

Is the *Heart Sūtra* an Apocryphal Text? – A Re-examination

Author: Prof. Ji Yun, Buddhist College of Singapore

Translator: Dr. Chin Shih-Foong

Translator's notes

To East Asian Buddhists, the popularity and prevalence of the *Heart Sūtra* is perhaps unparalleled. So when Jan Nattier discussed its authenticity in 1992 (*The Heart Sūtra: A Chinese Apocryphal Text?*) considerable interest was expected. However, response from the Chinese readership was somewhat muted, due perhaps to language inaccessibility. For this reason, and also for the fact that he did not obtain authorisation for full translation, that Prof. Ji Yun 纪贇 resorted to translating excerpts of the seminal work into Chinese (§2). While the English readers may benefit more of this part by consulting the original work directly, they may find the rest of Ji's work of considerable value especially where Chinese sources are drawn upon. For instance the author presented the research of the little known Shen Jiu Cheng 沈九成 (§7), some of whose observations remarkably predated Nattier's. Perhaps the greatest value lies with Prof. Ji's research on ancient Chinese Buddhist bibliographies (§8), which might otherwise be inaccessible to the English readers. In the end, the author presented convincing evidence to show that the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* is not a sutra but a *dhāraṇī*, its nature a "copied sutra extract", first appearing at the peak of Tang, as a tantric text for mnemonic purposes. Since it is not a sutra, the question of its "apocryphal-ness" does not even apply. Viewed in this context, all the "peculiarities" raised by Nattier can be easily accounted for. Namely: its brevity; the absence of a standard 3-part format of a sutra proper; the absence of Subhūti and in his place Avalokiteśvara; and finally, the presence of a mantra at the end of the text. The philological flow of the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* may then be summarised as follows: extracts from the Sanskrit *Pañcaviṃśat-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* are translated into the Chinese *Large Sūtra* wrongly attributed to Kumārajīva (T223); extracts from an adapted version of this translation included in the *Dazhidu lun* are copied to form the core of the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* – both the so-called Xuanzang version (T251), which appeared earlier, and the so-called Kumārajīva version (T250), which appeared later, with both versions including a *dhāraṇī* taken from Atikūṭa's *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* (T901). Finally, there is the possibility that the short-form Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is a back-translation from the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* by someone other than Xuanzang.

My present translation is based on the article: 纪贇 — 《心经》疑伪问题再研究 published in the *Fuyan Buddhist Studies*, No. 7, pp. 115-182 (2012), Fuyan Buddhist Institute. The translation was first published in pp.9-113, Vol. 4, *Singapore Journal of Buddhist Studies* (2017). Post-publication corrections and improvements have been incorporated here. In this translation "T" stands for the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon 《大正新脩大藏经》, and the symbol "*" preceding a title or name means the title or name is reconstructed. For ease of reference, I have appended a trilingual *Heart Sūtra* in Sanskrit, Chinese and English at the end of the text. Acknowledgement is due to Ken Su of Hsinchu, Taiwan, for his clarification on certain Taishō readings, and to the author for providing copies of Conze's cited works, and of course his authorization for this translation.

1. Foreword

The *Heart Sūtra* 《心经》 comes in many (translated) versions of which Lin Guang Ming 林光明 collected 184. They include Chinese (50), Sanskrit (39), English (29), Japanese (39), Tibetan (6), Korean (7), Indonesian (1), Vietnamese (2), French (4), German (4), Russian (3), and one version each in Manchurian and Mongolian (林光明, 2004). Not mentioned by Lin are translations in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and others. The widespread appeal of the *Heart Sūtra* is thus apparent. The many commentarial and research works both past and present also clearly attested to the profound impact of the *Heart Sūtra* on the spiritual lives of East Asians in China, Korea, and Japan (Ochiai Toshinori 落合俊典, 2011). Therefore, the *Heart Sūtra* warrants our close attention.

A few months ago in Oct 2011, I read in the *Shanghai Book Review* 上海书评 a short commentary by the respected scholar Xu Wen Kan 徐文堪 entitled ‘*Heart Sūtra*’ and ‘*Journey to the West*’ 《〈心经〉和〈西游记〉》 (徐文堪, 2011). In it was mentioned Jan Nattier’s well-known article *The Heart Sūtra: A Chinese Apocryphal Text?* (Nattier, 1992). Xu’s article reminded me of the bafflement I had when I first read Nattier’s article many years ago. As is well-known, the writing style of Pāli or Sanskrit Buddhist texts is more repetitious whereas the Chinese style is relatively more succinct. When I first read the (short-form) Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* [translator’s note: Conze, 2000b], I found it to be as concise as the Chinese version. But feeling my own scholarship limited, I could not get to the root of the matter. It was not until I read Nattier’s article that all became at once clear. Therefore, on this occasion, Xu’s article made special sense to me. But his article is only a brief book review and does not introduce the readers to Nattier’s article in any detail. I therefore decided to translate Nattier’s work to benefit the wider readership. Regrettably, after the translation was done, my communication with her came to an unexpected end, and I was thus unable to have the translation published without her authorisation.

In due course, I found some comments on Nattier’s article in certain Chinese publications to be occasionally erroneous and in need of clarification. Xu Wen Kan wrote: “the *Heart Sūtra* was originally formulated by extracting certain passages from the *Dapin bore* 《小品般若》 [translator’s note: i.e. T223, Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā*, which is also the *Large Sūtra* mentioned below]. Likewise, Victor H. Mair 梅維恒 wrote: “the *Heart Sūtra* is copied almost verbatim from the much larger *Mohe bore boluomi jing* 《摩訶般若波羅蜜經》 (梅維恒, 2004, p. 45)” [translator’s note: **Mahāprajñāpāramitā*, another name for T223]. But in fact, Nattier’s view is that the so-called Kumārajīva *Heart Sūtra* “is not the work of Kumārajīva himself, but an adaptation of his version of the *Large Sūtra* (or rather, an adaptation of the version of his *Large Sūtra* included in the *Dazhidu lun* by a third party” (Nattier, 1992, p. 188).

In his article Xu also remarked that (the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is a back-translation from Chinese), “the back-translator is Xuanzang himself” (while Mair cautiously avoided this issue). Although Nattier suspected Xuanzang to be the back-translator, she also said this

“cannot ... be definitively proven” (Nattier, 1992, p. 181). Here, I do not mean to criticize these two scholars who are my seniors and whom I have always respected. Perhaps it was due to the restrictive format of a book review, or the fact that the topic was outside their main area of research, that they did not give Nattier’s article their full appraisal.

Not only does Nattier’s article raise the question of whether the *Heart Sūtra* is an apocryphal text, it also talks about many issues hitherto undiscussed. For example, her conjectures about the historical development of the Chinese *Heart Sūtra*; her dating of the Hōryūji Temple 法隆寺 version of the *Heart Sūtra*; her comments on the different Indian and Chinese criteria for determining scriptural authenticity and so on, all of which contain many noteworthy observations. Regrettably, these have not been given the attention they deserve by Buddhists and academics in China in the twenty years since her article was published. Even in the English academic world, only relatively unprofessional supporting or counter arguments have emerged (Pine, 2004, pp. 23-27). Thus I decided to write this article to present in detail Nattier’s views; her main supporting argument, and the logic them. I will also provide some of my own comments on her research.

In addition, I intend to present the main findings of some of the related works by other researchers regarding the authenticity of the *Heart Sūtra*. I will also show the impact and contributions they have on Nattier’s studies. I will furthermore compare their findings with Nattier’s to illustrate the importance of philological methodologies in Buddhist studies. I will then continue my discussion by investigating some of the unresolved issues concerning the *Heart Sūtra*.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my two mentors: Professor Fang Guang Chang 方广锬, who shall remain my life-long spiritual mentor, and who, like a patient teacher giving tireless advice, has ‘spinkled’ his corrections all over my first draft. The other mentor is Mr Ken Su 苏锦坤, who has supported me without fail (while we shall always remain each other’s most unreserved critic). Mr Su has always helped me source the references I needed. He read through my finished first draft more than once with care. He corrected many of my typographical errors and the expressions which did not conform to Taiwanese usage. He has also made some very meaningful exploration on a certain issue. All errors in this article are of course mine alone.

2. Nattier’s Research (with comments)

The first thing Nattier pointed out in her article is that although the *Heart Sūtra*, as a concise Buddhist text, is very popular among East Asian Buddhists, and has therefore been thoroughly investigated academically in various ways, all previous studies have one major flaw. On the one hand “overexposure to its content ... has prevented modern scholars from undertaking a thorough re-evaluation” (Nattier, 1992, p. 154), while on the other hand, modern Buddhist researchers tend to either work with the Sanskrit version (and occasionally consulting the various Chinese texts), or with the Chinese version (and more or less consulting the corresponding Sanskrit passages). In other words, there are many “intra-Sanskrit” and “intra-Chinese” studies but very little “cross-lingual” analyses (Nattier, 1992, p.

154). In this regard, Nattier's article is an achievement due precisely to its innovative methodology, which has pointed a way forward for us on future Buddhist research.

It is common knowledge that existing versions of the *Heart Sūtra* can generally be divided into a short-form and a long-form. The former is considered to be earlier and is thus the focus of Nattier's article. For ease of narration, Nattier begins with an English translation of the short-form Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* (Nattier, 1992, p. 155-156).

Immediately following the translation, Nattier pointed out a few peculiar features of the text. First, compared with other Mahāyāna texts it is very brief. But she soon pointed out also that this feature is not unique, as there are a few other Mahāyāna texts that are of comparable length, especially those found in the group of Prajñāpāramitā texts (all composed relatively late) which Conze has labelled “‘abbreviations’ of earlier texts” (Conze, 2000a, pp. 56-74).

Then there are the other more important peculiar features. First, the *Heart Sūtra* lacks an opening section 序分 usually associated with all Buddhist sutras, (i.e. “Thus have I heard. At one time, the Lord was staying at ...”) (Brough, 1950). Second, it lacks a concluding section 流通分 [translator's note: typically describing the reactions of the audience]. Third, Buddha himself makes no appearance in the *Sūtra*.

Fourth, in the context of Prajñāpāramitā literature, there is the unusual feature of having the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara, who generally plays no role in this type of literature, as the main (and indeed only) preacher (Donald S. Lopez, 1988, p. 7 n. 14). By contrast, there is the complete absence of Subhūti, the earliest main interlocutor in Prajñāpāramitā texts. “The cast of characters, in other words, is not at all what we would expect, for both the Buddha himself and Subhūti are entirely missing, while a seeming interloper, the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara, has been awarded the only speaking part.” (Nattier, 1992, p. 157).

The fifth and final peculiar feature is that unlike earlier Prajñāpāramitā texts, the *Heart Sūtra* ends with a mantra. Mantras play a relatively limited role in Prajñāpāramitā literature and when they first appear they are labelled “not as mantras but as *dhāraṇī*, a term referring (in this early usage) to mnemonic devices rather than inherently salvific or protective formulas.” (Nattier, 1992, p. 158). Nattier explained that there is no instance of the use of mantras or *dhāraṇī* in what are generally considered to be the earliest Prajñāpāramitā texts, i.e. the *Ratnaguṇasamcayagāthā* [author's note: the extant Chinese translation of this is the *Foshuo fomu baodezang bore poluomi jing* 《佛说佛母宝德藏般若波罗蜜经》 by Faxian 法賢 of Song], and the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《八千颂般若经》. The first appearance of the mantra formulas in this body of literature occurs in the *Pañcaviṃśāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《二万五千颂般若经》. Although in later Buddhism mantra and *dhāraṇī* are not easily distinguishable, in early Buddhism mantra referred to words or phrases in which the sounds themselves were considered to be highly effective when pronounced correctly, and *dhāraṇī* was first employed in reference to mnemonic devices used to retain (Sanskrit *dhṛ*, meaning “to hold”) certain elements of Buddhist doctrine in one's memory (Nattier, 1992, p. 158 note 9).

2.1 Two Astonishingly Similar Texts

Following the above discussion, Nattier pointed out two startling similarities: the word-for-word parallel between: 1) the *Heart Sūtra* attributed to Xuanzang and the *Large Sūtra* translated by Kumārajīva, i.e. the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā* (T223); 2) the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* attributed to Xuanzang and the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* in the the critical edition published by Edward Conze (Nattier, 1992, p. 158-161). These similarities are respectively illustrated by the two following tables:

<i>Large Sūtra</i> Kumārajīva trans. (T8.223,223a13-20)	<i>Heart Sūtra</i> Xuanzang trans. (T8.251,848c4-14)
舍利弗 色不异空 空不异色 色即是空 空即是色 受想行识 亦复如是 舍利弗 是諸法空相 不生不灭 不垢不淨 不增不減 是空法非过去非未来非現在 是故空中无色无受无想行识 无眼耳鼻舌身意 无色声香味触法 无眼界乃至无意识界 亦无无明亦无无明尽 乃至亦无老死亦无老死尽 无苦集滅道 亦无智亦无得	舍利子 色不异空 空不异色 色即是空 空即是色 受想行识 亦复如是 舍利子 是諸法空相 不生不灭 不垢不淨 不增不減 —— 是故空中无色无受想行识 无眼耳鼻舌身意 无色声香味触法 无眼界乃至无意识界 无无明亦无无明尽 乃至亦无老死亦无老死尽 无苦集滅道 无智亦无得

Chinese <i>Heart Sūtra</i> (Nattier's translation)	Sanskrit <i>Heart Sūtra</i> (Nattier's translation)
Śāriputra, —— Form is not different from emptiness, emptiness is not different from form. Form itself is emptiness, emptiness itself is form. Śāriputra, All dharmas are marked by emptiness:	Here, Śāriputra, Form is empty, emptiness itself is form. ¹ Form is not distinct from emptiness, emptiness is not distinct from form. [That which is form is emptiness, that which is emptiness is form.] Here, Śāriputra, All dharmas have the mark of emptiness: ²

¹ Nattier, 1992, note 12: This line, which is absent from all the Chinese versions of the text, appears in the form cited here (that is, Skt. *rūpaṃ śūnyam śūnyatāiva rūpaṃ*) in the majority of extant Sanskrit copies ... as well as in the Tibetan translation of the longer recension of the *sūtra* (which reads *gzugs stong-pa'o*). Conze, however, preferred the reading “form is emptiness” (*rūpaṃ śūnyatā*) and accordingly chose this version (which constitutes a distinct minority of readings in the manuscript copies) as standard.

² Nattier, 1992, note 13: Here we come to a large rift between the traditional Chinese understanding of this line, on the one hand, and the Tibetan on the other. The Chinese *Heart Sūtra* reads *shih chu fak'ung hsiang* [translator's note: 是諸法空相] “all dharmas [have] the mark [of] emptiness.” The Tibetan *Heart Sūtra*, by contrast, reads *chos thams-cad stong-pa-nyid-de/mtshan-nyid med-pa* (“all dharmas are emptiness [they are] devoid of marks”). Grammatically the Sanskrit admits of either interpretation; it can be read either as *sarvadharmāḥ śūnyatā-lakṣaṇā* (“all dharmas have the mark of emptiness”) or as *sarvadharmāḥ śūnyatā-alakṣaṇā* (“all dharmas are emptiness, [and are] unmarked”) [author's note: Sanskrit *sandhi* specifies that long ā

[They are] not originated, Not extinguished, Not defiled, Not pure, Not increasing, Not decreasing. Therefore, in emptiness there is no form, no sensation, no concept, conditioning force, [or] consciousness; No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body [or] mind; No form, sound, smell, taste, touch-object [or] mind-object (dharma); No eye-realm (and so on up to) no realm of mind-consciousness; And no ignorance and no destruction of ignorance; (And so on up to) no old-age-and-death [and] no destruction of old-age-and-death; There is no suffering, arising [of suffering], extinction [of suffering], [or] path; No wisdom and no attainment.	[They are] non-originated, Non-extinct, Non-defiled, Non-pure, Non-decreasing, Non-increasing. ³ Therefore, Śāriputra, in emptiness there is no form, no sensation, no concept, no conditioning forces, no consciousness; No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body [or] mind; No form, sound, smell, taste, touch-object [or] mind-object (dharma); No eye-realm (and so on up to) no realm of mind-consciousness; No ignorance, no destruction of ignorance; (And so on up to) no old-age-and-death [and] no destruction of old-age-and-death; There is no suffering, arising [of suffering], extinction [of suffering], [or] path; No wisdom [and] no attainment.
--	--

2.2 One Astonishing Difference

While we may consider the word-for-word correspondence between the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* and the Chinese *Large Sūtra* relatively easy to explain (as mutual copies), we would find the (literal) correspondence between the Chinese and Sanskrit versions of the *Heart Sūtra* somewhat baffling (the same point noted by me many years ago). Even more peculiar is the startling difference between the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* and the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* as pointed out by Nattier in the following table. Here the *Large Sūtra* is the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* transcribed from Gilgit manuscript, which clearly

vowel combined with short *a* vowel becomes long *ā*, and the meaning of *lakṣaṇā* is negated by the prefix ‘a’]. Conze's English translation of the Sanskrit follows the Chinese sense, but without a discussion of the alternative reading.

³ Nattier, 1992, note 14: It is noteworthy that both Sanskrit versions of this passage (that is, both the *Heart Sūtra* and the *Large Sūtra*) follow the sequence “not decreasing, not increasing,” while both Chinese versions place the word “increasing” (zeng, 增) before “decreasing” (jian, 减). It is difficult to explain this reversal no matter what direction of textual transmission is postulated. A possible explanation is that the difference is due simply to the established sequences of these terms in the two languages: that is, that in Sanskrit the more natural sequence would be “decreasing-increasing,” while the reverse would be true in Chinese (just as in English we normally say “waxing and waning” rather than the reverse, and would tend to follow this sequence even when translating from a language that read “waning and waxing”). An additional factor may be the visual effect of the Chinese characters: by placing the word “decreasing” last, one obtains a sequence of six negations in which items 2, 4 and 6 [translator's note: 减、淨、減] all contain the “water” radical while items 1, 3 and 5 [translator's note: 生、垢、增] do not. If one followed instead the sequence found in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* the water radical would not alternate so rhythmically, but would instead appear in items 2, 4 and 5, lending a perhaps less poetic appearance to the list. Both of these suggestions are, however, merely hypothetical.

displays certain features of Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit⁴.

Sanskrit <i>Large Sūtra</i>	Sanskrit <i>Heart Sūtra</i>
na hi Śāradvatīputra- ⁵	iha Śāriputra
—	rūpaṃ śūnyaṃ śūnyataiva rūpaṃ
-anyad rūpaṃ anyā śūnyatā ⁶	rūpaṃ na pṛthak śūnyatā
nānya śūnyatānyad rūpaṃ	śūnyatāya na pṛthag rūpaṃ
[rū]paṃ eva śūnyatā	[yad rūpaṃ sā śūnyatā
śūnyat(ai)va rūpaṃ	ya śūnyatā tad rūpaṃ ¹⁰]
evaṃ nā(ny)ā vedanānyā śūnyatā	—
nānya saṃjñā nānyā śūnyatā	—
nānye saṃskārā anye śūnyatā	evaṃ eva vedanā-saṃjñā-saṃskāra-
nānya vijñānaṃ anyā śūnyatā	vijñānaṃ
nānyaḥ śūnyatānyad vijñānaṃ	—
vijñānaṃ eva śūnyatā śūnyataiva	—
vijñānaṃ	—
ya Śāradvatīputra śūnyatā	iha Śāriputra sarva-dharmāḥ śūnyatā-
—	lakṣaṇā
na sā utpadyate	anutpannā
na nirudhyate	aniruddha
na saṃkliśyate	amalā
na vyavadāyate	avimalā
na hīyate	anūnā
na vardhate	aparipūrṇāḥ
nātītā nānāgatā na pratyutpannā ⁷	—
yā notpadyate na nirudhyate na	—
saṃkliśyate na vyavadāyate na	—
hīyate na vardhate nātītā	—
nānāgatā na pratyutpannāḥ	—
—	tasmāc Chāriputra śūnyatāyām na
na tatra rūpaṃ na vedanā na	rūpaṃ na vedanā
na saṃjñā na saṃskārāḥ	na saṃjñā na saṃskārāḥ
na vijñānaṃ	na vijñānaṃ
na cakṣur na śrotraṃ na ghrāṇaṃ	na cakṣuḥ- rotra-ghrāṇajihvā-kāya-
na jihvā na kāye na manaḥ	manāṃsi
na rūpaṃ na śabda na gandho na rasa	na rūpa-śabda-gandha-rasa-
na sparśo na dharmāḥ	spraṣṭava ¹¹ -dharmāḥ
—	—
na tatra skandhā na dhātavo	na cakṣur ¹² -dhātu yāvan
nāyatanāni	
na tatra cakṣudhātu na rūpadhātu	
na cakṣuvijñānadhātu	
na (śro)tradhātu na śabdadhātur	
na śrotravijñānadhātuḥ	

⁴ Nattier, 1992, note 15: All citations from the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* are based on the readings found in the Gilgit manuscript published in facsimile by Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra; a photocopy and transcription of the passage corresponding to the core section of the *Heart Sūtra* were generously supplied by Gregory Schopen. I have followed Schopen's lead in not regularizing the transcription.

⁵ Nattier, 1992, note 16: The Gilgit manuscript of the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* regularly reads *Śāradvatīputra*, while the later Nepalese manuscripts (and the Tibetan translation) read *Śāriputra*. For a discussion of this and other variants of this name see Andre Migot, "Un grand disciple du Buddha Śāriputra," *Bulletin de l'école Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 56 (1954), 405-554 (p. 411).

⁶ Nattier, 1992, note 18: The Gilgit manuscript regularly reads *śūnyatā* where *śūnyatā* is expected.

⁷ Nattier, 1992, note 20: This line ("not past, not future, [and] not present") is found in both the Gilgit manuscript and Dutt's late Nepalese copies of the *Large Sūtra*, as well as in the Chinese translations of the text. It is absent, however, from all versions of the *Heart Sūtra* (in all languages) except the Chinese version attributed to Kumārajīva, a text whose attribution is very problematic.

na ghrāṇadhātu na gandhadhātu na ghrāṇavijñādhātu na jihvadhātu na rasadhātu na jihvavijñāna dhātuḥ na kāyadhātu na spraṣṭavyadhātu na kāyavijñādhātu na manodhātu na dharmadhātu na manovijñāna[dhā]tuḥ[sic] na tatrāvidyā nāvidyānirodhaḥ na saṃskārān na saṃskārānirodhaḥ na vijñānaṃ na vijñānanirodhaḥ na nāmarrūpaṃ na nāmarrūpanirodhaḥ na satvāyatanam ⁸ na satvāyatananirodhaḥ na sparśo (na) sparśananirodhaḥ na vedanā na vedanānirodhaḥ na ṛṣṇā na ṛṣṇānirodhaḥna nopādānaṃ nopādānanirodhaḥ na bhavo na bhavanirodhaḥ na jāti(r)na jātinirodhaḥ jarāmarāṇaṃ na jarāmarāṇanirodhaḥ na duḥkhaṃ na samudayo na nirodho na mārgaḥ na prāpti nābhisamayah ⁹	na mano vijñāna-dhātuḥ nāvidyā nāvidyā-kṣayo yāvan na jarāmarāṇaṃ na jarāmarāṇakṣayo na duḥkha-samudaya-nirodha-mārga na jñānaṃ na prāpti
--	--

Comparison of the two Sanskrit texts shows them to be different. First, the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* is clearly longer than the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*. Although they basically have the same content, the latter is much more concise and has omitted certain category (of the five *skandhas*). For example, the *Large Sūtra* does not simply say: “form is not one thing and emptiness another (*na ...anyad rūpaṃ anyā śūnyatā*), but goes on to repeat the same formula for each of the remaining four *skandhas* (“sensation is not one thing and emptiness another”) and so on. The *Heart Sutra*, by contrast, states simply that the same is true of the other *skandhas* (*evaṃ eva vedanā-samjñā-saṃskāra-vijñānaṃ*). Likewise, when the *Large Sūtra*

¹⁰ Nattier, 1992, note 19: “The sentences *yad rūpaṃ sā śūnyatā ya śūnyatā tad rūpaṃ* (“that which is form is emptiness, that which is emptiness is form”) are absent from a substantial majority of the Sanskrit manuscripts reviewed by Conze in his critical edition, as well as from the canonical (longer version) Tibetan translation, though they do appear in the Tun-huang manuscript copies (shorter version), where they are rendered into Tibetan as *gag gzugs-pa de stong-pa-nyid ll gag stong-pa-nyid-pa degzug-te* [sic]. Accordingly, I have omitted these lines from the English translation of the Sanskrit given above.

