater one's faith, the greater the merit and virtue one will receive from bowing to these Buddhas. If one has accomplishment in this practice, then one will realize the Samadhi of All Buddhas Appearing, and thereafter one can even repent on behalf of all beings.

### E. How the Buddhas' Names Came About

The Chinese custom for giving names is extremely complex. The ancient Chinese used *xing* (the family name) to represent your blood lineage, *shi* to represent your social status, *ming* (a given name) to express who you are, and *zi* (a courtesy name) to express what virtues you possess. Later, *xing* and *shi* merged into a single last name, and *ming* and *zi* also combined into a single first name. Modern Chinese people can't imagine having both a given and a courtesy names.

☞To be continued