



# Interpreting Wisdom — Hermeneutics and Translation of the Prajñāpāramitā

## 翻譯智慧

### — 詮釋學與般若波羅蜜多經的翻譯

By Shu Xiaojuan

束曉娟 文

Chinese Translated by Xue Wei

薛衛 中譯



On February 4, DRBU Symposium hosted its first event in 2020 with the speaker, Dr. Matthew Orsborn, a New Zealander who has studied and taught Buddhism since 2000. The topic was “Interpreting Wisdom: and Translation of the Prajñāpāramitā,” which focused on the hermeneutics of interpreting ancient Buddhist texts.

He humorously used the example of “an apple” to illustrate what could be lost in translation across time, space and language. From psychological to grammatical, from grammatical back to psychological, the hermeneutic circle constantly begs the question: how can translated texts from the original teaching create a similar state or “dynamic equivalence” in the modern minds of a completely different culture?

He emphasized that a good translation must come from a translator who understands the text. But then

2月4日，法界佛教大學研討會舉辦了2020年第一場活動。演講者奧斯本博士，是新西蘭人，自2000年以來一直從事佛教的研究和教學。他演講的主題是翻譯古代佛教經典的詮釋學。

他以「蘋果」為例，幽默地演示了，因跨越不同時間、地點和語言，在翻譯中可能會丟失的內容。從心理學到語法，又從語法回到心理學，詮釋學界不斷地提出一個問題：從原始教導翻譯出的文字如何在文化完全不同的現代人頭腦中創造出相似或「等同」的情境？

他強調，好的翻譯要求譯者本人必須理解所譯之文字。但是，如果原文本身於時間遷移中，在不同語言中經過多次製作、翻譯和再翻譯而可能有問題，那該怎麼辦呢？

此外，經典的注解及注解的注解，對理解原文如果不是帶來迷惑的話，至少是增加了複雜性。為了理解一部經，可能需要研究多部相關的經文。

奧斯本博士的演講加深了我們對翻譯古代經典的詮釋學的理解，並提醒我們作一位佛經翻譯者需要投入多少精力、需要多少耐心、知識和認真的探索。

further inquired: what if the text itself is also in question as it moves through time after many copies, translations and then subsequent translations in multiple languages? Furthermore, the commentaries of the original text and commentaries of the commentaries add more layers of complexity, if not confusion, in the process of decoding the original texts. In order to understand one sutra, one may indeed need to study multiple related sutras.

Dr. Orsbon's presentation deepened our understanding in the hermeneutics of interpreting ancient texts and reminded us how much dedication, patience, knowledge, and earnest exploration is required to be a Buddhist text translator.

While studying at National Taiwan University, Dr. Orsbon came across a stack of *Vajra Bodhi Sea* journals, from which he learned about the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and Master Hsuan Hua. He later obtained his MA and PhD at the University of Hong Kong.

Presently, he teaches at Taiwan National University as a Visiting Associate Professor, and his research is focused on classical Indian Buddhist texts and philosophy, as well as the practice, thought and institutions of contemporary Chinese Buddhism. He is the author of two books: *The Structure and Interpretation of Early Prajñāpāramitā: An Analysis via Chiasmic Theory*, and *Old School Emptiness: Hermeneutics, Criticism and Tradition in the Narrative of Śūnyatā*. ❀

在佛學院讀書期間，奧斯本博士看到了一摞《金剛菩提海》雜誌，從中他知道了有萬佛聖城和宣化上人。後來，他在香港大學獲得文學碩士和博士學位。

目前，他是台灣國立大學的客座副教授，他的研究重點是印度古典佛教經典和哲學，以及當代中國佛教的實踐、思想和體制。他寫了兩本書：《早期般若波羅蜜多經的結構和解釋：基於交錯配列理論的分析》和《舊派虛空：描述「空」的詮釋學、批評和傳統》。❀



萬佛城 聖劉英復海  
VAJRA BODHI SEA

訂閱萬佛城月刊〈金剛菩提海雜誌〉  
附上支票乙紙，抬頭：D.R.B.A.

I am enclosing a check made to D.R.B.A. for a subscription to VAJRA BODHI SEA for:

- 一年美金四十五元 US\$45.00 / 1 year  
 二年美金八十五元 US\$85.00 / 2 years  
 三年美金一百一十元 US\$110.00 / 3 years

歡迎投稿，稿件請寄 [vbs@drba.org](mailto:vbs@drba.org)  
 We welcome articles. Please send the articles to [vbs@drba.org](mailto:vbs@drba.org)

歐美地區 In America & Europe, please send to:  
 Gold Mountain Monastery  
 800 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94108  
 Tel: (415) 421-6117 Fax: (415) 788-6001

亞澳地區 In Asia & Australia, please send to:  
 Dharma Realm Guan Yin Sagely Monastery  
 161, Jalan Ampang,  
 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
 Tel: (03)2164-8055 Fax: (03) 2163-7118  
 Email: [vbs@drba.org](mailto:vbs@drba.org)

臺灣 In Taiwan 請寄法界佛教印經會  
 臺北市忠孝東路六段八十五號十一樓  
 電話：(02) 2786-3022 傳真：(02) 2786-2674

訂閱單 Subscription Form

姓名 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

地址 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

電話 Tel. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_