¹¹ Nattier, 1992, note 21: Note that the *Heart Sūtra* reads *spraṣṭavya* while the *Large Sūtra* has *sparśa*. In this context (that is, in the list of *āyatana* and *dhātus*) the reading *spraṣṭavya* (“touchable”) is more standard than *sparśa* (“touch”); see Bruce Hall, *Vasubandhu on “Aggregates, Spheres, and Components”: Being Chapter One of the “Abhidharmakośa”*, Ph.D.thesis, Harvard Univ., 1983, p. 62 (I, §9a-b) and p. 80 (I, §14a-b).

¹² Nattier, 1992, note 22: The *Heart Sūtra* regularly reads *caḥsurdhātu* where the *Large Sūtra* has *caḥsudhātu*.

⁸ Nattier, 1992, note 23: “Where the Gilgit text reads *na satvāyatanam na satvāyatananirodhaḥ* (“no being-*āyatanas* and no extinction of being-*āyatanas*”). Dutt’s edition has *na ṣaḍāyatanā na ṣaḍāyatananirodha* (“no six *āyatanas* and no extinction of the six *āyatana*”), which is the more expected reading.

⁹ Nattier, 1992, note 24: While the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* negates attainment (*prāpti*) and realization (*abhisamaya*), most Sanskrit manuscript copies of the *Heart Sūtra* place the term *prāpti* second rather than first and negate knowledge (*jñāna*) rather than realization. In this respect the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* matches both the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* attributed to Xuanzang and the Chinese *Large Sūtra* translation of Kumārajīva, where the corresponding terms are 智 and 得.

declares that in emptiness there is no eye, ear, and etc. It does so by enumerating each of the eighteen *dhātus* individually, while the *Heart Sūtra* simply lists the first twelve elements in the list (i.e. the sense-organs and their respective objects) and then summarizes the remaining *dhātus* in abbreviated form (“no eye-realm and so forth up to no mind-consciousness-realm” Skt. *na cakṣur-dhātu yāvan na manovijñāna-dhātuḥ*.)” (Nattier, 1992, p. 163).

More peculiarly, when expressing a similar idea, the two Sanskrit versions even resort to using different terms and expressions. For example, while both versions are saying “no old-age-and-death” (*na jarāmaraṇam*), the *Large Sūtra* goes on to say there is no “extinction” (or “stopping”) (*nirodha*), whereas the *Heart Sūtra* uses the term *kṣaya* “destruction”. Another example is that the *Large Sūtra* uses the expression *na anya X anya Y* to express “form is not other than emptiness, emptiness is not other than form”, that is, “X is not other than Y” (literally “not other X other Y”) whereas the *Heart Sūtra* uses the expression “*X na pṛthak Y*” (literally “from-X not distinct Y,” in which X is in the ablative case). The two texts are essentially identical in meaning but differ noticeably in wording. (Nattier, 1992, p. 164).

Nattier cited yet another even more vivid example to show the divergence between the two texts as follows:

<i>Large Sūtra</i>	<i>Heart Sūtra</i>
<i>na ... utpadyate</i>	<i>anutpannā</i>
<i>na nirudhyate</i>	<i>aniruddhā</i>
<i>na saṃkliṣyate</i>	<i>amalā</i>
<i>na vyavadāyate</i>	<i>avimalā</i>
<i>na hīyate</i>	<i>anūnā</i>
<i>na vardhate</i>	<i>aparipūrṇā</i>

In this example, the *Large Sūtra* consistently uses the singular verbal forms:

[It] does not originate (*na ... utpadyate*), is not extinguished (*na nirudhyate*), is not defiled (*na saṃkliṣyate*), is not purified (*na vyavadāyate*), does not decrease (*na hīyate*), does not increase (*na vardhate*);

By contrast, the *Heart Sūtra* uses plural adjectival forms:

[They] are non-originated (*anutpannā*), non-extinct (*aniruddhā*), non-defiled (*amalā*), non-pure (*avimalā*), non-decreasing (*anūnā*), non-increasing (*aparipūrṇā*).

The above comparisons show that there are substantial differences between the two Sanskrit versions, not only in their terminology but also in their grammatical forms (verbs vs. adjectives, singulars vs. plurals) (Nattier, 1992, p. 165). More importantly, these grammatical differences in numbers fit in with Nattier’s overall scheme (of textual transmission). For example, the shift from singular forms (in the *Large Sūtra*) to plurals (in the *Heart Sūtra*) is paralleled by a change of subject in the Sanskrit texts – from “emptiness” (in the *Large Sūtra*) to “all dharmas” (in the *Heart Sūtra*). In other words, while the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* reads “that which is emptiness does not originate” and so on, Kumārajīva’s Chinese *Large Sūtra* reads “all dharmas are marked by emptiness: not originated” and so on, wordings which the

Heart Sūtra attributed to Xuanzang follow exactly. But since the subject in Xuan Zhaung's text is only implied, the readers would be led into thinking that the subject is "all dharmas", which most interestingly coincided with the plural form of "emptiness" in the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*. From the above discussion one can observe the trail of transmission from the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* > to the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* > to the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* (Nattier, 1992, n. 26).

Furthermore, in terms of Sanskrit, there are close parallels between the *Large Sūtra* and the *Heart Sūtra*. Although they differ in terminology and grammatical forms, they share clear similarity in content. What then is the relationship between the two texts?

First in terms of textual history, the *Large Sūtra* clearly predates the *Heart Sūtra*. There is an abridged translation of the the *Large Sūtra* dated 286 CE by Dharmarakṣa 竺法护 – the *Guang zhan jing* 《光赞经》 (T222), and a complete translation of it dated 291 CE by Mokṣala 巫叉罗 – the *Fang guang jing* 《放光经》 (T221). However, the so-called Kumārajīva version (T223) (if this is indeed his work) would have be done around 402-412 CE, while the Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra* is said to be translated in 649 CE, clearly later than the *Large Sūtra*. Thus, we can only conclude that the word-for-word correspondence between the Kumārajīva *Large Sūtra* and the Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra* can only be the result of the latter inheriting or copying from the former. Such relationship however does not apply to the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* and the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*. This is because although the two texts have closely matching views and even matching orders of presentation of these views, they have used different terms. There is the substitution of adjectives for verbs, plurals for singulars, and synonymous Buddhist terms (e.g. *kṣaya* for *nirodha*). Applying the general philological redaction rules, the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is simply unable to be derived from the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra*, nor *vice versa*.

Therefore, in subsequent sections, Nattier re-analysed the entire path of transmission of the various texts. She began by comparing the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* with Kumārajīva's Chinese translation of this text. She found the two to be closely related apart from the changes made to accommodate Chinese aesthetic preference for succinctness. Therefore, the line of transmission from the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* to the Chinese *Large Sūtra* is very clear. And given the similarities between the Chinese *Large Sūtra* and the Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra* – plus the fact that the former appeared much earlier than the latter, the line of transmission of the corresponding content from the Chinese *Large Sūtra* to the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* is also very clear. But how is the (short-form) Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* to be placed in this line of transmission? Nattier's answer to this is: "the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is a translation from the Chinese (*Heart Sūtra*)." (Nattier, 1992, p. 169).

2.3 Internal Evidence: How to Determine a Back-translation

Nattier's first task is to resolve an issue of methodology. Namely: how to determine a case of back-translation. For this, she made use of her background in Mongolian studies. In other words, citing examples of back-translation in the Mongolian Buddhist canon, she unravelled the general indicators and features of a back-translation. She pointed out that the

Mongols were fond of Indian loan words, but their *Kanjur* and *Ganggyur* were translated from the Tibetan Buddhist canon which has a preference for free translation. Thus, the Mongols were compelled to find a way of translating the Tibetan terms, which have been freely translated from Sanskrit, back into their Sanskrit terms which may or may not be correct. For example, in the **Ārya-maitrī-sūtra*, the city of abode for Maitreya is Ketumatī in Sanskrit [author’s note: “Jitou city” 鸡头城 in Chinese transliteration]. It is often translated into Tibetan as *Rgyal-mtshan blo-gros*, where *rgyal-mtshan* (lit. “royal ensign”) is a Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit word *ketu* for “flag,” and *blo-gros* (“mind”) is an attempted rendition of the suffix *-matī* [Nattier’s note: feminine form of *-mat* meaning “having, possessed of”, i.e. “the one (f.) possessing a flag”], which has been mistaken for *matī* (“mind”). This in fact is a mistranslation (Nattier, 1992, p. 170, n. 35). The Mongolian translators attempted to recover the original Indian word for *Rgyal-mtshan blo-gros* and reconstructed the first element in the name not as *ketu*, but as *dhvaja* – another Sanskrit word for “flag” that is also regularly rendered into Tibetan as *rgyal-mtshan*. In other words, the Mongols made an educated but erroneous guess using in all probability a Tibetan-to-Sanskrit dictionary as their reference (Nattier, 1992, p. 170).¹³

Nattier thus concluded that: “An unmatched but synonymous equivalent of a Sanskrit term, then, is one of the leading indicators of back-translation. But there are other indicators as well. Incorrect word order, grammatical errors that can be traced to the structure of the intermediary language, and incorrect readings (due to visual confusion of certain letters or characters in the intermediary language) can all provide evidence that reconstruction, not preservation of an original text, has taken place.” (Nattier, 1992, p. 170).

By this criterion we can see that the *Heart Sūtra* shows similar signs (of back-translation). For example, where we read *na anyad rūpaṃ anyā śūnyatā* in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* (“form is not one thing and emptiness another”), meaning of course “form is not different from emptiness” 色不异於空, the Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra* reads: “*se bu yi kong*” 色不异空, which interestingly is the exact Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* reading of “*rūpān na pṛthak śūnyatā*”. Here, Nattier’s explanation is somewhat complicated but we can explain it as follows: If we disregard gender, number, case and other grammatical forms and focus solely on the word orders, we can see that the four words in the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* are the exact match of the four Chinese words “*se bu yi kong*”. In Nattier’s own words, it is “a perfectly good (if somewhat unidiomatic) translation of Chinese “*se bu yi kong*”. And this is also “an exact counterpart of the sequence Skt. *ketu* > Tib. *rgyal-mtshan* > Skt. *dhvaja*, in which a Sanskrit term is transformed – via back-translation through a second-language intermediary – into a synonymous but quite different expression.” (Nattier 1992, p. 171) [translator’s note: in the case being discussed, Skt. *na anyad rūpaṃ anyā śūnyatā* > Ch. *se bu yi kong* > Skt. *rūpān na pṛthak śūnyatā*].

¹³ Nattier, 1992, note 36: The various Mongolian-Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries employed by the Mongols in translating Buddhist texts from the Tibetan are discussed in detail in Vladimir Leonidovich Uspensky, “*Buddhiskaya terminologiya v mongol'skom perevode. Isochniki dlya izucheniya i puti formirovaniya*” [“*Buddhist Terminology in Mongolian Translation. Sources for their Study and their Means of Formation*”] (unpublished M.A. thesis, Leningrad University, 1981), pp. 8-27. One of the most important of these texts is the Mongolian version of the Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary known as the *Mahāvyyutpatti*; see Alice Sarkozi, “*Some Words on the Mongolian Mahāvyyutpatti*” *Acta Orientalia* (Budapest), vol. 34 (1980), pp. 219-234.

Nattier provided a second example (of back-translation). Where the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* reads *na jarāmarāṇanirodhaḥ* “no extinction (*nirodha*) of old-age-and-death”, the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* has *na jarāmarāṇakṣayo* “no destruction (*kṣaya*) of old-age-and-death.” And the term *nirodha* in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* has been replaced in both the Chinese *Large Sūtra* and the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* by the term *jin* 尽, which is back-translated into *kṣaya* in the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* [translator’s note: Skt. LS *nirodha* > Ch. LS & HS *jin* > Skt. HS *kṣaya*].

A more striking example (of back-translation) is the following parallel readings:

Sanskrit <i>Large Sūtra</i>	Chinese <i>Large Sūtra</i>	Sanskrit <i>Heart Sūtra</i>
<i>na ...utpadyate</i>	不生	<i>anutpannā</i>
<i>na nirudhyate</i>	不灭	<i>aniruddha</i>
<i>na saṃkliśyate</i>	不垢	<i>amalā</i>
<i>na vyavadāyate</i>	不淨	<i>avimalā</i>
<i>na hīyate</i>	不增	<i>anūnā</i>
<i>na vardhate</i>	不減	<i>aparipūrṇā</i>

For expressing the same meaning the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* uses singular verbal forms, while the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* uses plural adjectives. Nattier’s explanation for this is again somewhat hard to follow, but my own understanding is this: The expressions in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* are in singular forms because, as mentioned before, the subject here is “emptiness” 空 in singular, which should have remained singular in the Chinese translation. But the problem is: Kumārajīva’s translation is one that can be easily misunderstood – in his expression “*zhu fa kong xiang, bu sheng*” ... 诸法空相, 不生..., the addition of the modifier “*zhu fa*” 诸法 to the original subject “*kong*” 空, will result in the modified subject “*zhu fa kong xiang*” being easily misunderstood as plural in Chinese. Interestingly, plural form is exactly what is being used in the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*. Therefore, as Nattier pointed out: “In each case the Chinese is a perfectly good rendition of the terminology contained in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra*, while the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* in turn represents a perfectly good rendition of the Chinese. Once again the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* offers us exactly the kind of synonym-shift that we would expect if it were a back-translation from the Chinese.” (Nattier 1992, p. 172).

2.4 The Emergence of the *Heart Sūtra* and its Frame Sections

Nattier next examined the time-sequence of the emergence of the *Heart Sūtra* as an independent text in China and India. This is important because should the Indian Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* emerged earlier than its translation in China, back-translation would undoubtedly be proven false. For this Nattier’s examined the various commentaries on the text. She discovered that the earliest extant Indian commentaries can only be dated from the 8th century CE (Donald S. Lopez, 1988, pp. 4, 8-13, and Eckel, 1987, p. 71). Prior to this date there is no independent evidence for the existence of the *Heart Sūtra* (such as citations of it or reports of its existence by Chinese travellers in India).¹⁴ In other words, there is no evidence for the

¹⁴ Nattier researched into a widely quoted story from Xuanzang’s journey to India, which mentions that Bhavaviveka once recited the *Heart Sūtra* in order to conjure up a vision of the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara.

existence of the *Heart Sūtra* in India before the 8th century CE.

By contrast, commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* among Chinese records are dated no later than the second half of the 7th century – possibly even decades earlier. Regarding the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* itself, the matter is much more complicated. Although we have the so-called “Kumārajīva version” of the *Heart Sūtra*, this translation is not attributed to Kumārajīva until the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* 《开元释教录》 (8th century), which did not mention Xuanzang’s *Heart Sūtra* [translator’s note: first appears in the 7th century *Neidian Catalogue* 《内典录》 see §8.2]. The earliest extant (Chinese) evidence for the existence of the *Heart Sūtra* is attested at least by Xuanzang’s biography regarding his sojourn in Sichuan (ca. 618-622 CE), while the earliest Indian evidence should be Kamalaśīla’s 莲花戒 commentary of the text – ca. end of the 8th century CE (Donald S. Lopez, 1988, p. 4, 11). Therefore, the conclusion is: The Chinese *Heart Sūtra* predates the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*.

Nattier next considers the fact that the *Heart Sūtra*, apart from having a core section which finds its parallel in the *Large Sūtra*, has a so-called “frame-section”, defined by her as the introductory and concluding sections. This has no parallel in the *Large Sūtra*. She noted with insight that all the (peculiar) issues she previously pointed out – the absence of an introductory section, the absence of a concluding section (but the presence of a *dhāraṇī* in its place), the absence of the Buddha (but the presence of Avalokiteśvara in his place) – all appear in the “frame section”. For her, the question is: If the *Heart Sūtra* were indeed an

(Eckel, 1987, p. 70) (Donald S. Lopez, 1988, p.13) This story, however, which is based on the account given in Samuel Beal’s translation of the *Xi Yu Ji: Buddhist Records of the Western World* [1884; rpt. New York: Paragon Reprint Corp., 1968], vol. 2, pp. 223-225, is a figment of Beal’s translation; the text in question is not the *Heart Sūtra* at all [author’s note: This story refers to the following record in the 《大唐西域记》 (*Great Tang Records on the Western Regions*): “Bhavaviveka recited the 《随心陀罗尼》 (*Wish-Granting Dhāraṇī*) in front of Avalokiteśvara’s image. For three years he refused all food, survived on water, and Avalokiteśvara revealed in fresh.” (T51.2087.930c) Obviously, the text involved is not the *Heart Sūtra*.]

Another piece of Nattier’s important research is the Sanskrit palm-leaf manuscript of the *Heart Sūtra* at the Hōryūji temple in Japan purportedly brought from China to Japan in 609 CE. This assertion first appeared in the work of F. Max Müller, and has since been widely quoted in the Western academic world (Conze, 2000, p. 115). However, Nattier pointed out that Müller was in fact misled by his Japanese research assistants. In her own words: “(they) reported to him that a date for the arrival of the *sūtra* in Japan, corresponding to 609 CE, appears in a Japanese source (see F. Max Müller, ed., *Buddhist Texts from Japan*, [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881], pp. 4-5). Indeed it does; but the source in question, a local chronicle titled *Ikaruga koji benran* (*Memorandum on Ancient Matters of Ikaruga*) composed in 1836, is entirely unreliable on matters of ancient chronology; to cite only one example, it asserts that together with the palm-leaf *Sūtra* the mission that arrived in Japan in 609 brought (*inter alia*) a robe and a bowl belonging to Bodhidharma, items that acquired symbolic importance in Chinese Chan only during and after the time of Shen-hui 神会 (684-758 CE). Such a tradition, in other words, could only have been formulated around 730 CE at the earliest, and thus the assertion that Bodhidharma’s robe and bowl reached Japan in 609 CE is patently false, making the parallel claim that the *Heart Sūtra* manuscript was brought by the same mission quite useless as evidence. In the absence of any other source that could provide a concrete date for the arrival of this manuscript in Japan (and accordingly a *terminus ante quem* for its copying in India), we may provisionally accept the evidence (admittedly always tentative) provided by the shape of the letters in the manuscript itself: as G. Bühler asserts in the same volume (Müller, *Buddhist Texts from Japan*, p. 90), ‘If we had no historical information [a reference to the Ikaruga chronicle] regarding the age of the Hōryūji palm-leaves, every palaeographer, I believe, would draw from the above facts the inference that [the *Heart Sūtra* manuscript] belonged to the beginning of the eighth century A.D.’ Constrained by what he believed was a concrete date for the *Heart Sūtra* manuscript, Bühler went on to use that text to re-evaluate the history of Indian palaeography (pp. 90-95); as we can see, however, such contortions were not necessary, and the appropriate move would have been the reverse.” (Nattier, 1992, pp. 208-209, n. 39)

“apocryphal text”, then why did its author make no efforts to render the text more like a authentic sutra, and why is there the lack of native Chinese concepts one commonly finds in many Chinese apocryphal texts? Nattier found her answers for this in the works of the well-known Japanese scholar Fukui Fumimasa 福井文雅: the *Heart Sūtra* is not originally a sutra, and “heart” in the title does not mean “essence” but “*dhāraṇī*” (福井文雅, 1987, pp. 201-207).

The next thing Nattier wished to resolve is why do Avalokiteśvara and a *dhāraṇī* appear in the frame section? Her answer to the former is that the presence of Avalokiteśvara is not unexpected, for this is the most popular *bodhisattva* in southwest China at the time of the 7th century. As an answer to the latter, she pointed out that the *dhāraṇī: gate gate pāragate pārasaṃgate bodhi svāhā* can also be found in some other texts (citing McRae, 1998, p. 107, n. 10). In fact, this *dhāraṇī* has an entirely matching parallel in a more complete form, whose author is Xuanzang himself (we will return to this discussion later) [translator’s note: see §8.5]. Here Nattier is completely right. She continues by pointing out that the certain unidiomatic Sanskrit expressions found in the frame section could only make sense if they are placed in the context of the Chinese language. Having determined that the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* is the antecedent of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*, Nattier went on to conjecture that the Sanskrit text was probably a back-translation by Xuanzang (Nattier, 1992, pp. 173-178).

2.5 Xuanzang’s Role and the Chinese *Heart Sūtra*

Nattier focused her attention on Xuanzang because she noted an important fact: All extant Chinese commentaries are based on his text in short form (T251), while all Indo-Tibetan commentaries are based on the long-form version. What then is Xuanzang’s role in the formulation of the Chinese *Heart Sūtra*? The first thing to note is that the *Biography of Xuanzang* 《慈恩传》 recorded that he was given the *Heart Sūtra* by a monk in Sichuan, and in the course of his westward journey to India he was blessed by the text. Also more importantly, during his stay in India he translated the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* 《大乘起信论》 and other texts into Sanskrit. With these facts, he is thus to this day certainly “the most likely candidate” for the Sanskrit translation of the *Heart Sūtra*. Here, Nattier also pointed out a significant point: In Indo-Sino Buddhist relationship, China is traditionally considered a passive receiver but in fact, the Chinese were also “avid producers of Buddhist *sūtras*”, and there had been a transmission of texts from East to West (Nattier 1992, pp. 180-182).

Next, Nattier dealt with the various issues concerning other versions of Chinese *Heart Sūtra* than Xuanzang’s: When did the earliest version appear? What was the text Xuanzang received in Sichuan? And what changes if any did Xuanzang make to the content of the text he received?

Nattier first considered the two texts recorded in the catalogue by Shidaoan 释道安 which are probably versions of the *Heart Sūtra*: the one-fascicle 《摩诃般若波罗蜜神咒》 (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā Divine Vidyā*), and the one-fascicle 《般若波罗蜜神咒》

(*Prajñāpāramitā Divine Vidyā*). But she soon cautioned that from their titles we are unable to determine what link they had with the *Heart Sūtra* (Nattier 1992, pp. 182-184). But what really matters is the so-called Kumārajīva's translation of the *Heart Sūtra* (T250). Although his students (notably Seng Zhao 僧肇) read and commented on the core passage of the *Heart Sūtra* found in Kumārajīva's *Large Sūtra* (citing McRae, 1988, p. 89 n.9) there is no evidence that they were aware of the existence of the *Heart Sūtra* as a separate text. Furthermore, in the earliest catalogues of Kumārajīva's works, no such translation is listed, and for this reason alone the attribution of this text to Kumārajīva is highly suspect (Nattier, 1992, p. 154).

In addition, the (so-called) Kumārajīva *Heart Sūtra* diverges from the Xuanzang version in the following ways:

- (1) at the beginning of Kumārajīva's text (T8.250,847c, lines 5-7) contains 37 characters which have no counterpart in Xuanzang's text;
- (2) in the core passage of Kumārajīva's text (T8.250,847c, line 10), the line stating "these empty *dharma*s are not past, not future, not present" 是空法，非过去，非未来，非现在 has no counterpart in Xuanzang's text;
- (3) at another key point in the core passage – that is, in the first statement of the non-difference between form and emptiness – the wording of the two texts differ; and
- (4) at various points throughout both the core and the frame sections the two texts differ in their translation of certain Buddhist technical terms (e.g. *prajñāpāramitā*, *skandha*, *bodhisattva*, Avalokiteśvara and Śāriputra).

Based on identical word-for-word elements of the first two features between the so-called Kumārajīva translation of the *Heart Sūtra* and his *Large Sūtra*, Fukui concluded that this version of the *Heart Sūtra* is indeed a translation by Kumārajīva. But Nattier refuted this view. She noted: "This contention is problematic, however, for it rests on a questionable assumption. Namely, if a single individual (e.g., Kumārajīva) were to translate both the *Heart Sūtra* and the *Large Sūtra* into Chinese from Sanskrit originals, the two Chinese translations should agree word-for-word even though the Sanskrit texts do not. For, as we have already seen, the Sanskrit texts of the *Heart Sūtra* and the *Large Sūtra* diverge in a number of respects. Thus the nearly verbatim agreement between the two Chinese texts should instead arouse our suspicions. Moreover, even if a certain translator were to render two perfectly identical texts on two separate occasions into a second language, the odds against his or her choosing exactly the same word in each instance are enormous. And this is especially true of a translator like Kumārajīva, who is renowned not for a wooden faithfulness to the Sanskrit original but for his fluid and context sensitive renditions." (Nattier, 1992, p. 186). Nattier's argument is very convincing, especially considering the fact that the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* and the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* are basically different texts. So, the probability of two different (Sanskrit) sutras being translated into two verbatim (Chinese) texts is almost none.

The third of the above list of divergence is very important. Not only does the wording of the initial statement of the non-difference between form and emptiness of the (so-called) Kumārajīva translation of the *Heart Sūtra* diverge from the Xuanzang version, it also diverges from Kumārajīva's own translation – the *Mohe bore boluomi jing* 《摩诃般若波罗蜜经》 (i.e. T223, “*Large Sūtra*”). Rather, it corresponds to his translation of the *Dazhidu lun* 《大智度论》 (*Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*). In other words, the (so-called) Kumārajīva *Heart Sūtra* is not based on the *Large Sūtra* translated by him but on the *Large Sūtra* cited in the *Dazhidu lun*.

Nattier then made the interesting observation that the (so-called) Kumārajīva version never became popular in China – not a single Chinese commentary is based on this version. Considering the fact that Xuanzang's translation style is “cumbersome and (by Chinese standards) overly literal”, any Kumārajīva version of the same work should be the more popular of the two. But in the case of the *Heart Sūtra*, the situation is the other way round. Therefore, we can conclude that the (so-called) Kumārajīva *Heart Sūtra* is not his work, nor is it an independent work translated from Sanskrit (Nattier, 1992, pp. 182-189).

As for Xuanzang's *Heart Sūtra*, Nattier made a significant observation: Xuanzang translated the entire compendium of Prajñāpāramitā sutras, i.e. the 600-fascicle *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》, in which he included all the sutras ranging from the *Śatasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《般若十万颂》 (*Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 Lines*) to the *Suvikrāntavikrāmī-paripṛcchā-sūtra* 《善勇猛般若经》 (*Questions of Suvikrāntavikrāmī*). Thus, if the *Heart Sūtra* was indeed his work, it would have also been included in the *Da bore jing* but it has not. This shows that the work was once listed as “translator unknown” 失译经 and was only later, and for some peculiar reasons, became associated with Xuanzang (Nattier, 1992, pp. 189-190).

What then is Xuanzang's role in the version of *Heart Sūtra* associated with his name? Nattier pointed out that in the literal translation (not transliteration) of certain technical terms the Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra* differs from the (so-called) Kumārajīva text. For example, in the former, Śāriputra is translated as “*she li zī*” 舍利子 instead of “*she li fo*” 舍利弗, Avalokiteśvara as “*guan zi zai*” 观自在 instead of “*guan shi yin*” 观世音, and Sanskrit *skandha* as “*yun*” 蕴 instead of “*yin*” 阴. Such translations are typical of Xuanzang. It therefore shows that the version associated with his name had been edited by him.

Nattier next discussed Xuanzang's so-called transliteration (T256). On this, Nattier accepted Fukui's argument that the text is not the work of Xuanzang at all but is probably that of Amoghavajra 不空 (Fukui Fumimasa, 1987, p. 92-115).

In addition, Nattier also established the fact that when *Duoxin jing* 《多心经》 was cited in Tang, it referred “specifically to Xuanzang's *Heart Sūtra*.” This shows that it was Xuanzang who was “responsible for the widespread popularity of the *Sūtra* in China, and in all probability for its initial circulation (and perhaps its translation into Sanskrit) in India as well.” (Nattier, 1992, pp. 193-194).

2.6 Authenticity of Buddhist Texts – Different Indian and Chinese Criteria

There is a very interesting difference between the Indian *Heart Sūtra* and its Chinese counterpart. Namely, all commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* in India are based on the long-form version, while in China all extant commentaries are based on the short-form version edited by Xuanzang. How is such a difference to be explained? For this, Nattier examined the different criteria for determining the authenticity of Buddhist texts in Indian and in China.

The Chinese viewpoint is that for a Buddhist text to be authentic, it must be translated from the Indian source language. Thus the author of an apocryphal text would introduce into his work elements that resemble Indian. “In other words, the first criterion of scriptural legitimacy was that of geography, for any text that had no demonstrated Indian pedigree was, on those grounds alone, suspect.” (Nattier, 1992, pp. 195-196). On this point, my following view is in complete agreement with Nattier: “To ancient Chinese scholars in bibliography ... their fundamental criterion for determining the authenticity of a Buddhist scripture is whether it has a translated version. Or simply put, whether it has, as its source, a barbarous version 胡本 or a Sanskrit version. In other words, in the minds of the Chinese Buddhists, the authority of a scripture is self-evident as long as it is a translated text.” (Ji Yun 紀贇, 2011, pp. 72-73).

By contrast, the Indian viewpoint is quite different. Nattier pointed out that Indian Buddhists had a very clear way of judging if a particular scripture was authentic. On the one hand, it had to agree with the other teachings of the Buddha. On the other hand, it had to be something “heard” from a legitimate source. It is this latter criterion that led to the eventual formulation of an absolute, single criterion for authenticity – a legitimate sutra has to conform to the three-part genre comprising an opening section (with stock phrases) 序分, a narration 正宗分, and a closing section 流通分. By this criterion, the long-form *Heart Sūtra* is a sutra and the shorter-form version is not. Nattier further suggested that the reason for the emergence of the long-form version is because it is “the result of the domestication of a Chinese product to fit the demands of the Indian Buddhist market.” (Nattier, 1992, pp. 196-197). Nattier’s criterion for determining scriptural authenticity in India is inappropriate. Should this be the case, the many Mahāyāna texts, complete with the three-part genre, would not have faced the resistance they did by being considered apocryphal. In fact, I once pointed out that the main difference between Mahāyāna texts and the many early Buddhist sutras, or the reason why the authority of Mahāyāna texts was once severely challenged, was because they were not incorporated into the relatively closed system of early Buddhist literature through joint recitation sessions (*saṅgīti*) (Ji Yun 紀贇, 2011, pp. 68-70). Despite her Indian criterion being inappropriate, Nattier is right in saying that having a complete three-part genre is indeed an essential feature for Indian and Tibetan Buddhists to consider a text a sutra.

* * *

Presented above is an approximate outline of Nattier’s research. First, as its main conclusion, the author tried to demonstrate a philological sequence flowing from the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* (through the Chinese *Large Sūtra* of Kumārajīva), to the *Heart Sūtra* popularized by Xuanzang, to the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra*.

Second, she demonstrated the role of Xuanzang in the transmission of the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* to India, and perhaps even in the translation of the text into Sanskrit. In other words, it is technically an “apocryphal text”, “created as a separate scripture in China, composed of an extract from the *Large Sūtra* of Kumārajīva (itself a translation of the Indian *Pañcaviṃśat-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*), with an introduction and conclusion composed in China.” Nevertheless, the author emphasizes that “this in no way undermines the value that the text has held for Buddhist practitioners” (Nattier, 1992, p. 199).

3. Conze’s Research (with comments)

3.1 *Heart Sūtra* and its Place in Prajñāpāramitā Literature

Even to this day, Edward Conze (1904-1979) the German British scholar has to be regarded, not as one of many, but as the most important researcher on Prajñāpāramitā literature. This genius of Buddhist linguist and philologist devoted his whole life to the collation, translation and research of Prajñāpāramitā literature in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese – a language relatively neglected by European scholars before him. Although the research of this prolific writer covers well beyond the Prajñāpāramitā category, his works dedicated solely to this, according to an incomplete count by the Japanese scholar Yuyama Akira 湯山明, include 16 books and 46 articles. His bibliography on the subject goes on for as many as 11 pages (Conze, 2000a, pp. 127-138). In the history of Prajñāpāramitā research Conze can be regarded as a formidable scholar with no comparison, surpassing all past and perhaps even future researchers in his achievement.¹⁵

Included in his research on Prajñāpāramitā literature is of course the *Heart Sūtra*. Conze’s studies on this text are mainly found in the second edition of his general work on the subject: *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature* (Tokyo: The Reiyukai, 1978). The version I used is the new 2000 edition by Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., of New Delhi, India.

In *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, Conze divided all Prajñāpāramitā sutras into (five) phases. This division has also been adopted by other major scholars such as Warder (in his *Indian Buddhism* for instance, A.K. Warder, 1970, pp. 546-549), and is of great significance to our understanding of some of the specific features of the *Heart Sūtra* and the time of its composition. Therefore, I shall spend some time here discussing it and relating it to our analysis of the *Heart Sūtra*.

Conze’s time division is broadly as follows:

¹⁵ Conze lived a colourful life. He harboured left-leaning worldviews in his early days in Germany and was expelled from the country for refusing to fly the Nazi flag. After his disenchantment with politics he shifted his attention to religious studies but maintained throughout his life his leftist tendency. As a result of his stance against the Vietnam War in his old age, he was unable to remain in America and Canada. Remarkably, this genius, well-versed in over a dozen languages, was not a professional Buddhist researcher in his old age but had to earn his living teaching languages and psychology. Such (perseverance) serves to spur on Buddhist academics like us. For more information, please refer to the autobiography by Conze published before his death. It contains records from his early days and his correspondence with some of the great Buddhist researchers of his time.

1) The period of elaboration of basic Prajñāpāramitā texts (ca. 100 BC to 100 CE). In terms of specific work, Conze considered the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《八千颂般若经》 in 32 chapters and 8000 *śloka*s to be the oldest. The word 颂 in the Chinese title refers to the unit of count for Sanskrit verses (i.e. *śloka*). The unit of count of most Prajñāpāramitā texts, whose genre is basically *sūtra* is the “line” (also *śloka*) – a term derived from the root *śru* “to hear”. So the approximate Chinese meaning of *śloka* is 歌赞 (“songs of praise”), which in ancient translation is 颂 (“verse”), or in ancient transliteration 首虑, 室路迦, and so on. In the Sanskrit verse, a *śloka* consists of 32 syllables (Conze, 2000a, p.1). The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* contains many additions and alterations by later authors, all of which can be traced through the evolution of its Chinese translations (Conze, 2000a, p. 8-10);

2) The period of expansion of basic texts (ca 100-300 CE). After about 100 CE the basic Prajñāpāramitā texts expanded into a “Large Prajñāpāramitā”, as represented by the following three extant texts: the *Śatasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (Ś) 《十万颂般若》 (*Perfect Wisdom in 100,000 Lines*), the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (P) 《二万五千颂般若》 (*Perfect Wisdom in 25,000 Lines*), and the *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (Ad) 《一万八千颂般若》 (*Perfect Wisdom in 18,000 Lines*) [translator’s note: all 3 texts are included in Xuanzang’s 600-fascicle *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 (T220) – Ś: fascicles 1-400, P: fascicles 401-478, and Ad: fascicles 479-537, from the first, second and third *hui* (会, “sermon-session”, conducted on the Vulture Peak) (Conze, 2000a, p. 21)]. These texts are in fact one and the same, differing only in their degree of repetition. Two other texts were found in this period: the *Pañcaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《般若五百颂》 (*Perfect Wisdom in 500 Lines*), and the *Kāruṇīkarāja-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《仁王护国般若经》 (*Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra Explaining How Benevolent Kings May Protect Their Countries*) (Conze, 2000a, pp. 10-11);

3) The period of doctrinal re-statement in the form of short *sūtras* and versified summaries (ca. 300-500 CE). This period emerged as a reaction to the appearance of massive works in the form of “Large Prajñāpāramitā” in the previous phase, and also to the confusing way Prajñāpāramitā texts were organized. These factors, plus the abstract and difficult nature of Prajñāpāramitā ideas, have impeded the mastering of them by monks and lay people, and have resulted in the emergence of two solutions: One is the production of new and shorter works that are more philosophical; and two is the condensed summarisation of large texts.

Into the first category of shorter *sūtras*, Conze has placed the 25-*śloka* version (long-form) and the 14-*śloka* version (short-form) *Heart Sūtra*, plus the 300-*śloka* *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (all arranged and translated by Conze himself). Of these texts, the *Heart Sūtra* was described by him as: “one of the sublimest spiritual documents of mankind”, and “a re-statement of the four Holy Truths, reinterpreted in the light of the dominant idea of emptiness” (Conze, 2000a, p. 11), (also cited in Chen Yu Jiao, 陈玉蛟 1988, pp. 159-160). In later discussion I will explain in detail why placing the *Heart Sūtra* in this phase and in this category is incorrect;

4) The period of tantric influence (600-1200 CE). With the spread of tantric thoughts

after 600 CE, Prajñāpāramitā ideas and teachings were adapted to this new trend. However, the new Vajrayāna concepts are introduced only in the *Bore liqu jing* 《般若理趣经》 (i.e. T243, *Dale jinggang bukong zhenshi sanmaye jing* 《大乐金刚不空真时三么耶经》 translated by Amoghavajra 不空), for which the Sanskrit title is *Adhyardhaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (see note 16). Prajñāpāramitā texts under tantric influence display three features: One is an attempt to compress the Prajñāpāramitā message into short but effective spells. Already in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* 《八千颂》, *prajñāpāramitā* had been described as a *vidyā* 明咒, used to ward off evil spirits. In his translation of the *Mahāmāyūrī* 《孔雀王咒经》 (T988), Kumārajīva mentions *prajñāpāramitā-dhāraṇī* 摩诃般若波罗蜜神咒 and *Avalokiteśvara-dhāraṇī* 观世音菩萨陀罗尼神咒 (Conze, 2000a, p. 13). In other words, in Kumārajīva's days at least, *prajñāpāramitā* already showed signs of being used as a magic power. And this point can provide some aid in our understanding of why a *vidyā* (mantra) is found in the Chinese *Heart Sūtra*. In later discussions, I will talk more about the actual source of this mantra in the *Heart Sūtra*.

By about 550 CE, old style Prajñāpāramitā literature was no longer produced. In their place was a series of short Prajñāpāramitā texts composed between 600 CE and 1200 CE such as the *Svalpākṣarā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《圣佛母小字般若波罗蜜多经》 (T258) (*The Holy Buddha Mother, the Perfect Wisdom in a Few Words*), which displays many similarities with the *Heart Sūtra*. I will return to the discussion of this text later.

Similarly there are ten other very short Prajñāpāramitā texts in the Chinese or Tibetan canon such as: the *Adhyardhaśatikā*;¹⁶ the *Kauśika prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*;¹⁷ the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūryagarbha mahāyāna-sūtra* 《般若波罗蜜多日藏大乘经》; the *Candragarbha prajñāpāramitā mahāyāna-sūtra* 《月藏般若波罗蜜多大乘经》; the *Prajñāpāramitā Samantabhadra mahāyāna-sūtra* 《般若波罗蜜多普贤王如来大乘经》; the *Prajñāpāramitā Vajrapāṇi mahāyāna-sūtra* 《般若波罗蜜多金刚手菩萨大乘经》; the *Prajñāpāramitā Vajraketu mahāyāna-sūtra* 《般若波罗蜜多金刚幡大乘经》;¹⁸ the *Prajñāpāramitā nāma-aṣṭaśatakā* 《圣八千颂般若波罗蜜多一百八名真实圆义陀罗尼经》

¹⁶ This is the *Bore liqu jing* 《般若理趣经》 also known as the 《百五十颂般若波罗蜜多经》 (*Perfect Wisdom in 150 Lines*); its Sanskrit editions include: (E. Leumann, 1912); (Toganō Shōun 桐尾祥云, 1932, pp. 1-9); its Chinese translations include: T220 (Xuanzang 玄奘, 660 CE); T240 (Bodhiruci 菩提流支 693 CE); T241 (Vajrabodhi 金刚智, 725 CE); T243 (Amoghavajra 不空, 770 CE); T242 (Dānapāla 施护, 980 CE); T244 (Dharmabhadra 法贤, 999 CE); its Tibetan translation is *śes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa'i tshul brgya lña bcu-pa*. Its previous manuscript from Central Asia is incomplete; a complete edition is recently discovered in China. Following the studies by Tomabechi Tōru 苦米地等流 of University of Hamburg, an excellent combined (Khotanese)-Tibetan edition has been published (Tomabechi, 2009).

¹⁷ *Kauśika* is the name of the deity 帝释天. The literal Chinese title is 《侨尸迦般若经》. Its Sanskrit version was jointly edited by Conze (Conze, 1956a) and Vaidya (P.L. Vaidya, 1961, pp. 95-95); its Chinese version is *Dishi bore boluomiduo xin jing* 《帝释般若波罗蜜多心经》 (T249) translated by Dānapāla 施护 (980 CE) of Northern Song; its Tibetan translation is *śes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa Ko'usika shes bya-ba* (Conze, 2000, pp. 82-83).

¹⁸ The above five texts have no extant Sanskrit edition or Chinese translation, only Tibetan and Mongolian (Conze, 2000a, pp.83-84).

(*The 108 Marks of Perfect Wisdom*),¹⁹ and etc. These short Sanskrit and Tibetan texts were compiled and translated by Conze himself (E. Conze, *Perfect Wisdom: The Short Prajnaparamita Texts*, 1973). Also included in this book are (his English translations of): Sanskrit *Suvikrāntavikrāmī-paripṛcchā-prajñāpāramitā(-nirdeśa)-sūtra* 《善勇猛般若经》 (*The Questions of Suvikrāntavikrāmin*)²⁰ (pp. 1-78); Sanskrit *Saptaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《文殊师利所说摩诃般若波罗蜜经》 (*The Prajñāpāramitā as Taught by Mañjuśrī*)²¹ (pp. 79-107); Tibetan *Hphags-pa śes-rab-kyi-pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa lña-brgya-pa* 《般若五百颂》²² (pp. 108-121); Sanskrit *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《金刚经》 (*Diamond Sūtra*) (pp. 122-139); Sanskrit 25-*śloka* long-form *Heart Sūtra* (pp. 140-141); Sanskrit short-form *Heart Sūtra* (pp. 142-143); Sanskrit *Svalpākṣarā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Perfect Wisdom in a Few Words*)²³ (pp. 144-147); Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā Sūryagarbha mahāyāna-sūtra* (pp. 148-149); Tibetan *Candragarbha prajñāpāramitā mahāyāna-sūtra* (pp. 149-151); Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā Samantabhadra mahāyāna-sūtra* (pp. 151-152); Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā Vajrapāṇi mahāyāna-sūtra* (p. 152); Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā Vajraketu mahāyāna-sūtra*²⁴ (pp. 152-153), Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā-ardhaśatikā*²⁵ (pp. 154-156); and Tibetan *Kauśika prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*²⁶ (pp. 157-159). Next Conze gave an abridged English translation each of two Chinese texts: the *Foshuo rushou pusa wushang qingjing fenwei jing* 《佛说濡首菩萨无上清淨分卫经》 (*Buddha's Preaching on the Utmost Tranquil Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva Taking Alms*)²⁷ (pp. 160-164); and the *Karuṇikarāja-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*²⁸ (pp. 165-183). Conze then presented the English translations of some *Prajñāpāramitā* texts that are purely tantric in nature: the Sanskrit/Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā-naya-śatapañcāśatikā* 《百五十颂般若经》 (*Perfect Wisdom in 150 Lines*)²⁹ (pp. 184-195); the Tibetan *Prajñāpāramitā*

¹⁹ This was translated into Chinese by Dānapāla 施护 of Northern Song (T230); there is no extant Sanskrit version, only Tibetan and Mongolian (Conze, 2000a, pp.84-85).

²⁰ Also known as *Sārdhadvisāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《般若二千五百颂》 (*Perfection of Wisdom in 2,500 Lines*), which corresponds to no. 16 *hui* (会, “sermon-session”) of Xuanzang’s *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》. There is also a Sanskrit edition of Japan. (Hikata, 1958)

²¹ The Sanskrit title literally reads “*The Perfection of Wisdom in 700 Lines*”; this is the 《般若七百颂》 (T232) in no. 7 *hui* (会, “sermon-session”) in Xuanzang’s *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》.

²² Conze pointed out in his introduction that the translation from Tibetan may not be as accurate as from Sanskrit. The Chinese equivalent is the *Kaijue zixing bore jing* 《开觉自性般若经》 by Wei Jing 惟净 of Song.

²³ This is a very important text and I will have more discussion on it later.

²⁴ These five Tibetan translations are the only extant editions. There is no Sanskrit or Chinese equivalent. Conze’s translation is from the Narthang edition of the *Kanjur*.

²⁵ The Chinese translation is 《五十颂圣般若波罗蜜经》(T248) (*The Perfection of Wisdom in 50 Lines*) translated by Dānapāla 施护 of Song. Conze also translated this text (into English) from Tibetan. According to his note, the Chinese translation is more concise than the Tibetan (Conze, 1973, p.iv).

²⁶ See note 17 on the title of this text. According to Conze, the Tibetan edition of this text presented here is shorter than the Sanskrit and Chinese editions, with 12 *dhāraṇī* less (Conze, *Perfect Wisdom: The Short Prajnaparamita Texts*, 1973, p.iv).

²⁷ This abridged translation drew reference from both the *Foshuo rushou pusa wushang qingjing fenwei jing* 《佛说濡首菩萨无上清淨分卫经》 and Xuanzang’s *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 newly translated by Lancaster.

²⁸ The source text of this abridged English translation was twice translated: once by Kumārajīva and the other time by Amoghavajra 不空. Conze based his translation on the latter.

²⁹ According to Conze this is translated from Sanskrit and Tibetan and drew reference from the German translation of the Khotanese edition. However, it did not consult the Khotanese edition or the other six Chinese

nāma-aṣṭaśatakā (*The 108 Marks of Perfect Wisdom*)³⁰ (pp. 196-198); and the Tibetan *Pañcaviṃśati-prajñāpāramitā-mukha* 《圣般若二十五门经》 (*The 25 Doors of Perfection of Wisdom*) (pp. 199-200). Of all these short texts the shortest is the *Bhagavatī prajñāpāramitā sarva-Tathāgata-mātā ekākṣarā nāma* 《一字般若波罗蜜多经》 (*Perfect Wisdom in One Letter*) in which the wisdom of *Prajñāpāramitā* is contained in the one and only syllable “om” (p. 201). As most of the above translations of Conze are based on Sanskrit and Tibetan editions, of which some have not been translated into Chinese, they are highly valuable resources for *Prajñāpāramitā* studies for the Chinese academic world. It is regrettable that their importance has hitherto been neglected. I have digressed from the main discussion and shall now return to it.

From the texts listed above and in the terms of their succinctness, we can see that Nattier’s point about *Prajñāpāramitā* texts being relatively lengthy is, given the historical background of their development, incomplete; there are indeed many short sutras amongst them. The only thing is: this category of texts is the product of the development of a specific Buddhist school – more specifically, it evolved and developed after Tang. Viewed under this historical background – and not placing it at the infancy of the development of *Prajñāpāramitā* literature – the emergence of the *Heart Sūtra* is then less unexpected. This is a very important point to bear in mind in our studies of the *Sūtra* and in our determination of its historical place. In later discussion, I will return to stress my point that the *Heart Sūtra* should be classified under the fourth period, which is the period under tantric influence after 600 CE and not, as Conze did, under the third. I will present my proofs in later discussions.

We can in fact go one step further and look for texts similar to the *Heart Sūtra* in the history of the entire *Prajñāpāramitā* literature. I just mentioned that in his classification, Conze placed the *Heart Sūtra* in the same category as the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* and others. This has prompted us to ask: what sutras in the canon, or more accurately in the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature, are indeed quite similar to the *Heart Sūtra*? And could their common features in some way dispel some of the doubts we have regarding the unusual features of the *Heart Sūtra* Nattier mentioned? Or could these common features give us the necessary background for understanding the *Heart Sūtra* (whether Sanskrit or Chinese), in terms of its composition or translation?

Nattier remarked in her studies that the appearance of Avalokiteśvara in *Prajñāpāramitā* literature was unexpected. However, at least in the period when such literature was under tantric influence, the role of Avalokiteśvara was already apparent in some Buddhist texts that are proven authentic. For example, Western scholars have long recognized the interesting similarities between the *Heart Sūtra* and the *Svalpākṣarā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Perfect Wisdom in a Few Words*) translated by Tian Xizai 天息灾 of

translations. A well-known Chinese version of this text is the *Bore liqu jing* 《般若理趣经》 (Skt. *Adhyarhaśatikā*). Other Chinese translations include those by Bodhiruci 菩提流支, Vajrabodhi 金刚智, Amoghavajra 不空, Dānapāla 施护, Dharmabhadra 法贤 and others; it is found in no. 10 *hui* (会, “sermon-session”) of Xuanzang’s *Da bore jing*. All these are easily accessible and are not furthered notated here.

³⁰ This text was translated by Dānapāla 施护 and not, as mistaken by Conze, Fa Xian 法显 (Conze, 1973, p.vii); the two lived ages apart.

Song (Willemen, 1973), (Conze, 2000a, p. 81). There is a Sanskrit edition of the *Svalpākṣarā* dated about 1000 CE edited by Conze and Vaidya (Conze, 1956b), (P.L.Vaidya, 1961, pp. 93-94), and Nepalese manuscript dated about 1700 CE edited by Yumaya Akira 湯山明 (Yuyama, 1977). The Sanskrit *Svalpākṣarā* has been translated by Conze into English in consultation with Chinese and Tibetan translations (Conze, 1973, pp. 144-147).

Below I shall compare the *Svalpākṣarā* with the *Heart Sūtra* to see what commonalities they share and what features they display compared to the rest of the Prajñāpāramitā literature:

- (1) The Sanskrit *Svalpākṣarā* displays something of interest. For example, following “*idaṃ ca prajñāpāramitā-hṛdayam-āgrahītavyam*” (literally “and this *prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya* is to be recited”), for which “*prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya*” has as its Chinese parallel “*bore boluomiduoxin*” 般若波罗蜜多心 in Tian Xizai’s translation – is a mantra (while the Chinese version has additional intervening text), thus proving indirectly that the word “*hṛdaya*” refers to mantra, something consistent with the *Heart Sūtra*;
- (2) Although the narrator in the *Svalpākṣarā* is the Buddha himself, importantly his conversation is with Avalokiteśvara. Just like the *Heart Sūtra*, Subhūti makes no appearance;
- (3) Like the *Heart Sūtra*, the *Svalpākṣarā* is also very brief;
- (4) The *Svalpākṣarā* also [sic] has two spells [translator’s note: i.e. a short mantra and a long *dhāraṇī* (Conze 2000a, p. 21)].

Apart from the *Svalpākṣarā*, another concise Prajñāpāramitā text also deserves our attention, i.e. the *Kauśika prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《帝释般若波罗蜜多心经》 (T249) mentioned above. If we view the *Heart Sūtra* as consisting of parts unravelled from various texts (as Natteir had it), then we can also see the uncontentious *Kauśika* as being dissected into fragments obtainable from various Buddhist sutras. There are following the opening section: a passage of the double negations common to Prajñāpāramitā texts: “not one or various; not with signs or without” 非一非异、非相非无相; a passage from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*; the famous verse of “eight-likeness” from the *Vajracchedikā* [translator’s note: Chap 32a]; two quotations from Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* [translator: Chap. 1.1-1.2]; a number of spells [translator’s note: “one of which is an echo of the *prajñāpāramitā-dhāraṇī*, and as the last, the mantra of the *Heart Sūtra* (Conze, 2000a, pp. 82-3)]. If we go by Nattier’s logic, we can see in this text at least two things that generate questions: Why is the Buddha preaching to Kauśika – a common figure in Āgama sutras – instead of to a common Prajñāpāramitā figure such as Subhūti? Why is this text, although complete with opening and concluding sections, ends with a mantra too?

Then there is *The 108 Marks of Perfect Wisdom* (T230) [translator’s note: see note 19]

translated by Dānapāla 施护 of Song. Although its Sanskrit version is no longer extant, it has a full Tibetan translation from Sanskrit. Here we see that just like the *Heart Sūtra*, this text is without an opening and a closing section, and it ends with a *dhāraṇī*.

From the above discussion, and considering the situation of the Prajñāpāramitā literature as a whole, we see that the emergence of the *Heart Sūtra* is not as strange as we first thought and was accompanied by a host of related sutras. But in order to dispel any lingering doubts we need to pin its production to a historical date.

There is one further point that requires our attention. In terms of its textual background, the *Heart Sūtra* (regardless of whether it should be called a “*sūtra*”) should be viewed against the backdrop of the entire Prajñāpāramitā literature. Hence, it is necessary to review the history of circulation of Prajñāpāramitā texts in China. Namely, what texts were transmitted and which were the more popular ones?

For the period of Tang when Xuanzang more or less spent his life, we are not entirely sure about the popular Buddhist texts prevailing at that time. However, we can be certain that his 600-fascicle compendium the *Da Bo Re Jing* 《大般若经》 was not particularly popular among the worshippers. This can be gleaned from some basic statistics on the Dunhuang manuscripts. The Japanese scholar Ikeda On 池田濶, basing his numbers on Huang Yong Wu’s *Latest Catalogue of Dunhuang Historical Manuscripts (Beijing Collection)* 黄永武《敦煌遗书最新目录》北京藏部分, estimated that among the Dunhuang Buddhist sutras there are: 1698 entries of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* 《法华经》 (*Fahua jing*) translated by Kumārajīva; 1412 entries of the *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 by Xuanzang; 928 entries of the *Vajracchedikā* 《金刚经》 translated by Kumārajīva; 569 entries of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-uttamarāja-sūtra* 《金光明经》 (池田濶, 1992, pp. 36-37). While the number of entries attributed to Xuanzang may look large, the popularity of his works is not commensurate with either the (monumental) size of his *Da bore jing* compendium nor its significance.

This situation (of massive work being unpopular) existed not only in China but also in India and Tibet. This is the reason for the emergence in India in the third period of Conze’s time division, of schematic works in verse form, distilling from Prajñāpāramitā ideas its essence using succinct language; for instance, the very famous work *Abhisamaya-alaṅkāra* 《现观庄严论》 [translator’s note: a 5th century recast version of *The Perfection of Wisdom in 25,000 Lines* (Conze, 2000a, p.36)]. This way the Buddhists managed to resolve the problem with overly massive Prajñāpāramitā texts, which make their reading and understanding difficult (Conze, 2000a, p. 12), (Chen Yu Jiao 陳玉蛟, 1988, p. 160).

But compared to the Indians and Tibetans the Chinese probably had greater preference for conciseness such that even the *Abhisamaya-alaṅkāra* was considered somewhat overly lengthy. Therefore, of all Prajñāpāramitā literature, the more popular ones were the *Vajracchedikā* and the *Heart Sūtra*, and not the seemingly overly difficult and “lengthy” *Abhisamaya-alaṅkāra*. We can thus see the reason why the *Heart Sūtra* rapidly gained popularity after Tang – it has to do with the taste for brevity of the Chinese;

5) The period of the Pāla dynasty (750-1200 CE). After 1200 CE, there is no further production of Prajñāpāramitā texts in India. Priority to this however, *prajñāpāramitā* ideas did make a come back since the emperors of the dynasty were believers of a mixture of *prajñāpāramitā* and tantric ideas. As a result, there was a profusion of commentaries to Prajñāpāramitā texts, which basically existed in Tibetan translations only. The commentators of this time were unaware of the historical development of Prajñāpāramitā texts, and were always keen to impose their own set of methodologies to unify the many complicated sutras (Conze, 2000a, pp. 16-17). We must bear in mind that as far as the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* is concerned, its many Tibetan commentaries are only comprehensible if they are placed against the historical backdrop (of this period). I will return to discuss this point later when I present the research by Lopez Jr.

3.2 Conze's Discourse on the *Heart Sūtra* in *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*

In *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature* by Conze, the most important section to the studies of the *Heart Sūtra* is his annotated bibliography included as an appendix to his classification of the entire Prajñāpāramitā literature. In it, discourse on the *Heart Sūtra* amounts to eight pages (Conze, 2000a, pp. 67-74). I am aware that Nattier has benefited much from it, which will undoubtedly continue to be a valuable reference to our future studies on the *Heart Sūtra*. I will present below a summary with detailed comments. Please note that for the different *Heart Sūtra* editions in various languages including Sanskrit, one should also be aware of the summary of all the Sanskrit editions compiled by the Japanese scholars Yamada Ryujo (山田龙城, 1977, from p. 89), (山田龙城, 1988, pp. 222-223, 231, notes 60-65), besides Lin Guang Ming's work (林光明, 2000). For the latest Japanese research on Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*, one may also consult Okukaze Eiko (奥風栄弘, 2011).

Critical editions of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*:

1) Edited by Conze (Conze, 1948)

This can be found in the article *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* in pages 149-154 of *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies* by Conze. I will talk more about this edition in subsequent discussion (§3.3);

2) Edited by Müller (Müller, 1884)

First some background. This edition is one of a monograph series managed by Friedrich Max Müller, then Professor of Religion at the Oxford University. This series is a publication of the manuscripts collected at the various Oxford libraries mainly the Bodleian. In the *Aryan Series*, the very first volume is the *Buddhist Texts from Japan*, where all Buddhist sutras in Sanskrit can be traced back to Japan as their source. There are three parts to this volume, published respectively in 1881, 1883 and 1884: Part 1 being the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā*; Part 2 the *Sukhāvāṭīvyūha Sūtra* 《无量寿经》, and Part 3 a joint edition of the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* and the *(Sarva-durgati-pariśodhana)-uṣṇīṣa-vijaya-dhāraṇī* 《佛顶尊胜陀罗尼》. As the

monograph was published more than a hundred years ago, the authors used a form of Roman transcription for their Sanskrit in the appendices that is quite different from current usage. Fortunately, all the original Sanskrit texts are in the Devanāgarī script. So, the material is still very accessible to modern-day researchers.

I will now briefly talk about the origin of this critical edition. In Part 1 of the *Buddhist Texts from Japan*, Müller said that he was first aware of the existence of Sanskrit Buddhist texts in Japan in 1873. Later in 1879 two Japanese monks came to Cambridge to study Sanskrit: Nanjō Bunyū 南条文雄 (1849-1927) and Kasawara Kenjiu 笠原研寿 (1852-83) [author's note: the latter was diagnosed with late stage of tuberculosis in 1881. He died soon after]. Müller took the opportunity and urged the two monks to make inquiries in Japan about the existence of Sanskrit manuscripts. In December of the same year (i.e. 1879), Müller obtained his first Buddhist manuscript in Sanskrit from Japan via Nanjō – the smaller *Sukhāvati-vyūha* 《阿弥陀经》, and had it published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in April 1880 [author's note: Nanjō and Kasawara undertook their Sanskrit studies with Müller in January, 1880. In September of the same year Nanjō attended the Berlin Conference of Orientalists with Müller and met with many top scholars – an experience that had a very positive effect to his life-long academic pursuit].

Müller's publication attracted the attention of a certain Mr Wylie, who sent Müller some of the books he obtained from Japan. Upon examination, Müller found among them the *Vajracchedikā*, the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*, and the *Thousand Sanskrit Words* 《梵语千字文》 [translator's note: Müller's original title is “*Thousand Sanskrit and Chinese Words*”]. These Sanskrit texts were believed to have come from the Hōryūji temple 法隆寺 of Japan [author's note: or “Horiusi” in Müller's original text. Its full name is “Hōryū Gakumon-ji” 法隆学问寺] (Müller, 1881, pp. 1-2). The temple is located at Ikaruga town 斑鳩町 in the Ikoma district 生駒郡 of Nara Prefecture 奈良县 and is believed to be built by Prince Umayado 厩戸皇子 [author's note: i.e. Prince Shōtoku 圣德太子]. The temple was known in ancient times as the Ikaruga-ji, and is one of the seven major temples of the southern capital. Later on 2 August 1880, Nanjō Bunyū wrote to inform Müller that he received letter from his acquaintances in Japan searching for Sanskrit manuscripts at the Hōryūji that prior to the search, some of the significant cultural valuables including the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* had already been sent to the Imperial Court [author's note: record shows that in 1879 (11th Year of Meiji), Chihaya Jōchō 千早定朝, the head-priest of Hōryūji, relocated over 300 items of valuables to the Imperial Court out of safety consideration. These were first received at the Shōsō-in 正倉院, and later moved to the Imperial Museum at the Ueno Park of the Imperial Household Ministry, which became the National Museum after the Second World War].

Nanjō's letter stated that the search party learned from a book entitled *Ikaruga koji benran* (*Memorandum on the Ancient Affairs of Ikaruga*) that among the valuables of the Hōryūji were: 1) a cymbal; 2) a water-vessel; 3) a staff; 4) a scarf worn by Bodhidharma; 5) a bowl belonging to Bodhidharma, and 6) palm-leaves of the (*Sarva-durgati-parisodhana*)-*uṣṇīṣa-vijaya-dhāraṇī* and the *Prajñāpāramitā*-

hr̥daya-sūtra. These items were said to have been transmitted via Hui Si 慧思 who lived in Nan Shan 南山 [author's note: Nien-shan, Nenzen, i.e. Nanyue 南嶽; translator's note: Müller's original words are: "these things are said to have been in the procession of some Chinese priests, named Hwui-sz (Yeshi) and Nien-shan (Nenzen), and four others successively, who lived in a monastery on the mountain called Nan-yo ..."]. In 609 CE when Prince Umayado was 37 [author's note: the birth year of the prince should be 574 CE, which is either the 29th or the 30th year of the reign of Emperor Suiko 推古天皇. So, the prince's age could not be 37 in 609 CE], the Emperor's retainer Imoko Ono 小野妹子 brought the items back to Japan from the Sui dynasty 隋朝 (Müller, 1881, pp. 4-5). Although the search party had not actually witnessed the palm leaves at that time, they did find a 17th century copy of these made by Priest Jōgon 淨严 (1639-1702) who founded the Edo Reiun-ji 江戸灵云寺 of the Shingon Sect 真言宗 (Müller, 1881, pp. 5-6). Nanjō's letter also contained descriptions about the palm leaves but these are omitted here. The discovery of these Sanskrit manuscripts was also mentioned in Nanjō's own memoir, which is more colourful than scholarly and is short on details (南條文雄, 1979, pp. 129-130).

At the same time, Müller also received a letter from the eminent diplomat Sir E. Satow informing him that on reading (account of) Müller's article, he sourced for Müller certain Sanskrit manuscripts including a 1694 copy of the Hōryūji *Heart Sūtra* by Priest Jōgon of the Edo Reiun-ji, as well as its transcription into Chinese and Japanese. These written scrolls and copies of the *Heart Sūtra* were later classified as Catalogue Bodleian Japan Nos. 45b, 46a, 61, 62, 63 (Müller, 1881, pp. 10-11). Since the copyrights of the photographic edition of the above have now expired, they are now easily accessible on the Internet. They are written in the Siddham script in two leaves. The first leaf and the first line of the second leaf contain the *Heart Sūtra*; and the rest includes the *Uṣṇīṣa-vijaya-dhāraṇī* and a complete Sanskrit syllabary in Siddham 悉曇十四音.

After sourcing the above manuscripts Müller compiled them into a book (Müller, 1884) which includes the following: (1) the two texts mentioned above rewritten in Devanāgarī by Müller himself, their transcription by Jōgon, and two other copies of them (pp. 5-8); (2) the title page of Jōgon's handwritten copy (translated into English by Nanjō); (3) the following transcriptions of Jōgon's handwritten copy: in Devanāgarī script, in Roman script, in Roman script of his Chinese transcription, and in Roman script of his Japanese transcription (pp. 17-22); (4) three other transcriptions of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* (pp. 28-30); (5) English translation of the long-form and the short-form *Heart Sūtra*, including a bilingual Devanāgar/Sanskrit translation of the short-form version (pp. 48-50), and a Devanāgarī transcription of the long-form *Heart Sūtra* purportedly transmitted by Jōkyō 常晓 – disciple of Kukai 空海 (774-835 CE) (pp. 51-54) with English translation and explanation (now classified as Catalogue Bodleian Japan No. 63) (pp. 55-59). This edition is the collection of the Hasedera Temple 长谷寺 – Headquarters of the Buzan School 丰山派 of the Shingon Sect 真言宗. Together with the Hōryūji edition, they are the two major and most

well-known manuscripts of Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* in Japan.

In the last part of his 1884 book, Müller appended an article entitled *Paleographic Remarks on the Hōryūji Palm-leaf Manuscript* by the eminent German Indologist and linguist Johann Georg Bühler (1837-1898) (pp. 63-95). This article is very important in relation to the historical dating of the Hōryūji Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*. If the *Heart Sūtra* is indeed proven to be a manuscript of 609 CE or earlier [translator's note: as according to the *Ikaruga* memorandum cited above] Nattier's speculation on Xuanzang's role [translator's note: i.e. back-translated in 649 CE, see §2.2] would become baseless. Therefore, Nattier also quoted Bühler's article in her refutation of the claim that the Hōryūji *Heart Sūtra* was introduced (to Japan) in 609 CE.

Nattier's argument (see note 14) is most persuasive. Linking the written (palm-leaf) scroll with Bodhidharma the patriarch of Zen Buddhism is itself suspicious, (although) in Zen legend, Bodhidharma himself is said to have close ties with the *Heart Sūtra* (Cheng Zheng 程正, 2007). We should also take note of another very important point: this written scroll has also written on it the *Uṣṇīṣa-vijaya-dhāraṇī* 《尊胜陀罗尼》, which only became popular after Tang. The earliest reliable translation of this *dhāraṇī* did not appear until 679 CE during the 4th Year of the Yi Feng reign of Tang 唐仪凤四年. It gradually became popular after 713 CE during the Kaiyuan reign of Emperor Xuan Zong 玄宗开元, and it was not until 776 CE in the 11th Year of the reign of Da Li of Emperor Dai Zong 代宗大历 that it became widely circulated (Lin Yun Rou 林韵柔, 2008, pp. 154, 184, 177-178), (Liu Shu Fen 刘淑芬, 2008, pp. 5-6, 12). Considering all the above, I personally feel that the historical date of the Hōryūji *Heart Sūtra* should be placed at 730-750 CE, or even later;

3) Edited by Shaku Hannya *释般若 (Hannya, 1992-3)

This is an edition of the long-form *Heart Sūtra* in Sanskrit/Tibetan not seen by me;

4) Edited by Suzuki (D.T. Suzuki, 1934, p. 190), (D.T. Suzuki, 1935, p. 27)

This is an edition of the short-form *Heart Sūtra*;

5) Other non-Chinese editions

In the following discussion I have omitted all the Chinese editions. Other non-Chinese resources of the *Heart Sūtra* can be found in Nattier's citation based on the works by Conze, and I shall quote from her below (Nattier, 1992, pp. 200-201, note 1):

“The Tibetan canon contains only the (long-form) *Heart Sūtra* usually found in both the Prajñāpāramitā and the Vajrayāna sections of the Kanjur (Derge nos. 21,531; Narthang nos. 26,476; Lhasa no. 26,499), though in the Peking Kanjur the text appears only in the Vajrayāna section (no. 160). Jonathan Silk is about to published a critical edition of the Tibetan canonical (long-form) version. The (short-form) Tibetan text is now being prepared for publication by John McRae and myself; in the

meantime see a preliminary note on the (short-form) published by Ueyama Daijun 上大峻 in *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū*, vol. 26 (1965), pp. 783-779 (where, however, the Dunhuang text has been substantially regularized to conform with the orthographic conventions of Classical Tibetan). The Mongolian Kanjur, following the format of the Tibetan Peking xylograph edition, includes the *Heart Sūtra* only in the Vajrayāna Division (Ligeti No.162) [author’s note: this refers to the catalogue on the Kanjur by the well-known Hungarian Orientalist Lajos Ligeti (1902–1987)].

A Sogdian version of the *Heart Sūtra*, together with a barbarous rendition of the Sanskrit, has been edited by E. Benveniste in *Textes sogdiens*, Part 1 (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1940, pp. 142-144). An incomplete Khotanese version has recently been edited and translated by Prods Oktor Skjaervø; see *The Khotanese Hṛdayasūtra in A Green Leaf: Papers in Honour of Professor Jes P. Asmussen*, Acta Iranica Series 2, No. 28 (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1988), pp. 157-171. An Üghur (Turkish) version of the text has recently been discovered in the Berlin Turfan collection, but is as yet unpublished. According to Peter Zieme (cited in Silk, *op. cit.*, p. 71, n. 78) the text is an incomplete manuscript, translated into Üghur from the Chinese but possibly also with reference to the Tibetan.”

Beside his important bibliography, *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature* by Conze is also interspersed with the author’s findings on the *Heart Sūtra*. For example, he considered that the “Kumārajīva version” (T250) was in fact “translated by Kumārajīva’s disciple”, and also pointed out that it was not until 730 CE, in the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* 《开元录》, that this version was associated with Kumārajīva’s name for the first time (Conze, *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, 2000a, p. 20). Furthermore, Conze compared the Kumārajīva and the Xuanzang versions and pointed out that the two texts were basically the same. However, the two texts translated technical terms like *skandha* differently, and the Xuanzang version omitted two passages in the “Kumārajīva version”, as well as the word *mahāmantra* [author’s note: meaning “great *dhāraṇī*”]. As we can see, all these observations have inspired Nattier’s research. As well, Conze noted that it was not until 741 CE that the long-form *Heart Sūtra* was first translated into the Chinese by the East Indian monk Dharmacandra 法月, i.e. the 《普遍智藏般若波罗蜜多心经》 (T252) (*Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra – the Storehouse of Omniscience*) (Conze, *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, 2000a, p. 22). Such time-lag between short-form *Heart Sūtra* [translator’s note: i.e. the earlier Kumārajīva and Xuanzang versions] and long-form *Heart Sūtra* [translator’s note: i.e. the later Dharmacandra version] becomes the starting point of Nattier’s logic in her consideration of the different Chinese and Indian criteria for determining the authenticity of Buddhist texts [sic].

3.3 Special Article on the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*

Apart from the above-mentioned work, Conze’s research on the *Heart Sūtra* is mainly found in his special article *The Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*, first published in the *Journal*

of the *Royal Asiatic Society* (pp. 38-51) in 1948, and later included in his *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies* (Conze, 2000b, pp. 148-167). Even following the appearance of Nattier's article, this is still probably the most important work – if not one of the most fundamental ones – in the studies of the *Heart Sūtra*.

The article begins by listing a critical edition of the text (pp. 149-154). The sources included for this edition are: 12 Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal (dating between 1164 and 1819); 7 Sanskrit manuscripts from China (including the well-known Chinese transliteration S2464 from Dunhuang [translator's note: i.e. Stein Collection], and 6 others dating between 850 CE and the 17th century); the two previously mentioned Sanskrit editions from Japan: one from Hōryūji (edited by Müller) and one from the Hasedera Temple. Also consulted were: 7 Chinese translations and one Tibetan edition (long-form) from the Kanjur. This edition of Conze is a long-form version. As it was critically done, it is currently probably the most used and most convenient to use edition in the academic world.

Following the edited text, Conze pointed out some of the variant readings between the various editions. For example:

1) Where the Hōryūji edition (609 CE) reads *na prāptitvaṃ bodhisattvasya*, the Chinese translations – from Kumārajīva's to Prajñācakra's 智慧轮 (861 CE) – seem to read *na prāpti/tasmād aprāptitvād bodhisattva(sya)* [translator's note: 亦无得/以无所得, 菩提萨埵], which appears to have only developed in the course of time;

2) Kumārajīva and several other manuscripts know nothing of the phrase [translator's note: found in Nepalese manuscripts] *na vidyā na vidyākṣayo* [author's note: literally 无明、无明尽 or “no knowledge, no end of knowledge”]. Please note that this phrase is different to the double-negative form *na-avidyā na-avidyā-kṣayo* 无无明, 亦无无明尽 or “no no-knowledge, and no no-end-of-knowledge” found in the translations of Kumārajīva and Xuanzang. In the Hōryūji edition, the complete form of this phrase has an additional syllable ‘a’, i.e. *na vidyā na-avidyā na vidyākṣayo na-avidyākṣayo* 无明, 无无明, 无明尽, 无无明尽 or “no knowledge, no no-knowledge, no end of knowledge, no no end of knowledge”, which is obviously different to Xuanzang's 无无明, 亦无无明尽. I would also like researchers to note that this phrase in the Dunhuang transliteration *Tangfan fandui ziyin bore boluomi xin jing* 《唐梵翻对字音般若波罗蜜多心经》 (T8.256,851c17-19) (thought to be the work of Xuanzang or Amoghavajra (705-774)) is: 曩尾爾也, 曩尾爾也, 曩尾爾也乞叉喻, 曩尾爾也乞叉喻 [translator's note: reads “*nang-myoi-x-ni-jax, nang-myoi-x-ni-jax, nang-myoi-x-ni-jax-khiot-chre-jyoh, nang-myoi-x-ni-jax-khiot-chre-jyoh*” in Middle Chinese Romanization (see www.zdic.net; final “x/t/h” denote tones), which corresponds to *na vidyā na-avidyā na vidyākṣayo na-avidyākṣayo*]. (Clearly) “*na-vidyā*” and “*na-avidyā*” have very different meanings in Sanskrit but this difference is lost in the transliteration 曩尾爾也, 曩尾爾也 where there short ‘a’ and long ‘ā’ are indistinguishable. This subtle point aside we can see that this edition has exactly the same reading as the Hōryūji and not the Xuanzang edition. Therefore, this presents quite an obstacle to Nattier's theory of back-translation. In other words, the Sanskrit edition she used to compare (with

Xuanzang’s translation made in Tang) [translator’s note: i.e. Conze’s critical edition which reads: *na-avidyā na-avidyā-kṣayo*] is actually different to that circulated in Tang (i.e. T256) [translator’s note: which reads: *na vidyā na-avidyā na vidyākṣayo na-avidyākṣayo*]. Thus, her word-for-word comparison is really incomparable;

3) Also found in a few manuscripts is *na-amārgāḥ* [author’s note: literally 无无道 or “no no-path”]. In six Nepalese editions and in Feer’s polyglot edition (17th century?), this phrase follows immediately behind *na duḥkha-samudaya-nirodha-mārgā* 无苦集滅灭道;

4) Similarly only in a few Sanskrit manuscripts is *na-prāptiḥ* followed by *na-aprāptiḥ*, which appears quite late in the Chinese translations [author’s note: *na-prāptiḥ* is 无得 or “no gain” and *na-aprāptiḥ* 无无得 or “no no-gain”. In early translations only 无得 appears after 无智 *na jñānaṃ* or “no wisdom”], but the Dunhuang Fa Cheng 法成 edition (856 CE) reads: 无智无得, 亦无不得 or “no wisdom, no gain, and no no-gain”. One other major difference has escaped the attention of both Conze and Natter: In the Dunhuang transliteration T256, following 无得 is the phrase 曩鼻娑么 “*nang-bjiḥ-sax-muax*”, which is rendered 拏毕三磨野 “*nra-pid-sam-mua-jax*” in Ci Xian’s 慈賢 transliteration found in the Fang Shan Stone Carving Collection 房山石经藏 [translator’s note: in Middle Chinese Romanization, as above]. In Sanskrit, this phrase would be *na-abhisamya* meaning “no clear realization” 无现解 or “no clear understanding” 无现观. Thus, we know that these two transliterated phrases, both very old, do not match Xuanzang’s translation word-for-word either [translator’s note: i.e. without *na-abhisamya*]. As an aside, Fukui Fumimasa (福井文雅, 1985, p. 244) explained that *na-abhisamya* is an interlinear note 夾注 for *na-prāptiḥ*. I find it rather odd that Sanskrit transliteration would be resorted to for notation purposes, and I therefore remain unconvinced;

5) In *cittāvaraṇa* in some editions [author’s note: mainly three later ones after the 17th century] reads *cittālambaṇa* instead. (Conze speculated that) *cittāvaraṇa*, literally 心无障碍 “mind without obstruction” reads “mind with no hindrance” 心无罣碍 in earlier Chinese translations, which is closer to *cittālambaṇa*. I find this speculation hardly necessary. If we go by the transliterated (Sanskrit) manuscripts, we see that the Dunhuang Stone Cave Collection edition reads 只哆嚩嚩拏 (*cje-thra-po-luo-na*), while Amoghavajra’s edition reads 唧哆阿嚩嚩拏 (*cit-thra-qa-po-luo-na*) [translator’s note: in Middle Chinese Romanization, see above]. In Chinese transliteration *luo* 嚩 is often used to denote “r”. This, together with the dates of the transliterated manuscripts, indicates that the Sanskrit editions around the time of Tang should read *cittāvaraṇa*.

Apart from the above variant readings mentioned by Conze, we also find other anomalies if we compare the various Sanskrit versions with Xuanzang’s translation. For example in both the Kumārajīva and Xuanzang translations we find the phrase 度一切苦厄 (“transcends all afflictions”), which is absent from the Sanskrit transliterations mentioned above. Strangely, this phrase is also absent from all extant Sanskrit versions. However, (a similar phrase) 离诸苦厄 (“away from various afflictions”) can be found in the Chinese translations by Bo Re Gong Li Yan 般若共利言 (T253) and Prajñācakra 智慧轮 (T254). In

this regard, if the extant Sanskrit version is indeed back-translated by Xuanzang or others, then why is this (Chinese) phrase missing in the Sanskrit? This is very perplexing indeed.

There is also the variant reading used by Nattier in her very persuasive argument. Namely, *rūpān na pṛthak śūnyatā śūnyatāya na pṛthag rūpam* found in most Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*, which corresponds word-for-word to the Chinese 色不异空，空不异色 (“form is not other than emptiness, emptiness is not other than form”). The variant reading of this is *na rūpam pṛthak śūnyatāyāḥ nāpi śūnyatā na pṛthag rūpat* found in two later-day Sanskrit manuscripts [translator’s note: probably 17th century (Conze, 2000b, p 150, nn. 11-12)]. In Chinese translation this Sanskrit variant would read 非空异於色，也非空不异於色 (“not that emptiness is other than form, and not that emptiness is not other than form”). Not only do these two variant readings mean differently, such discrepancy also diminishes the likelihood of a Sanskrit back-translation from Chinese since we cannot completely rule out the possibility of these two (17th century) manuscripts could also have existed earlier – at least not until otherwise proven.

And I like to emphasize here that we should note that *rūpān na pṛthak śūnyatā śūnyatāya na pṛthag rūpam* is a very awkward word-for-word (back)-translation of 色不异空，空不异色. This is because if we just pay attention to the Sanskrit word order for now, we can see an exact correspondence of *rūpān* to 色, *na* to 不, *pṛthak* to 异, *śūnyatā* to 空, *śūnyatāya* to 空, *na* to 不, *pṛthag* to 异, and *rūpam* to 色, thus giving an exact match to Xuanzang’s translation. The problem is, anyone with a little Sanskrit knowledge can see that if the Sanskrit sentence is analysed, an exact opposite Chinese word order will be produced. While word order is very important in Chinese syntax, it is relatively less important in Sanskrit and Pāli, whose syntax relies on the gender, number and case of the words involved instead. For these languages, word order is not rigidly applied even though a subject-object format of a sentence is preferred, and different word orders may result in sandhi issues. Here, I will analyse the first half of the sentence (for simplification, I will not go into all the grammatical explanations regarding sandhi, gender and number): *rūpān* is in ablative case, i.e. “from form”, *na* is an indeclinable word, *pṛthak* is also indeclinable meaning “different (from), other than” when used with an ablative, and *śūnyatā* is in nominative case. So, literally, the phrase means 空不异於色 (“emptiness is not different from form”), which is a complete opposite to Xuanzang’s 色不异空. For the second half of the sentence this situation is the same. Therefore, if the Sanskrit sentence was indeed back-translated by Xuanzang, we can be sure that he would have reversed its word order instead of making such a basic mistake. We have no grounds to assume that given his Sanskrit knowledge, Xuanzang was unfamiliar with basic grammar.

There is yet another point. Nattier noticed that the way “form is not other than emptiness and emptiness is not other than form” is expressed in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* is completely different to the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* – especially the way “other than” is expressed in Sanskrit (Wu Ru Jun 吴汝钧, 1992, p. 394). In this regard, Nattier did not mention that *anya* (used in the *Large Sūtra*) and not *pṛthak* (used in the *Heart Sūtra*) is the more common expression for “variance” or “difference” in Sanskrit – at least in

Prajñāpāramitā literature if not in general Buddhist texts. In his days or even to this day, no one other than Xuanzang, who has translated the massive *Da bore jing*《大般若经》from Sanskrit into Chinese, is more familiar with the entire Prajñāpāramitā literature in these two languages. If he was indeed the one who back-translated the *Heart Sūtra*, he would undoubtedly have easily brought to mind the standard usage (i.e. *anya*) repeated numerous times in the entire Prajñāpāramitā literature, instead of using an alternative translation that sounds awkward.

Lin Guang Ming 林光明 has summarized 21 differences between the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* and the Xuanzang version. Apart from some minor points of little relevance, some of them are worthy of our attention (林光明, 2004, pp. 318-321). Leaving these differences aside for now, my above analysis and my previous investigation more than convince me to strongly question the claim that Xuanzang translated the *Heart Sūtra* into Sanskrit.

Another case which Nattier used as proof (of back-translation) is 无眼界，乃至无意识界 in Xuanzang's version. This is yet another example of complete match with the abbreviated expression found in the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*: *na cakṣur-dhātur yāvan na manovijñāna-dhātuḥ* (as in Kumārajīva's Chinese *Large Sūtra* but not in the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* itself). But in fact in a 17th century Sanskrit manuscript, all the 18 *dhātus* are listed, and in two Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal, the listing is even much more detailed and cumbersome.

From the brief presentation of the Sanskrit versions given above, we can also see that even if the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is indeed Xuanzang's back-translation from Chinese, it is not itself a one-off, immutable product but is rather subject to a process of change. And if the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is indeed a Chinese back-translation, its later inclusion of an opening and a closing section to make it look more like a Buddhist text on the one hand, and the addition of typical Indian cultural elements such as the increasing use of more cumbersome items mentioned above on the other hand, will make the text look more Indian.

Thereafter Conze's devoted himself to finding the literal correspondence between the main body of the *Heart Sūtra* and the larger Prajñāpāramitā texts. Although he managed to conclude that the former is an abridged extract of the relevant chapters of the large Sanskrit text *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*《二万五千颂般若经》(Conze, 2000b, pp. 158-160), he unfortunately failed to make the necessary association in order to realize that the Chinese translation of this large text, i.e. Kumārajīva's *Large Sūtra*, is the main source for the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* (so-called) translated by Kumārajīva and by Xuanzang. This is the realization that has led Nattier to wonder: Why is there word-for-word correspondence between Xuanzang's Chinese *Heart Sūtra* and Kumārajīva's Chinese *Large Sūtra*, but huge differences between the Sanskrit *Large Sūtra* and the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*? Although it was Nattier who provided the answer to the question, it was Conze's editorial work comparing the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* with the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* (on which Kumārajīva's Chinese *Large Sūtra* is based) that provided Nattier with the very important basis of her research. We can at

least say Conze's edition has saved Nattier, and of course the rest of us, the troubles of identifying the parallels in the original texts.

In the rest of his article Conze focused mainly on the studies of the ideas promulgated in the *Heart Sūtra* in comparison with those in the other Prajñāpāramitā texts. As a result, he concluded that the *Heart Sūtra* is a condensation of the larger Prajñāpāramitā texts, as a restatement, for beginners, the fundamental Buddhist tenants of Four Noble Truths. Seen in the historical perspective of the the development of Buddhism, it is the *dharmacakra-pravartana-sūtra* 《转法轮经》 in new dispensation.

We see from the above analysis that Conze found passages in the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* that were parallel to the Sanskrit *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, and analysed their similarities or otherwise. He was aware that the latter was the basis for Kumārajīva's Chinese *Large Sūtra*, and he had also partially compared their similarities and differences. It is a pity that he did not take the further step to examine the relationship between Kumārajīva's Chinese *Heart Sūtra* and Xuanzang's Chinese *Heart Sūtra*; nor the step to question why the two Chinese translations, while corresponding word-for-word to each other, should refer to different Sanskrit texts? Taking these missing steps was precisely what Nattier did. She thereby provided a reasonable explanation for the logic behind the causal relationship (of the texts involved). And the breakthrough came, as Nattier herself explained, not from intra-textual but (cross-lingual) inter-textual studies. This point, I think, serves as a profound guiding principle for our future work in Buddhist philology. By ignoring cross-lingual work, we could be prevented by our limited methodology from achieving significant breakthrough that may just be a step away. This is true even for a talent like Conze, who is endowed with multi-lingual editorial skills, and one who has made major contributions in his field of research.

4. Research by Hurvitz and others

The other relatively major Western academic studies on the *Heart Sūtra* are mainly found in a monograph edited by Lewis Lancaster in memory of Conze (Lancaster, 1977). Of the 22 articles it has collected all except four are studies on Prajñāpāramitā texts, grouped under their classification. In the third group, there are five articles all dedicated to the studies on the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*: *Hsuan-tsang and the Heart Scripture* by Leon Hurvitz (pp. 103-121); *The Heart Sutra in Japanese Context* by Michael Pye (pp. 123-134); *Secret of the Heart Sutra* by Alex Wayman (pp. 135-152); *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* by Sir H.W. Bailey (pp. 153-162), and *A Study of a Khotanese prajñāpāramitā text: After the Work of Sir Harold Bailey* by Lancaster himself (pp. 163-183).

Hurvitz's article begins with a complete English translation of Xuanzang's *Heart Sūtra* and has included the prefaces found in the Taishō canon written by the First Ming Emperor Tai Zhu 明太祖 and Hui Zhong 慧忠 of Nanyang 南阳 (pp. 104-108). Following this is his translation of the entire *Tangfan fandui ziyin bore boluomi xin jing* 《唐梵翻对字音般若波罗蜜多心经並序》 [translator's note: i.e. T256, a Chinese transliteration], which has similarly included a very important preface telling the story of Xuanzang meeting a sick monk in Yi Zhou 益州 of Sichuan, who instructed him on the *Heart Sūtra*. The same monk

was to reappear to Xuanzang at the Nālandā Vihāra in India, and told him he was himself the Avalokiteśvara. We can see that this part of Hurvitz's article has likewise much inspired Nattier in her studies. Hurvitz then attempted to reinstate, with little success, the mantra following the preface, i.e. the *Universal Praise of the Three Jewels of Lotus and Other Maṇḍala* 《莲花部等普赞叹三宝》. The final part of the article is the Sanskrit restoration of the Chinese transliteration of this Dunhuang *Heart Sūtra* (pp. 110-112). This part of the particle has been rather fully utilized by Nattier in her article. For more review on Hurvitz's article, please refer to the comments by Prof. Wan Jin Chuan (万金川, 2004a, pp. 102-103).

The second article – *The Heart Sutra in Japanese Context*, is not too relevant to our discussion and is therefore omitted here. If it has any reference value, it is the fact that the author pointed out that in Japan the only popular version of the *Heart Sūtra* is likewise the Xuanzang version (p. 130), and the reason for its popularity is its *dhāraṇī*, which makes the text more accessible to the common folks (p. 131). No doubt we can refer to these two points in our understanding of the popularization of the *Heart Sūtra* in China's context.

In the third article Wayman quoted Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙 as saying: “We can be certain that Avalokiteśvara 观世音 has never appeared in any Prajñāpāramitā sutras” (p. 135), a comment, I think, that must have been very inspirational for Nattier, for this is one of the points she raised when she talks about the few unusual features of the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*. This (absence of the Avalokiteśvara) is of course not the case, and I will return in §8.6 to discuss the importance of this figure in Prajñāpāramitā texts during the period of tantric influence. The remaining two articles are completely irrelevant to Nattier's work and are omitted here from our discussion.

5. Research by Lopez, Jr.

Nattier has also benefited from *The Heart Sūtra Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries* (ALBANY: State University of New York Press, 1988) by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. This book is part of the monograph series on Buddhist studies edited by Kenneth Inada. Lopez, Jr. (1952-) is currently Professor of Buddhism and Tibetan Studies in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan, and an internationally acclaimed Tibetologist. This book has been reprinted in India (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990), which is the least expensive and most usable edition. It is divided into two parts: Indian Commentaries (pp. 19-136) and Tibetan Commentaries (pp. 139-186) on the *Heart Sūtra*. Included in the first part is an overview of the entire *Heart Sūtra*, which also discusses certain contentious issues about the text.

In the opening chapter, Lopez, Jr. pointed out that the aim of his book was to examine the contemporary understanding of the *Heart Sūtra* as reflected in its commentarial literature during the Pāla Dynasty (750-1199). In particular the author pointed out that all Indian commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* were written at about this time. So, if (we accepted) Conze's placement of the text at around 300-500 CE (§3.1), then there is obviously a gap of some 500 years between it and its commentaries (p. 4). Although Lopez made this noteworthy observation, he had simply let the matter slip without pursuing it further. It was

Nattier who made this discrepancy an important argument in her proposal that the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is a back-translation from Chinese.

In his analysis of the *Heart Sūtra*, Lopez, Jr. pointed out that in early Prajñāpāramitā literature, the speaker was often Subhūti and not the Buddha, let alone Avalokiteśvara. He remarked that the *Heart Sūtra* was the only major Prajñāpāramitā work in which Avalokiteśvara made an appearance, and his appearance was yet another sign that the text belonged to a relatively late date, written after the worship of Avalokiteśvara the *bodhisattva* became fully established (p. 7). As mentioned before, this observation has been very inspirational for Nattier. When Lopez, Jr. analysed the *dhāraṇī* included at the end of the text, he similarly concluded that the scripture was completed at a relatively late date (p. 8).

Having respectively discussed the Indian commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra*, the author again pointed out that the reasons why earlier commentaries were lacking was probably due to India's monsoon seasons [sic]; Islamic invasions, and so on; or perhaps they simply did not exist in the first place since they were never quoted by most of the early Mahāyāna *abhidharmas*. It was not until Xuanzang's time that records began to emerge (pp. 12-13). Why then did the Indians take a sudden interest on this text during the Pāla Dynasty? To this, Lopez's answer is that many of the Indian commentarial works have something to do with Tibet, and the *Heart Sūtra* contains many elements that reflected Tibetan preferences. Namely, it is very short and easy to recite; it contains the fundamental Buddhist teachings; its teachings are open to interpretation; and it has a *dhāraṇī* that is attractive to the followers of Tibetan Vjrayāna (p. 13).

We can see from the above that by studying the timing of the Sanskrit and Tibetan commentarial works of the *Heart Sūtra*, Lopez, Jr. was led to the question: Why they appeared so late? But since he did not place his investigation on the footing of a comprehensive cross-lingual study, Lopez, Jr. was unable to advance his work a step further like Nattier. Once again, this demonstrates the importance of cross-lingual study in Buddhist philology.

6. Research by Fukui Fumimasa 福井文雅 (with comments)

Another academic source that has exerted a relatively major influence on Nattier's work comes from Fukui Fumimasa (1934-) – a Japanese monk of the Tendai Sect and a very active, heavy-weight Buddhist scholar in contemporary Japan. One of Fukui's fields of research is the *Heart Sūtra*, the work of which is mainly reflected in the two following books published by the Shunjusha Publishing Company 春秋社: *Studies on the History of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* 《般若心經の歴史研究》 in 1987, and *A Comprehensive Study of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra – History, Society, References* 《般若心經の総合研究 歴史・社会・資料》 published in 2000. In addition, the various views of Fukui on the *Heart Sūtra* relevant to Nattier's work can be found in his article *The Changing Perspectives of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra in China* 《般若心经观在中国的变迁》 translated into Chinese by Guo Zi De 郭自得 and Guo Chang Cheng 郭长城 published in No. 6 of the 1983

issue of the *Journal of Dunhuangology* 《敦煌学》 of the Centre for the Studies of Chinese Literature of the Chinese Culture University of Taiwan.

One of the very important views of Fukui's 1983 article is that while *Xin jing* 《心经》 the Chinese title of the *Heart Sūtra* is commonly considered to carry the meaning of “essence”, the title in the Tang period is not *Xin jing* but *Ta xin jing* 《多心经》 [translator's note: 多 in Middle Chinese is pronounced “*ta*”]. In fact, *Ta xin jing* is also the title adopted by Buddhist scriptural catalogues 经录 in general. The above is what Fukui found after consulting: the Dunhuang manuscripts; the written documents of the Shōsō-in 正仓院 in Japan, and the scriptural catalogues of Tang. Fukui first examined the titles of the Dunhuang manuscripts, and all had the character 多 such as: *Ta xin jing* 《多心经》, *Foshuo ta xin jing* 《佛说多心经》, *Bore ta xin jing* 《般若多心经》, *Foshuo bore ta xin jing* 《佛说般若多心经》, *Ta xin bore jing* 《多心般若经》, *Guanyin ta xin jing* 《观音多心经》, *Boluomi ta xin jing* 《波罗蜜多心经》, *Mi ta xin jing* 《蜜多心经》 and so on. Only two manuscripts were found to have the title *Xin jing* 《心经》 (without the extra character 多), and both are most likely later addition and not contemporaneous with the rest.

Fukui then examined: the scriptural catalogues of the time; the written documents of the Shōsō-in, and even the Hōryūji edition of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* mentioned above. He found most of them to have *Ta xin jing* 《多心经》 as their title. This situation continues well after Tang. Fukui's view can indeed be supported by evidence found in Chinese philology, and the situation is in fact time-sensitive, with the title *Xin jing* 《心经》 becoming more common as written manuscripts are gradually replaced by printed ones. Nevertheless, the common usage of this title would seem to have taken hold only after the 14th century (Fukui, 1983, pp. 18-20). Many modern scholars take it for granted that (the difference in the titles *Ta xin jing* and *Xin jing*) is a case of mistaken break in a string of words. This view has persisted in the academic world even to this day, many years after the publication of Fukui's article (林光明, 2004, p. 44).

What then is the original meaning of the title *Ta xin jing*? Using as an example the different translations of the title of the *Bukong juansuo shenzhou xin jing* 《不空羼索神咒心经》 (*Amoghapāśa-hṛdaya-dhāraṇī*), Fukui found that 心 (“heart”) was interchangeable with 咒 (*vidyā*), 陀罗尼 or 真言 (*dhāraṇī*), and he concluded that 心 had in fact the meaning of mantra (pp. 22-25). Fukui also found that in scriptural catalogues, *dhāraṇī sūtra* 陀罗尼经 and *heart sūtra* 心经 were interchangeable terms, and in the catalogues of Tang – except fascicle five of the *Neidian* 《大唐内典录》 (*Catalogue of Buddhist Texts in Great Tang*) – as well as the catalogues found among the Shōsō-in documents, *Ta xin jing* was classified as being in the same group as *dhāraṇī* and *vidyā*, and these were treated alike for cataloguing purposes. This situation is further supported by the fact that *Ta xin jing* among the Dunhuang manuscripts are found to be included in the collection of *mahā-vidyā* 大明咒藏 (pp. 25-26). Later in §8.4 when I discussed the way the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* manuscripts are titled, I will point out that “*xin*” 心 (“heart”) and “*tuō luó ní*” 陀罗尼 (*dhāraṇī*) belong to the same shade

of concepts. Precisely because 心 equates to 陀罗尼, many sutras at the time carried the word “heart” in their titles. In order to distinguish these from the *Heart Sūtra* (*Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*) proper, the latter was given the extra character 多 (“ta”) to reflect the last syllable of the term *prajñāpāramitā*.

Lastly Fukui pointed out that except for the intelligentsia minority who would regard the *Heart Sūtra* as the embodiment of the *prajñāpāramitā* idea of “emptiness”, the text was worshiped by the overwhelming majority of Tang followers as a mystical mantra. In other words, *Ta xin jing* is associated with a belief system which has, as its core, a mystical mantra. Later after the Song period, with the fading of tantric influence and the rise of Zen Buddhism, the title *Ta xin jing* 《多心经》 was eventually replaced by *Xin jing* 《心经》.

From the brief introduction above we can see that Fukui’s views have resolved a major issue for Nattier, who maintained that the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* is a scripture produced in China; who also wondered why the production did not follow the general local practice by adding elements to make it more resembling a Buddhist text – such as giving it a complete three-part format comprising an introductory section, a core section and a concluding section – and introducing some Indian elements and so on. In other words, if there was indeed a (Chinese) author, why more efforts were not taken to make it better resembled a Buddhist text? Fukui’s studies have provided Nattier the answer she would have hoped for. Namely, the *Heart Sūtra*, instead of being a Buddhist scripture, is only a *dhāraṇī*.

We should note that apart from the reasons given by Fukui above, there is yet another important one for explaining why *Ta xin jing* in Tang is the common title rather than *Xin jing*. The reason being: *Ta xin jing* refers to the Xuanzang version of the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*, which in his days, has the term “*prajñāpāramitā*” translated as *bo-re-bo-luo-mi-ta* 般若波罗蜜多, whereas this term in the (earlier) Kumārajīva version is translated as *bo-re-bo-luo-mi* 般若波罗蜜 without the extra character 多 (“ta”). This change came about because, as pointed out by Wan Jin Chuan 万金川 (a leading Taiwanese scholar on Buddhist linguistics), 蜜 in Middle Chinese phonology is pronounced “*mīēt*”, whereas in the modern phonology (of Tang), it loses its terminal “*r*” sound (in entering tone 入声) to be pronounced “*muī*”. Therefore, in the later (Tang) translation by Xuanzang (where the final “*r*” sound has been dropped) an extra character 多 (“ta”) needs to be added in order to transliterate “*tā*” in the Sanskrit term *prajñāpāramitā* (万金川, 2004b, pp. 90-91). Thus we need to bear in mind that *Ta xin jing* is in fact none other than the (so-called) Xuanzang translation.

Even so, many issues remain unanswered. If *Xin jing* 《心经》 is commonly known as *Ta xin jing* 《多心经》 in Tang, then why exceptions are seen in the *Biography of Xuanzang* 《慈恩传》 written by Huili 慧立 et. al., in which the titles of fascicles one and nine both read *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (Huili/Yancong, 慧立、彦惊, 2000, pp. 16, 202)? It is also not uncommon to find the title *Bore xin jing* in the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* 《开元录》 and in the travelogues by Japanese monks who visited China during Tang in search of sutras. How

could these discrepancies be explained? For now, I have no answer and can only await the enlightenment by those who are in the know.

As a sidenote: On the night of 26 January, 2012, Ken Su 苏锦坤 wrote to me with the following suggestion: Just as for the word *jhāna* (meditation 禅定), where 禅 (*chan*) is its sound and 定 its meaning; for the word *kṣama* (penance 忏悔), where 忏 (*chan*) is its sound and 悔 its meaning [translator’s note: cf. *kṣama*: “forbearance”; *kṣamāpaya* “seeking pardon”]; and for the word *kṣetra* (land 刹土), where 刹 (*sha*) is its sound and 土 its meaning; the word *dhāraṇī* could likewise be thought of as being made up of 多 “*ta*” as its sound and 心 (heart) as its meaning. These suggestions are worthy of consideration but there is one problem: We need to find the philological evidence for associating 多 with *dhāraṇī*, but so far I am unable to locate any (see §8.4). On the other hand, if 多 “*ta*” is indeed used to approximate the sound of the word *dhāraṇī*, then since the usual Chinese title is 《多心经》 *Ta xin jing*, we would expect to see **dhāraṇī-hṛdaya-sūtra* in the Sanskrit title of the *Heart Sūtra* where the word *dhāraṇī* 多 precedes the word *hṛdaya* 心. But we can find no examples of this. Instead in Sanskrit titles, *hṛdaya* always precedes *dhāraṇī* to give **hṛdaya-dhāraṇī-sūtra* (see §8.4), which would translate into the (unseen) Chinese title of 《心多经》 *Xin ta jing*.

7. Research by Shen Jiu Cheng

Prompted by Prof. Fang Guang Chang 方广锜, and assisted by Ken Su of Taiwan in providing the relevant references, I reviewed the articles by Shen Jiu Cheng 沈九成 published in issues 195 and 196 of the *Neiming Journal* 《内明》, Hong Kong, entitled *Commentary on the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra – Part I and II* 《般若波罗蜜心经疏义》 (一)、(二) (沈九成, 1988). Further search also reveals a Part III published in pp. 3-8 of issue 206 of the same journal dated May 1989, but I have not been able to access it.

Of the first two available articles, what is original and of value is only the first (even here, it is only the introduction that is of value, at least to our current discussion). Based on this article alone, Shen has displayed some obvious errors in his writing, or some lack of rigour to say the least, due perhaps to his lack of systematic academic trainings. This article also shows the author’s lack of the necessary knowledge in foreign languages, and his unfamiliarities with studies done overseas. Even so, some of the author’s judgement and conjectures, derived from his academic intuition perhaps, are still a surprise to me. I believe someone like Shen, who is on the fringe of the academic circle, will definitely be outsidied the radar of scholars like Nattier, whose first language is not Chinese. However, a few of Shen’s observations in his article predated Nattier’s, and thus deserve our respect, even though his conjectures and arguments are less rigorous in comparison with Nattier’s.

Almost right from the start Shen pointed out that the *Zhou jing* 《咒经》 (T250) [author’s note: so-called Kumārajīva’s *Heart Sūtra*, see §2.5)] and the *Xin jing* 《心经》 [author’s note: i.e. Xuanzang’s *Heart Sūtra*] were 咒 (*vidyā*) and not “经” (*sūtra*), and the most important

distinguishing feature was the presence or otherwise of the three-part format comprising an introduction, a core, and a conclusion (沈九成, 1988, p.5).

Shen further pointed out that: “*Xin jing* is named after *Bore fomu xinzhou* 《般若佛姆心咒》, where ‘*xin*’ 心 has the meaning of ‘*xin zhou*’ 心咒 or ‘*hṛdaya-vidyā*’. At the end of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is the wording: *prajñāpāramitā hṛdayaiṃ* [sic] *samāptam* [translator’s note: i.e. the *prajñāpāramitā hṛdayaṃ* is concluded], where *hṛdayaṃ* can be translated as: ‘*xin*’ 心 or ‘heart’, ‘*zhen yan*” 真言 or *dhāraṇī*, ‘*xin zhou*’ 心咒 or ‘*hṛdaya-vidyā*’, and so on.” Although this statement is not quite rigorous, for instance “*hṛdayaiṃ*” strangely takes on a suffix [sic], his point about it having the meaning of *vidyā* 咒語 does echo the view of Fukui Fumimasa which made the same point many years before him.

Shen also remarked: “Whether the *Zhou jing* 《咒经》 has any original Sanskrit text is to date a moot point”. He later pointed out that it probably had no Sanskrit original, and was thus distinct from the Xuanzang *Xin jing* which did have one. Shen went on to remark that: “*Xin jing*, considered by learned monks since ancient times to be the essence of *prajñāpāramitā* thoughts is not include in Xuanzhang’s 600-fascicle *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 (T220); neither is the *Mo jing* 《摩经》 i.e. 《摩诃般若波罗蜜经》 (T223) [author’s note: also known as Kumārajīva’s *Large Sūtra* 《大经》] included the *Zhou jing* 《咒经》. Why? It is because none has an independent Sanskrit source text.” (沈九成, 1988, p. 6).

Shen went on to compare the parallels between Kumārajīva’s *Heart Sūtra* (T250) with his *Large Sūtra* (T223), and pointed out their relationship. Especially noteworthy is his examination of the source of the mantras in the Kumārajīva’s *Heart Sūtra* and Xuanzang’s *Heart Sūtra* (T251). He was able to trace these back to the following *Bore fomu xinzhou* 《般若佛姆心咒》 included in the 600-fascicle *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 translated by Xuanzang:

𑖀(ta) 怛 𑖩(dya) 耶 𑖘(thā) 他 𑖩(om) 唵 𑖀(ga) 伽 𑖀(te) 帝
 𑖀(ga) 伽 𑖀(te) 帝 𑖘(pa) 鉢 𑖩(ra) 囉 𑖀(ga) 伽 𑖀(te) 帝 𑖘(pa)
 鉢 𑖩(ra) 囉 𑖩(sam) 僧 𑖀(ga) 伽 𑖀(te) 帝 𑖘(bo) 菩 𑖘(dhi) 提
 𑖘(svā) 薩 𑖘(hā) 訶(T.07,1110a)

This discovery has not previously been made by any scholar. Even though this mantra shows some variations compared with the mantra found in Xuanzang’s *Heart Sūtra*, this is still an important discovery. In later discussion (§8.5) I will show that the source of the mantra is in fact the *Bore daxin tuoluoni* 《般若大心陀罗尼》 by Atikūṭa 阿地瞿多. While the main body of the two mantras are identical in Sanskrit, they also display two clear differences: One, the initial word “*om*” in the *Bore fomu xinzhou* mantra is absent in the *Heart Sūtra* mantra; Two, for their main part the two mantras used completely different Chinese transliterations [translator’s note: cf. the mantra in Xuanzang’s *Heart Sūtra* (T251, 848c22): 揭(ga) 帝(te) 揭(ga) 帝(te) 般(pa) 罗(ra) 揭(ga) 帝(te) 般(pa) 罗(ra) 僧(sam) 揭(ga) 帝(te) 菩(bo) 提(dhi) 萨婆/

僧莎 (svā) 诃(hā)]. This discovery is important in that it clarifies two things: One, the mantra found in the *Heart Sūtra* already existed in other Prajñāpāramitā texts; Two, whether Xuanzang's *Heart Sūtra* is a translated text or not, he could not have been its translator because it is unlikely and unnecessary that he would have transliterated an identical mantra using differing sets of Chinese words.

Having compared the mantras, Shen reached two conclusions: One, the *Zhou jing* 《咒经》 has no independent Sanskrit source; Two, the reason why neither Kumārajīva's *Large Sūtra* 《大经》 nor Xuanzang's *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 has respectively included Kumārajīva's *Heart Sūtra* and Xuanzang's *Heart Sūtra* in them is because both versions of the *Heart Sūtra* “have no independent Sanskrit source”.

Shen also compared the style of the two Chinese translations of the *Heart Sūtra* and concluded that: “by Xuanzang's usual style, his *Xin jing* 《心经》 should have been much lengthier than Kumārajīva's *Zhou jing* 《咒经》 but it is in fact more concise.” Some passages in the Xuanzang version were found to be deletion, shortening or re-wording of Kumārajīva's version. More importantly Shen found that “no ignorance and no end-of-ignorance” 无无明，亦无无明尽 in the Kumārajīva version (i.e. *Zhou jing* 《咒经》), which had already been changed to “no arising of ignorance, no ending of ignorance” 无无明生，无无明灭 in Xuanzang's *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》, was once again rendered: “no ignorance and no end-of-ignorance” 无无明，亦无无明尽 in the so-called Xuanzang version of *Xin jing* 《心经》. This therefore “indicates that *Xin jing* 《心经》 is re-written on the basis of the *Zhou jing* 《咒经》, and not translated from an independent Sanskrit text.”

If to some readers the above assertions are not enough to surprise them, then there is yet another inference of Shen's that would: “In terms of date of composition, Xuanzang's *Xin jing* and Kumārajīva's *Zhou jing* are some 240 years apart. It is not inconceivable that there is first the translation from Chinese into Sanskrit, and later (back-translation) from Sanskrit into Chinese.” In other words, Shen directly pointed out here that the Sanskrit version of the *Xin jing* is a back-translation from Chinese (沈九成, 1988, p. 8). From the above we can see that (although) Shen's inference is by no means as rigorous as Nattier's, his article has nevertheless provided us with some very valuable observations.

8. The *Heart Sūtra* Re-examined

8.1 Are Copied Sutra Extracts Doubtful or Apocryphal Texts?

What exactly is the nature of the *Heart Sūtra*? This is a very important question. As discussed above, Nattier pointed out that Indians and Chinese have very different criteria for determining the authenticity of a text. We shall examine the Chinese criteria in the first place. But on this I shall be brief as very good works have already been done by past researchers.

As China was not the birth place of Buddhism, all (foreign) sutras need to be transmitted through Sanskrit or Central Asian languages. Therefore, in addition to the usual arguments over the legitimacy of Buddhist texts faced by the Indians, ancient Chinese

Buddhists – especially rule-abiding monks and Buddhist bibliographers – would also need to closely guard against the creation of new sutras, done intentionally or otherwise, by the Chinese themselves. It is for this reason that the determination of the authenticity of translated sutras became very important right from the start.

Shi Daoan 释道安 (312-385) – father of Chinese Buddhist bibliography, was the very first to pay attention to the issue of scriptural authenticity. In his *An Catalogue* 《安录》 (no longer extant but its outline can be gleaned through quotations of it in the *You Catalogue* 《祐录》) is an entry called “*Records of Doubtful Sutras*” 《疑经录》. Certainly his concept of “doubtful” 疑经 differs from the later day notion of “needing clarification” 疑惑待详. This concept is a negative one since everything listed under “Doubtful” are ideas contrary to those found in other Buddhist sutras (Cao Ling 曹凌, 2009, p. 2), (Xiong Juan 熊娟, 2010, p. 19). The usage of such name as “doubtful” is prone to be misunderstood. But in a way this reflects the state of play in the formative days of Buddhist bibliography.

By the time of Sengyou 僧祐, the notion of “texts opposed to genuine sutras” was more scientifically defined as “doubtful and fabricated texts” 疑经伪撰. It thus paved the way for distinguishing doubtful texts from apocryphal ones in later days, and laid the foundation for the basic classification used in the studies of non-authentic texts. In his *You Catalogue* 《祐录》, Sengyou sets out two criteria for determining if a text is authentic: 1) In terms of content, is the doctrine consistent with Buddha’s teachings? 2) In terms of form, is it a translation? In later days, these two criteria are to become the most important ones for determining the authenticity of a text (熊娟, 2010, p. 20).

Sengyou was also the first Buddhist bibliographer to have singled out “copied sutra extracts” 抄经 as an independent concept. We note that he did not subscribe to the practice of sutra copying for he wrote:

“Scripture copying is the act of collecting and citing that which is essential. In ancient times, Anshigao 安世高 copied from the text *Xiuxing* 《修行》 and turned it into the *Dadao dijing* 《大道地经》 because a more complete translation was difficult and so an abridged translation was done. Zhiqian 支谦 also produced the scripture *Beichao* 《苾刍抄》, which is an abridged version and not a ‘dismembering’ of its Sanskrit original. But people of later days were inconsiderate. They wilfully copied or collated bits of texts taken from the various sutras, tossing them around like chess pieces, or simply ‘clawed’ through and ‘shredded’ the original works. Not only do such acts divert the noble teachings from their truth, they also make the learners go after the trifling. Even Emperor Wenxuan of Jingling 竟陵文宣王, with his insight and profound understanding, could not help making such mistakes. If such acts are allowed to multiply with no end, there will be more of them over time. The dharma treasures will then be overgrown with weeds and all will be sullied. How pitiful will the situation be? Once a work is done, making amends will be hard. All the copied sutra extracts listed in Shi Daoan’s catalogue are included here. New works obtained by me are listed in the entries on the left. I urge later generations not to imitate such acts of copying.” (T2145, 37c).

Sengyou's tone is clearly harsh. In other words, he has included this special group of texts known as copied sutra extracts with the like of fabricated texts (Cao Ling 曹凌, 2009, p. 4). In this regard, he has more rigidly applied the criterion “translation” as a test for scriptural authenticity. However, the reality faced by ancient Buddhist literature – as Sengyou himself would be acutely aware – was that some of the massive sutras were already facing a circulation problem. Thus for generations, the act of copying parts of a lengthy work, either for ease of circulation or for worshipping needs, was an important religious practice. Even in the case of translation, it was not always the case that the entire work was translated; abridged versions were made instead. To some extent, all these considerations would affect our decision of whether to call a copied sutra extract a fabrication or not. On the other hand, the rampant existence of scripture copying had undoubtedly created a niche for non-authentic works (Yin Guang Ming 殷光明, 2006, p. 15). One further point: Although copied sutra extracts play an important part in religious practice, they themselves are of no independent philological values. Therefore, the attitude of most past Buddhist bibliographers towards such texts has been one of: “deletion” or “unnecessary to make a canonical copy” (Wang Wen Yan 王文颜, 1997, p. 30), (熊娟, 2010, p. 27).

From the above discussions we can see that copied sutra extracts (also called 别生经 i.e. “other-generated sutras”, and etc.) have a delicate relationship with the concept of non-authenticity. This has therefore caused past Buddhist bibliographers to self-contradict on the question of how to treat these texted. For example, Sengyou included in his *New Catalogue of Miscellaneous Doubtful/Fabricated Sutras* 《新集疑经伪撰杂录》 the text “*Ablution Sūtra*” 《灌顶经》. Leaving aside its authenticity, this text was notated with these words by Sengyou: “copied from a sutra” (T55.2145, 39a). In other words, while he regarded it a copied text, he also placed it in his catalogue of non-authentic sutras nevertheless. A similar example can be seen with the two texts: “*Most Essential Knowledge of the Six Meanings of the Dharma*” 《佛法有六义第一应知》, and “*Six Unimpeded, Unobstructed Entries to the Acts of Cleansing the Six Senses*” 《六通无碍六根淨业义门》. Here Sengyou clearly pointed out that these were copied Buddhist sutras. However, because they were combined into one text and “given a different name” by the copier, he placed them in his *Catalogue* as doubtful/fabricated texts, “for fear of causing posterity confusion” [translator's note: “右二部。齐武帝时。比丘释法愿抄集经义所出。虽弘经义异于伪造。然既立名号则/别成一部。惧后代疑乱。故明注于录”; T2145, 39b]. By contrast, his contemporary Xiao Ziliang 萧子良 [translator's note: i.e. Emperor Wenxuan of Jingling 竟陵文宣王], well-known for sutra copying, placed the same two texts in his *New Catalogue of Copied Sutras* 《新集抄经录》 instead of treating them as non-authentic. With a twist, this same collection of Xiao Ziliang was once again placed in the “non-authentic” category in later catalogues such as *Fajing* 《法经录》, *Renshou* 《仁寿录》, *Neidian* 《内典录》, *Kaiyuan* 《开元录》, and *Zhenyuan* 《贞元录》. It can thus be seen that in ancient China there was never any consensus as to how copied sutra extracts were to be categorized (Wang Wen Yan 王文颜, 1997, p. 7, 32-33). The reason for this is that ancient Chinese Buddhist bibliographies did not grasp the important difference between two concepts.

Namely, a copied sutra extract narrates what has already been written and creates nothing new, while a doubtful/fabricated sutra does both (Zhang Miao 张淼, 2006, p. 20).

Returning to the *Heart Sūtra*, we see that since ancient times some Buddhist monks have considered it a copied sutra extract. For instance Kuiji 窥基 of Temple Cien 慈恩, a disciple of Xuanzang, gave the following explanation for the title of the *Xin jing* (*Heart Sūtra*):

“‘*xin*’ (‘heart’) refers to that which is solid and most splendid. The *Dajing* 《大经》 [translator’s note: i.e. the *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》] tailors its teachings to various audiences and circumstances, and is thus broad in meaning and content, (such that) when one receives it, upholds it, transmits it and studies it, one may take fright and retreat. The noble preacher of dharma thus extracted from it purport that is substantial and most splendid and composed this *Xin jing*. (In the process) therefore, the three-section format, the two front and back prefaces of the original text are all but lost.” (T1710, 33.524a)

In other words Kuiji (632-683 CE) thought that because the *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 is too broad and cumbersome, the “noble preacher of dharma” copied parts of it to produce the *Heart Sūtra* and thereby losing its introductory and concluding sections. Kuiji’s remark is very important for understanding the early formation of the *Heart Sūtra* as well as its place in Buddhist literature. Kuiji considered it a copied sutra extract, and in his days the copying had already taken place. Had the copying been done by Xuanzang, Kuiji (his disciple) would not have glossed over the authorship with the simple phrase “a noble preacher of dharma”.

Another disciple of Xuanzang – Woncheuk 圆测 (613-696 CE) from the Korean empire of Xinluo 新罗, held the same view. He cited as an example the *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (*Heart Sūtra*) when he discussed the classification of Buddhist texts in his *Renwang jing shu* 《仁王经疏》 (*Commentary on the Karunīkarājaprajñā-pāramitāsūtra*) as follows:

“However, different sutras have different name invocations at the beginning of the text and they are of four types: ‘self-generated sutras 自有经 [translator’s note: as opposed to ‘other-generated sutras’ 别生经], which begin by invoking the name of the Buddha only, such as 《涅槃》 (*Nirvāṇa Sūtra*) and so on; ‘self-generated sutras, which begin by invoking the names of the Bhagavats only, such as 《大品》 (**Mahāprajñāpāramitā*) and so on; ‘self-generated sutras which begin by invoking the names of both the Buddha and the Bhagavats, such as 《无上依》 (‘*In Accordance with the Utmost*’) [translator’s note: i.e. T669] and so on; and sutras with no name invocation, such as *Taxin* 《多心》 (*Heart Sūtra*) and so on. This is the how the various sutras differ. Since *Taxin jing* 《多心经》 and etc. are transmitted from the one same source, they therefore have no name invocation.” (T1708, 364a)

Again from the above remark, it can be seen that in the eye of Woncheuk, *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (*Heart Sūtra*) is also a typical copied sutra extract and is therefore distinct from most other texts.

Once the notion of “copied sutra extract” has been clarified, Western researchers such as Tokuno also considers the *Heart Sūtra* one such text (Tokuno, 1990). Nattier noted that in a letter dated 21 January 1992, Robert Buswell suggested to her that the *Heart Sūtra* might be “a kind of ch’ao-ching (‘condensed *sūtra*’)” (Nattier, 1992, p. 210, note 48). From all these discussions, we can see that starting with Xuanzang’s two disciples, the concise *Heart Sūtra* has had a long history of being considered a copied sutra, and it should be viewed as such.

8.2 Records of the *Heart Sūtra* in Buddhist Bibliographies

Below I will briefly discuss the various entries of the *Heart Sūtra* in the various scriptural catalogues of ancient China. To this day the earliest record of the *Heart Sūtra* is found in fascicle five – *Records of Various Periods* 代录, of the *Datang Neidian Catalogue* 《大唐内典录》 by Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667 CE), which has records from early Tang to the time the catalogue is completed, (the year of Xuanzang’s death, i.e. First Year of Linde 麟德, 664 AD). In this catalogue, included under Xuanzang’s series of translations are:

“listed on the right the *Bukong juansuo shenzhou xin jing* 《不空羼索神咒心经》 (*Amoghapāśa-hṛdaya-dhāraṇī*) ; the *Shiyimian shenzhou xin jing* 《十一面神咒心经》 (“*Eleven-faced Deity Hṛdaya-dhāraṇī*”) ; the *Chengzan qifo minghao gongde jing* 《称赞七佛名号功德经》 (“*Sūtra of the Merit of Praising the Seven Appellations of the Buddha*”); the *Bore Ta xin jing* 《般若多心经》 (*Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*); the *Qianzhuān tuoluōni jing* 《千转陀罗尼经》 (“*Thousand Chirping Hṛdaya-dhāraṇī*”) totalling 1,344 fascicles from 67 Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sutras as well as commentaries; translated on imperial decree by *śramaṇa* Shi Xuanzang 释玄奘 of the Grand Cien Temple 大慈恩寺 of the Imperial Capital.” (T55.2149, 282a-283a)

In addition, the *Heart Sūtra* is also listed by Daoxuan in fascicle eight – *Records of Canonical Entries* 入藏录, and in fascicle nine – *Records of Recited Highlights from Various Sutras in Successive Periods* 历代众经举要转读录. These placements records have created the necessary conditions for the wide spread transmission of the *Heart Sūtra* in later years.

But strangely in fascicle six – *Records of Translated Mahāyāna Sutras With or Without Single or Multiple Re-translations in Successive Periods* 历代大乘藏经翻本单重传译有无录, all sutras listed after the *Xukongzang pusa wen chijing jifu jing* 《虚空藏菩萨问持经几福经》 are listed as “sutras with unknown translators” 失译经, and among these, second from the last, we (also) find an entry for the *Bore ta xin jing* 《般若多心经》 (i.e. the *Heart Sūtra*).

We should note here that Daoxuan was a contemporary of Xuanzang, whose active period of translation lasted between the twentieth year of Zhenguan 贞观 (646 CE) – the second year on his return (from India), and the first year of Linde 麟德 (664 CE) – the year of his passing (Ji Xianlin 季羨林 et. al. ed., 1985, pp. 111-114). Daoxuan (596-667 CE) lived around the same time as Xuanzang. The time he completed his catalogue was also the time when Xuanzang ended his translation career. Besides, Daoxuan participated in Xuanzang’s translation activities and played a major role in them (Wang Shao Feng 王紹峰, 2004, pp. 7-8). So we should have no reasons to doubt the accuracy of Daoxuan’s records in his catalogue, especially that of someone his contemporary (i.e. Xuanzang). But then, how are we to explain the discrepancy we see? Is the *Bore ta xin jing* the work of an unknown translator or that of Xuanzang?

My own guess is that perhaps the text is a wilful addition to the *Records from Various Periods* 代录 by a later person. I base my suggestion on the fact that in some edition of Daoxuan’s catalogue, the finishing sentence that reads “67 works of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sutras and commentaries” actually reads “65 works”. Therefore, this shows that two unnamed texts could have been added to the original version. Although we have no evidence to suggest that one of the added texts is the *Bore ta xin jing*, its listing among texts of unknown translators has necessarily led me to this conjecture.

After Daoxuan, Shi Jingtai 释静泰 composed his *Dongjing Jingai Temple Grand Catalogue of All Sutras* 《東京大敬爱寺一切经目录》 (hereafter *Jingai Catalogue* for short), whose completion date has variously been claimed to be the third year of Longshuo 龙朔 (663 CE) (Wang Wen Yan 王文顏, 1997, p. 12), or the first year of Linde 麟德 (664 CE) (Cao Ling 曹凌, 2009, p. 10). But the *Jingai Catalogue* could only have been completed in the first year of Qianfeng 乾封 (666 CE), two years after the completion of Daoxuan’s *Neidian Catalogue* in 664 CE, according to its own preface as follows:

“By imperial decree dated the Twenty Second Day of the First Month of the Third Year of Longshuo 龙朔 (663 CE), an order was issued for the compilation of the *Catalogue on All Sutras* 《一切经论目》 at the Jingai Temple dharma place 敬爱道场. And by imperial decree dated the Twenty Sixth Day of the First Month of the First Year of Linde 麟德 (664 CE), ten *śramaṇa* well-versed in Buddhist doctrines including Huigai 惠概, Mingyu 明玉, Shencha 神察, Daoying 道英, Tan Sui 昙邃 and others were gathered, and an outstanding person especially skilled in literary interpretations was selected. For three years, cross-referencing, repeated checking, text comparing, and editing were done ... 2,731 fascicles from 741 old scriptural and commentarial works were compiled, and 1,335 fascicles from 75 new translations by Xuanzang were included. Altogether, 4,066 fascicles from 816 works new and old were written into the canon. The number of sutras down the ages, with a catalogue entry but without a text, amounts to 725 fascicles from 382 works. These are recorded here as investigations are being done I, Jingtai 静泰, not withstanding my own

ignorance, wrote this preface Five fascicles, listed on the left, have been compiled.” (T2148, 180c).

In the *Jingai Catalogue* the *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (*Heart Sūtra*) is clearly attributed to Xuanzang. Thereafter, this same attribution is adopted by all later catalogues and this point will not be further discussed.

If it was in the *Neidian* 《内典录》 that Xuanzang’s *Heart Sūtra* made its (first) appearance, then it was not until the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* 《开元录》 (composed in 730 CE by Zhisheng 智升) that another important translation of the *Heart Sūtra* – the Kumārajīva version, made its first appearance. Respectively in fascicles four and eight, the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* listed the following inclusions in the Kumārajīva version and the Xuanzang version as follows:

(the Kumārajīva version) “has included the one-fascicle *Mohe bore boluomi damingzhou jing* 《摩诃般若波罗蜜大明咒经》, also known as *Mohe damingzhou jing* 《摩诃大明咒经》; it is the first translation (of the *Heart Sūtra*); it has the same source as that of the Tang translation *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (*Heart Sūtra*) and others” (T55.2154, 512b);

(the Xuanzang version) “has included the one-fascicle *Bore boluomi Ta xin jing* 《般若波罗蜜多心经》 (see the *Neidian Catalogue* 《内典录》); it is the second translation (of the *Heart Sūtra*); it has the same source as the *Mohe bore damingzhou jing* 《摩诃般若大明咒经》; it was translated on the Twenty Forth Day of the Fifth Month of the Twenty Third Year of Zhenguan 贞观 at the Cuiwei Palace 翠微宫 in Mount Zhongnan 终南山, written as dictated by *śramaṇa* Zhiren 知仁” (T55.2154, 555c).

It is thus clear the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* based its entry on Xuanzang’s version on Daoxuan’s *Neidian Catalogue*. But it is unclear what the basis was for listing the Kumārajīva’s version as being the first translation (of the *Heart Sūtra*). However fascicle eleven of the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* also listed this version as “a reinstated past omission” 拾遺編入 (T55.2154, 584a). Has there been a source of conclusive evidence, Zhisheng 智升, with his editorial rigour, would have made this clear. But since its origin was doubtful, the entry on Kumārajīva’s version could only be given the vague remark: “a reinstated past omission”. Nevertheless, since fascicle nineteen of the *Kaiyuan Catalogue – Records of Canonical Entries* 《入藏录》 does include Kumārajīva’s version alongside Xuanzang’s versions, the former is thus able to gain popular circulation.

In fact apart from the above two versions of the *Heart Sūtra*, Zhisheng also recorded another version that was already lost at his time – the one-fascicle *Bore boluomiduona jing* 《般若波罗蜜多那经》 by the Tang translator Bodhiruci 菩提流支, with the following remarks: “(this is) a newly catalogued, third translation (of the *Heart Sūtra*); it has the same

source as the *Damingzhou jing* 《大明咒经》 and etc. listed on the right; all in all, three translations exist: two in collection, one lost” (T55.2154, 626b). This third translation is one (of the three) Zhisheng considered lost, and one that is in his own words “searched but not found” (T55.2154, 570a). From the above record, we can see that in dealing with the different versions of the *Heart Sūtra*, Zhisheng, well known for his critical editing, has not been particularly meticulous.

Fascicle eleven (of the *Kaiyuan Catalogue*) also remarks that the Xuanzang and Kumārajīva versions are different translations of the *Heart Sūtra*, which has “three translations, two extant and one lost [author’s note: the lost one being the *Bore boluomiduona jing* 《般若波罗蜜多那经》]. Previous catalogues have the *Heart Sūtra* listed as a single version; here it is catalogued as a collation of three texts including the re-translated *Renwang bore* 《仁王般若》 (*Benevolent King Prajñāpāramitā*). Although the main teachings of these three texts are consistent with that found in the larger *Prajñāpāramitā* works, in which the three texts are not found nor from which they are derived; these texts are taken up by the minor schools” [translator’s note: T55.2154, 584a].

Briefly in summary: Zhisheng included Xuanzang’s version in his *Kaiyuan Catalogue* on the basis of Daoxuan’s *Neidian Catalogue* (where it first appeared); he added a so-called “Kumārajīva version” of dubious origin, and also a third version which was by then lost – the *Bore boluomidana jing* 《般若波罗蜜多那经》. In other words, his Kumārajīva version is something added to “reinstate a lost text” and not something sourced from other catalogues; its reliability is therefore questionable. In addition, the Kumārajīva version first appears in a catalogue (*Kaiyuan*) which is later than the *Neidian Catalogue* in which the Xuanzang version first appears. Therefore, we can be completely certain that the Kumārajīva version is a late addition. However, due to the major influence of Zhisheng’s *Kaiyuan Catalogue*, all later catalogues, (taking the lead from *Kaiyun*), also included both versions in their *Records of Canonical Entries* 入藏录. This fact has enabled the Kumārajīva version to achieve wide circulation.

Even so, we should also note that a later day author Huilin 慧琳 was still very unsure about the translatorship of the *Heart Sūtra*, as shown in his *Yinyi* 《音义》 (*Meanings of the Sound of Words*) completed in 810 CE (Fang Guang Chang 方广锜, 2006, p. 281). Huilin was born in 737 CE (the Twenty Fifth Year of Kaiyuan 开元) and died in 820 CE (the Fifteen Year of Yuanhe 元和) (Yao Yong Min 姚永银, 2003, p.5). In the *Yinyi* he mentioned three versions of the *Heart Sūtra*:

“one-fascicle of *Damingzhou jing* 《大明咒经》, previously the *Bore xin* 《般若心》;
 one-fascicle of *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》, Kumārajīva; and
 one-fascicle of *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》, new translation from Jibin 闍宾”
 (T54.218, 362c).

Leaving aside the third version, which is a new translation, we notice that the first translation – what we normally refer to as the Kumārajīva version, is without a translator name; while the second translation – what we normally refer to the Xuanzang edition, has the name of Kumārajīva instead. (The CEBTA also remarks that there are Kumārajīva versions without mentioning his name). Whatever the case may be, this shows that for a very long time the issue of translatorship is never quite settled.

In subsequent passages of the *Yinyi* dedicated to the discussion of the pronunciations and meanings of words, we read, following the phrase “*Daming zhoujing* 《大明咒经》”, previously translated as *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》” the three terms: 挂碍 “*gua ai*”, (“hindrance”); 竭帝 “*gate*” (“gone”), and 僧婆诃 “*svāhā*” (“hail”); and following the phrase “*Bore boluota xin jing* 《般若波罗多心经》 translated by Kumārajīva”, we read: 五蕴 “*wu yun*” (“the five *skandhas*”); 揭帝 (“*gate*”), and 般若 “*bo lu*” (“*prajñā*”). (Note that in some versions the phrase “translated by Kumārajīva” is absent, meaning these are texts without a known translator). Judging by the terms employed, we know that the first text – *Daming zhoujing*, is the Kumārajīva version (but the third term 僧婆诃 differs from 萨婆诃 found in his current-day version). The second text is clearly not the Kumārajīva version because where it reads 五蕴, the current-day Kumārajīva version reads 五阴, so it must be referring to the Xuanzang version (which has the habitual usage of “五蕴”). However the *Linyi* 《琳音》 [translator’s note: i.e. Huilin’s 慧琳 *Yinyi* 《音义》] has in many cases erroneously attributed the translatorship to Kumārajīva. This shows that at Huilin’s time, the translatorship of the two *Heart Sūtra* versions was still very confusing. By the time of the *Zhenyuan Catalogue* 《贞元录》 (composed in 800 AD) and later, the authorship of the two translations became more settled, although the concept of “having the same source” 同本 may still differ [translator’s note: i.e. “same source but different translations” 同本异译]. For example, the *Zhenyuan Catalogue* regarded the Kumārajīva and Xuanzang versions as having the same source, and the Dharmacandra 法月 and Bo-re 般若 versions as having the same source (T55.2157, 912a-b). However, these are minor details which I need not go into here.

Briefly in summary: Xuanzang’s translation first appears in Daoxuan’s *Neidian Catalogue* 《内典录》 but its entries in this catalogue are inconsistent – some recorded as “translated by Xuanzang”, others as “translator unknown”, and so the situation is uncertain. Kumārajīva’s translation first appears in (Zhisheng’s) *Kaiyuan Catalogue* but its origin is doubtful. Also listed in this catalogue is another version now no longer extant. Lastly, if we link our above discussion (on Xuanzang’s translation) with the fact that Xuanzang’s disciples Kuiji 窥基 and Woncheuk 圆测 did not mention anything about their master having translated the *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 but treated the text as a copied sutra extract instead (§8.1), we will be left wondering: if “Xuanzang’s translation” is indeed a translation by Xuanzang at all.

8.3 “Apocryphal”, “Doubtful/Fabricated” and “Native” Texts – Clarification of Concepts

In ancient China, locally composed, non-translated sutras were often delineated “doubtful”, “fabricated” and so on. There are many studies on this (Cao Ling 曹凌, 2009, pp. 2-4), (Xiong Juan 熊娟, 2010, pp. 19-28). Their findings are not here repeated.

Before we argue over the “authenticity” of the *Heart Sūtra*, I feel it necessary to provide some analyses on the connotation 内涵, denotation 外延, and value judgement of the terms “apocryphal text”, “doubtful text”, and “fabricated text” as applied in China or abroad, for determining the authority of a religious text. Otherwise such determination may mire in the confusion and misguided attention caused by conceptual differences.

In the studies of scriptural authenticity, a common technical term used by Western academics is “apocryphal”, often translated as “*yi wei*” 疑伪 – “doubtful/fabricated”. But we must bear in mind that the studies of Buddhism in the West took place later than the studies of Christianity, which to a large extent have affected the former. Thus terminologies employed in Buddhist studies have been borrowed from the studies of Christianity or other Western religions – a fact that equally applies to the term “apocryphal”.

Etymologically this term is derived from the Greek word “apokryphos” (ἀπόκρυφα) meaning “hidden”. In Christian philological context, it means “non-canonical” or more precisely, “(scriptures) not admitted into the Bible”. It contains no value judgement unlike the Chinese term “doubtful/fabricated” (“*yi wei*” 疑伪) (Robert Buswell, 1990, pp. 3-4). Therefore, Western researchers usually give the Chinese term a relatively neutral translation of “secondary scripture” 次经. Of course later on – more precisely after the 16th century – the term gradually assumed a tinge of value judgement or even of heresy (Robert Buswell, 1990, pp. 4). Thus applying the term “apocryphal” (with its meaning of “non-canonical”) to native Chinese Buddhist sutras could be problematic. This is because unlike Christian literature such as the Bible, which is a relatively closed system, the Buddhist canon is relatively open. Up to a very late date, Buddhist literature has no immutable standards for excluding specific texts (and continued to accept new texts). Moreover, some native Chinese Buddhist sutras also came to possess a status of authority no less commanding than orthodox Buddhist literature. An example for this is the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* by Huineng 慧能. Therefore, not all native Chinese texts are necessary “heretical”.

Thus the English academic world tends to use other terms when referring to texts excluded from orthodox canonical literature, and therefore not well-regarded by Buddhist worshippers, but are of philological values nonetheless. These important terms, which can replace the value-judging terms “doubtful” or “fabricated” include: 1) “non-canonical”; 2) “post-canonical”; 3) “para-canonical”; 4) “extra-canonical”; 5) “native” or “original” if geography is being considered to denote non-translated texts locally produced by the Chinese themselves. Therefore, I would suggest that in the studies of scriptural authenticity – such as the authenticity of non-translated, native texts once branded “apocryphal” by us, the academic world could probably consider the use of the above terms, which are neutral, purely academic, without religious value-judgement, and without an emotive tone. This I feel can go a long way in avoiding the interference to academic research caused by religious emotions.

Indeed, simply linking an important text such as the *Heart Sūtra* to the word “fabrication” is enough to offend Buddhist worshippers and researchers alike. And “fake”, relative to “true”, is indeed an overly emotive term. In my own works therefore, I have always aimed at removing such unnecessary, man-made interferences, be they negative or otherwise.

8.4 “Heart” (“*hṛdaya*”, “*xin*”) in the *Heart Sūtra* (“*Xin jing*”)

Since it is uncommon for Sanskrit manuscripts to have their titles upfront, the Sanskrit titles of the various *Heart Sūtra* are written at the end of the texts with these words: *iti xxx samāptam* meaning: “thus ends the sutra entitled xxx”. On examination, the following different titles can be found: *Ārya-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya* 《圣般若波罗蜜多心》; *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-dhāraṇī* 《般若波罗蜜多心陀罗尼》; *Pañcaviṃśatikā-nāma-dhāraṇī* 《二十五颂名陀罗尼》; *Pañcaviṃśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-nāma-dhāraṇī* 《二十五颂般若波罗蜜多心名陀罗尼》; *Pañcaviṃśati-prajñāpāramitā* 《二十五颂般若波罗多》; *Pañcaviṃśatikā-bhagavatī-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya* 《二十五颂薄伽梵般若波罗蜜心》. Clearly the word “*sūtra*” never appears in all the above titles. Rather, what commonly appears is *hṛdaya* (“heart”), or *dhāraṇī*, or both. To some extent, this serves to verify Fukui Fumimasa’s view that “heart” and “*dhāraṇī*” in the Sanskrit titles belong to the same concept. The etymology of “*dhāraṇī*” (i.e. Sanskrit *dhṛ*, “to hold”) shows that it is a linguistic technique invented for memorizing and retaining something (Akira Hirakawa 平川彰, 2004, pp. 458-461). However, by the time of Tang, when Vajrayāna became prevalent, *dhāraṇī* had assumed divine protective and salvific power and gradually became one in meaning with “*mantra*” and “*vidyā*”. I will return to this point later.

[Translator’s note: the following discussion has drifted from the theme “*hṛdaya* means *dhāraṇī*” to that of “*hṛdaya* refers to the organ heart”! Perhaps the author is merely reflecting the view of the Chinese, who have also confused the “*xin*” 心 of the organ “heart” (*hṛdaya*) with the “*xin*” 心 of the “mind” (*citta*).]

In all the above examples the term *prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya* can be seen. This is a genitive *tatpuruṣa* compound, where the first word qualifies the last, i.e. “heart of *prajñāpāramitā*”. The problem is: the word “heart” is often misunderstood, especially by Chinese speakers with no Sanskrit background. This is because the original Sanskrit word for “heart” is “*hṛdaya*” and not “*citta*” as commonly accepted. Confusion arises because in ancient Chinese, both these Sanskrit terms were translated into “*xin*” 心. Even in, One finds in the the *Heart Sūtra* (*Xin jing*) the phrase 心无罣碍 (“*xin wu gua ai*” or “mind with no hindrance”), where “*xin*” (“mind”) here has a different meaning to “*xin*” (“heart”) in the title.

The term “*hṛdaya*” in the title “*prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya*” refers to the human organ, the heart; or the chest, stomach and other visceral parts [sic]. This Sanskrit term is etymologically related to modern Indo-European languages. For instance, it is related to the English word “heart”. Although in a few cases, “*hṛdaya*” may refer to the seat of thought, it is by and large a reference to the organ “heart” of man and beast (Monier-Williams Sanskrit English Dictionary, p.1302). Thus learned Chinese monks in ancient times would render “*hṛdaya*” (“*xin*”) into “meat-lump heart” 肉团心; “solid heart” 坚实心; “five-organ heart” 五

藏心, and so on, in order to distinguish it from the more abstract “*citta*” (also “*xin*”) for “mind” (Wu Jun Ru 吴汝钧, 1992, p. 104). The term “*hṛdaya*” has also been variously transliterated in Chinese as 紇利陀耶/紇哩陀耶 [translator’s note: both pronounced “*he li tuo ye*”], or 汗栗驮 [translator’s note: pronounced “*han li tuo*”], and so forth.

However, “*hṛdaya*” also has the extended meanings of “truth; divine knowledge; the *Vedas*; science [sic]”, or “core, essence, best, dearest or most secret part of anything” in the *Arthava Veda* (Monier-Williams, 1889, p. 1302). For the title of the *Heart Sūtra*, this would be the most befitting meaning.

The “*xin*” in “*xin wu gua ai*” 心无罣碍, for “*citta*”, has a very different meaning. It refers to our basic consciousness; a term we would normally associate with the functions of thinking and deliberation. It has the meanings of “thinking, reflecting, imagining, thought, intention, aim, wish, memory”, and etc. (Monier-Williams Sanskrit English Dictionary: p. 395). This is clearly different to “*hṛdaya*” the organ heart. To Indian Buddhists, the two terms are easily distinguishable, although both are designated “*xin*” in Chinese. While on this point, we can also refer to a line taken from the Pāli commentary *Dhammasaṅgaṇi-aṭṭhakathā* (DhsA.CS:p. 92): *cintanaṭṭhena cittā, vicittaṭṭhena vā cittā*, meaning: “*cittā* is (understood) through the meaning of thoughts, or through the meaning of deliberation”. Here the Pāli *citta*, *mana* and *viññāṇa* belong to the same series of concepts (Bhikkhu Ming Fa 明法比丘, 2007, pages ‘ch.1-6’). Thus in ancient China, “*citta*” was rendered the “thinking, deliberating heart” 念虑心, as opposed to the “meat-lump heart” 肉团心, which was reserved for “*hṛdaya*”. In other words, the “heart” in the *Heart Sūtra* (i.e. the “*hṛdaya*” in “*Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*”) does not refer to the thinking, deliberating “*xin*” (“*citta*”, the mind).

8.5 Xuanzang and Atikūṭa

Although I do not think Xuanzang translated the *Heart Sūtra* from Chinese into Sanskrit, I nevertheless think he is closely associated with the sutra and his association well surpassed that of any of his contemporaries. Precisely for this reason Nattier focused on Xuanzang in her studies and considered him to be the back-translator of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*.

A close examination of Xuanzang’s relationship with the *Heart Sūtra* broadly reveals the following facts: 1) the *Biography of Xuanzang* 《慈恩传》 shows that in his journey to the West, Xuanzang clearly benefited from the *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (*Heart Sūtra*), used for warding off evil spirits (note that the title cited here is not the Tang title of *Ta xin jing* 《多心经》); 2) Xuanzang obtained the *Bore xin jing* during his time in Sichuan (T2053, 224b); 3) in his old days, Xuanzang presented to the then emperor and empress “one fascicle of the *Bore xin jing* written in gold with an attached letter”. According to both the *Biography of Xuanzang* and the *Xingzhuang* 《行状》 [translator’s note: i.e. *A Brief Bibliographical Sketch of the Late Venerable Xuanzang of Great Tang* 《大唐故三藏玄奘法师行状》 by Ming Xiang 冥祥 of Tang], Xuanzang left Chang An 长安 at the age of 19 in 618 CE (Frist Year of Wude 武德), to escape war in the closing days of the Sui Dynasty. He entered Sichuan via the Ziwu Valley

子午谷 (Yang Ting Fu 杨廷福, 1998, pp. 67-68) and stayed there until the Fifth Year of Wude (622 CE). He left after observing the summer *varṣa* [translator's note: lit. "rain-retreat"] and went eastward by following the river down-stream until he reached Jingzhou 荆州 (Yang Ting Fu 杨廷福, 1998, pp. 75-76).

We thus know that the first contact Xuanzang had with the *Bore xin jing* (*Heart Sūtra*) should be some time during these four years. He began his westward journey in 629 CE, the Third Year of Zhenguan 贞观. Thereupon he frequently recited the *Sūtra* to ward off evil spirits during his sojourn. Precisely because of this experience, Xuanzang was very fond of the text right to his last days, culminating in him presenting a version of the *Bore xin jing* written in gold to the imperial court. Perhaps due to such attachment to the *Sūtra*, he ended his entire translation career with his 600-fascicle *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》 (bar a few later works). This translation began on the first day of the first month of the Fifth Year of Xianqing 显庆 (660 CE), and lasted until the Third Year of Longshuo 龙朔 (663 CE), thus spanning three years and eleven months. Xuanzang passed away in spring the following year, the First Year of Linde 麟德 (664 CE) (Yang Ting Fu 杨廷福, 1998, pp. 278-288).

Clearly the *Bore xin jing* (*Heart Sūtra*) meant a lot to Xuanzang in his whole life. If his biographies are to be believed, we can broadly sketch out the following outline: In his youth he obtained a Chinese version of the *Heart Sūtra* in Sichuan, which broadly speaking was copied from Kumārajīva's *Large Sūtra*, with the inclusion of a *dhāraṇī*. This text helped him conquered many obstacles along the way in his westward journey. Therefore, till the very end, it remained one of his favourite texts. As he was well-versed with *prajñāpāramitā* texts, he would probably have made some conscious re-writing and editing to the *Sūtra*. But his contemporary Daoxuan 道宣, as well as his own disciples (Kuiji and Woncheuk) knew full-well that the *Heart Sūtra* was not a translated text, so it was never recorded as one of his translated works.

In addition, we also need to pay attention to a contemporary of Xuanzang – Atikūṭa 阿地瞿多 [translator's note: lit. "beyond the summit" 无极高], who arrived at Changan on the very day Xuanzang returned from India. Atikūṭa translated the *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* into Chinese 《陀罗尼集经》 (*Catalogue of Dhāraṇī*) (T901), which might have had a major influence on Xuanzang's *Bore xin jing* (*Heart Sūtra*). Nattier also mentions in her article that the mantra found in the *Heart Sūtra* probably came from this Atikūṭa work. I also make this point when I discuss Shen Jiu Cheng's works in §7. Although in Sanskrit the mantra in Xuanzang's *Da bore jing* (T220) and the mantra in his *Heart Sūtra* (T251) are identical, their Chinese transliterations are different. But the Chinese transliterations of the *Heart Sūtra* mantra and the *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* mantra are identical (more details below). Therefore, we must first pay attention to the special relationship between Atikūṭa and Xuanzang.

Xuanzang (Like Atikūṭa) is also very fond of *dhāraṇī* texts. That is why upon his return to Changan, one of the very first four sutras he translated was a *dhāraṇī* text (T2053, 254a). Atikūṭa's *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* includes a *dhāraṇī* with the rather dubious [sic] title: *Bore boluomita daxin jing* 《般若波罗蜜多大心经》 (T901,804c-805a), as well as a *dhāraṇī*

entitled *Bore daxin tuoluoni No. 16* 《般若大心陀羅尼第十六》 (T901,807b20), which is identical with the *Heart Sūtra* mantra:

Bore daxin tuoluoni No. 16 by Atikūṭa (T901,807b20)

踰 (ta) 姪 (dya) 他 (thā) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te) 波 (pa) 罗 (ra) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te)
波 (pa) 罗 (ra) 僧 (saṃ) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te) 菩 (bo) 提 (dhi) 莎 (svā) 诃 (hā)

Bore xin jing by Xuanzang (T251, 848c22)

揭 (ga) 帝 (te) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te) 波 (pa) 罗 (ra) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te)

波 (pa) 罗 (ra) 僧 (saṃ) 揭 (ga) 帝 (te) 菩 (bo) 提 (dhi) 萨婆 (svā) 诃 (hā)

Also noteworthy is the fact that Xuanzang, having finished his translation of the *Abhidharmakośa* 《俱舍论》 and the *Nyāyānusāriṇī* 《顺正理论》, and having obviously been inspired by Atikūṭa, started his translation of numerous *dhāraṇī* texts on the tenth day of the ninth month in the very year Atikūṭa finished his translation of the *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* (i.e. 654 CE or the Fifth Year of Yonghui 永徽). According to the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* 《开元录》, these *dhāraṇī* texts include: one fascicle of the *Salvation of the Suffering Dhāraṇī* 《拔济苦难陀罗尼经》 (translated on the tenth day of the ninth month of the Fifth Year of Yonghui 永徽); one fascicle of the *Eight-Name Invocation for Deliverance Dhāraṇī* (translated on the twenty seventh day); one fascicle of the *Victory Banner Arm Bracelet Dhāraṇī* 《胜幢臂印陀罗尼经》 (**Dhvajāgra-keyūra*) (translated on the twenty ninth day), and one fascicle of the *Upholding the World Dhāraṇī* 《持世陀罗尼经》 (translated on the tenth day of the tenth month) (Yang Ting Fu 杨廷福, 1988, pp. 258-259). Therefore, although we have no extant historical records to show that Atikūṭa did have a direct influence on Xuanzang, we can still infer that the two were somehow connected because both were translating in Changan at the same time; both were probably having an influence on each other's religious interest, and Xuanzang's *Heart Sūtra* had sourced its mantra from Atikūṭa's work.

We cannot completely rule out that the so-called Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra* was produced with the above situation as its background. At least we can be very sure that at the time of Xuanzang's return to China, the *Bore xin jing* (*Heart Sūtra*) was enjoying a favourable backdrop for its popular acceptance.

8.6 Avalokiteśvara and Śāriputra in the *Heart Sūtra* – Why the Role Reversal?

8.6.1 Prajñāpāramitā and Female Deities in Buddhism

One of the noteworthy features of the *Heart Sūtra* is what Nattier called “role reversal”. Namely, in Prajñāpāramitā texts, the main narrators are normally the Buddha and Subhūti, but in the *Heart Sūtra* the main narrator has been noticeably changed to Avalokiteśvara 观世音. Nattier offered no explanation for this role reversal, nor any

suggestions on what it reflects in terms of the time and background when the text was composed.

The birth place of Prajñāpāramitā sutras is related to that of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Although this is a rather complex issue, current mainstream views include the South India Origin theory and the Northwestern India Origin theory. More specifically, the former has the origin located in Southern India, in the Andhra country, on the Kistnā River [translator’s note: present day Kriśna River]. Near Amarāvati and Dhānyakaṭaka in this region, the Mahāsāṅghikas 大众部 established two famous monasteries, which respectively belong to the Pūrvaśaila School 东山住派 and the Aparāśaila School 西山住派. These schools are important in the following regard: 1) they possessed a Prajñāpāramitā text written in Prakrit (more see A.K. Warder 渥德尔, 1987, p. 339); 2) they share the same discourse of the *dharmadhātu* with other Prajñāpāramitā literature, and 3) their Buddhist thoughts laid the foundation for Prajñāpāramitā thoughts (Conze, 2000a, p. 1). Warder is also of the opinion that certain specific sutras such as the *Rāṣṭrapālapariṣcchā* 《护国尊者所问经》 was written by the Pūrvaśaila School (渥德尔, 1987, p. 331).

Some Prajñāpāramitā literature such as the commonly regarded earliest text *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 《八千颂般若经》 clearly recorded that Prajñāpāramitā sutras originated in Southern India. The Chinese *Xiaopin jing* 《小品经》 [translator’s note: another name of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*] states that: “Prajñāpāramitā (texts) must (first) be distributed in the South; from there to the West; and from the West to the North” (T227, 555a). For more discussion on this please refer to my related work (Ji Yun 纪贇, 2011, pp. 58-59). Conze mentioned the presence in the *Da zhidu lun* 《大智度论》 *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (a commentary on Prajñāpāramitā sutras) the religious practice called “*dvācatvāriṃśad-akṣaramukha* 四十二字门” [translator’s note: lit. “42-syllable door-way”, e.g. *a-ra-pa-ca-na* etc. (in Siddham script)]. For more discussion of this practice, see Akira Hirakawa 平川彰, 2004, pp. 462-464. The practice has greatly influenced later day Buddhism, and has been found to contain linguistic remnants of South Indian dialects (Conze, 2000a, p. 3, note 3). This serves to show that Southern India was probably the birth place of early Prajñāpāramitā literature.

On the other hand, E. Lamotte’s theory of Northwestern India Origin (E. Lamotte, 1954), and A. Bareau’s theory of Northern Dekkhan Plateau Origin (Bareau, 1955, pp. 296-305) could perhaps be reconciled (with the Southern Indian theory) to mean that Prajñāpāramitā texts first originated in South India but survived or even prospered in the Northwest (Conze, 2000a, pp. 2-4).

I shall now return to the main discussion. Nāgārjuna lived in the vicinity of Dhānyakaṭaka in Southern India. In nearby Jaggayyapaṭa, the following inscription on a stupa has been found: “Bhadanta Nāgārjunācārya” (J. Burgess, 1882, p. 57). This region was extensively influenced by both Dravidian and Greek cultures, which prompted Conze to make some comparisons between Prajñāpāramitā thoughts and the Sophia ideas of the Mediterranean [translator’s note: both meaning “wisdom”]. He found many commonalities between

the two (Conze, 2000b, pp. 207-209). In his article (a book review) Conze pointed out that at around 200 BC, wisdom worship began to take shape concurrently in the Mediterranean and in India despite their great geographical divide. In each case such wisdom worship was independent from any antecedent elements in their respective culture. There are some obvious parallels between the two. For instance, both Sophia and Prajñāpāramitā are feminine words;³¹ Sophia is a “mother” (Ringgren, 1947, pp. III, 124-125), and Prajñāpāramitā is also the “mother of the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas”; Sophia is equivalent to the Hebrew *tōrō* (law) (Ringgren, 1947, p. 110, 114), and Prajñāpāramitā is the Buddhist *dharma* (“law”), and so on. Altogether Conze made dozens of other comparisons (Conze, 2000b, pp. 207-208).

It is worth noting that Conze astutely pointed out that the female gender of the word *prajñāpāramitā* may be the reason for Prajñāpāramitā texts – starting with the (earliest) *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* – to refer Prajñāpāramitā as “mother of all the Buddhas”. Although we cannot be sure that this is the ultimate reason, we cannot rule out the association between the two. Corresponding to this is the fact that Buddhist visual arts also tend to present the statues of the personified Prajñāpāramitā deity in female forms. For example, fascicle three of the previously mentioned *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* 《陀罗尼集经》, which is important to the discussion of the *Heart Sūtra*, depicts the following “ways of painting the great Prajñāpāramitā” 画大般若像法:

On painting the great Prajñāpāramitā bodhisattva: “one can choose (to paint on) the fifteenth day of the month, using two rolls of superior fine silk.....For the body of the bodhisattva – apart from the crown – paint it one *visati* long [translator’s note: 一肘/一磔; Monier-Williams Sanskrit English Dictionary: “about nine inches”]; paint it white throughout; paint three eyes in the face; give it the appearance of a heavenly maiden, with the proper looks and manners befitting a bodhisattva.” (T 901, 805a).

From these descriptions we can see that at least in the days when Atikūṭa translated his *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* (ca. 653-654 CE), a personified Prajñāpāramitā deity had already acquired the appearance of a goddess.

We should also note that among the various *Heart Sūtra* translations, the version by Dānapāla 施护 of Song has the title *Noble-Buddha-Mother Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra According to the Buddha* 《佛说圣佛母般若波罗蜜多经》. Here the title has directly been given a feminine flavour. In other words, in the belief system of Mahāyāna Buddhism, Prajñāpāramitā and Fomu 佛母 or “Buddha-Mother” are one and the same concepts, with the latter the personified embodiment of the former.

According to Conze, who based his view on records in the *Biography of Faxian* 《法显传》, the timing of the personification of Prajñāpāramitā can be traced back to 400 CE (Conze, 2000a, p. 14). Closer examination shows that the *Biography* indeed recorded that:

³¹ This refers to the gender of a word, just as *prajñā* is also a feminine word. Such grammatical gender is hard to understand for users of Chinese, which basically has no gender distinction (except for pronouns).

“the Mahāyānists make their offerings to the Prajñāpāramitā, the Mañjuśrī, the Avalokiteśvara, and so on” (T2085, 859b). Here Prajñāpāramitā is juxtaposed with Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, and she has been worshiped as a personified deity ever since. However, later records on her worship are scanty, showing that the practice did not gain much popularity until about Tang, when such worship once again became prevalent. This happened almost in sync with the “tantricization” of Prajñāpāramitā texts (in Tang).

8.6.2 The Unique Relationship between Prajñāpāramitā, Avalokiteśvara and Dhāraṇī

In tantric-influenced Prajñāpāramitā literature loaded with copious *dhāraṇī*, Prajñāpāramitā and Avalokiteśvara are intricately associated with one another. We find in the *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* 《陀罗尼集经》 the following statements:

“I, so-and-so, make offerings to all the Buddhas, to the Prajñāpāramitās, to the Avalokiteśvara and other bodhisattvas, to the Vajragarbhā bodhisattva, to the *Deva-nāga* and *Aṣṭau-nikāyāḥ* 天龙八部, to the guardians of *stupa* and *dharma* and so forth, in the Ten Directions” (T901,787b); and

“next, incense should be lit, perform the Buddha *mudrā* if you wish to invoke the Buddhas; next, perform the Prajñāpāramitā *mudrā* to invoke the Prajñāpāramitā; next, perform the Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva *mudrā* to invoke the Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva; next, invoke the Vajragarbhās and the Devas in a similar way” (T901,811a).

It is obvious from the above that the personified Prajñāpāramitā and Avalokiteśvara are closely associated with one another. Another point to note is that in tantric *dhāraṇī*-sutras, the role of the Avalokiteśvara is equally prominent. We continue to use Atikūṭa’s *Dhāraṇīsamuccaya* as an example. This work comprises twelve fascicles. The first and second are about the Buddhas; (the title of the) the third is unspecific but judging by its content this fascicle is about the Prajñāpāramitā; two-thirds of fascicles 3-6 concern the Avalokiteśvara, the remaining third is about the following bodhisattvas: Mahāsthāmaprāpta 大势至, Mañjuśrī 文殊, Maitreya 弥勒, Kṣitigarbhā 地藏, Samantabhadra 普贤, and Ākāśagarbhā 虚空藏; fascicles 7-9 are about the *Vajracchedikā*; fascicles 10-11 are about the various devas, and fascicle 12 contains the concluding *Duhui dharma-maṇḍa mudrā* 《都会道场印品》 and other (mudras). From the way these fascicles are divided up, it can be seen that in a *dhāraṇī*-sutra, Avalokiteśvara assumes a status surpassing that of other Mahāyāna bodhisattvas. Or shall we say, the status of Subhūti – the main narrator of early Prajñāpāramitā literature – is no where near that of Avalokiteśvara.

In other words, in Tang Dynasty or since then, Avalokiteśvara held a very unique place in Prajñāpāramitā sutras, especially those that had been “tantrified”, and was thus closely associated with Prajñāpāramitā. Therefore, we may conclude that the appearance of Avalokiteśvara in the *Bore xin jing* 《般若心经》 (*Heart Sūtra*) in Tang is hardly accidental. We may even infer from the fact that Avalokiteśvara takes centre stage in the *Bore xin jing* that the text was composed in the days of Xuanzang (i.e. in Tang) and no earlier.

We mention above the feminisation tendency of the (personified) Prajñāpāramitā, at least during Tang when the *Heart Sūtra* was produced. In this regard, we should also note the feminisation tendency of the (personified) Avalokiteśvara, which took place almost concurrently.

The name “Avalokiteśvara” 观自在 (“*guan zi zai*”) [translator’s note: from the root *lok* “to see”] gained common acceptance ever since Xuanzang considered its original name “Avalokitasvara” 观世音 (“*guan shi yin*”) [translator’s note: from the root *śru* “to hear”] a misnomer. But following the discovery by N.D. Mironov in August 1923 of five occurrences of “*avalokitasvara*” in the (Sanskrit) *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* 法华经 among the Otani University Collection, the resolution of this issue on philological grounds became possible (Mironov, 1927), (Mironov, 1961), (Yu Jun Fang 于君方, 2009, p. 63). The Otani Sanskrit fragments were later edited by Jiang Zhong Xin 蒋忠新, who dedicated a preface in his article explaining the epithets of Avalokitasvara and thus provided “philological evidence for the reliability of Kumārajīva’s translated name of “*guan shi yin*” 观世音” (Jiang Zhong Xin 蒋忠新, 1997, pp. 10-11). Recently reknown philologist Professor Seishi Karashima 辛岛静志, newly appointed Head of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University, reports that apart from the Otani Collection, other Sanskrit fragments have also be found to carry the name “*avalokitasvara*” – a name influenced by the Gāndhārī language (Seishi Karashima 辛岛静志, 2009, p. 204).

Be it Avalokiteśvara or Avalokitasvara, the gender of these Indian terms is masculine. Although in religion a *bodhisattva* is gender neutral, in etymology its name is not. And there is thus no surprise that in early Buddhist literature, the Avalokitasvara is regarded as a male figure, as evidence by the common address of him as “son of a noble family” 善男子 (*kulaputra*), or the depiction of him as a male *śramaṇa* or a male Taoist monk in popular literature such as the *Prophecy Fulfilment of Avalokitasvara* 《观世音应验记》. By Tang however, for particular social and religious reasons, Avalokitasvara gradually accomplished its feminisation in Chinese society (Shi Hou Zhong 释厚重, 2005, pp. 60-72). Of course, there may be many explanations for Avalokitasvara’s male to female gender transition. For example, Professor Yu Jun Fang 于君方 suggested that it was “a reaction to monastic Buddhism and to the patriarchy of Neo-Confucian Rationalism” (于君方, 2009, p. 41). But I wish to remind the readers here that we must never underestimate the impact a feminised and personified Prajñāpāramitā might have on the feminization of the Avalokitasvara.

Although this is a topic for future and further discussion, one thing is certain for now: The feminization of Avalokitasvara happened in sync with the “trantification” of Chinese Buddhism and the “*dhāraṇī*-zation” of Prajñāpāramitā sutras. Some scholars have in fact astutely observed that by the time of trantric Buddhism, “the *nirmāṇakāya* (transformed body or 化身) of Guanyin 观音 in China was predominantly feminine”, and that “although different Vajrayāna (i.e. tantric) sutras focused on the different *nirmāṇakāya* of the Avalokiteśvara, they had one common emphasis – the recitation of *dhāraṇī*” (Yu Jun Fang 于君方, 2009, pp. 67, 72). Therefore, when we put all these key elements together, we can more

or less arrive at the historical background of the *Heart Sūtra* be it the Kumārajīva version or the Xuanzang version. Namely, as an independent text, the *Heart Sūtra* could not have been produced earlier than Tang.

8.6.3 The Role of Śāriputra

While the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara signifies the emergence of a new Buddhist tradition, the contrasting figure Śāriputra – the other character in the *Heart Sūtra* – and one who could in a way be regarded as the ‘villain’ in Prajñāpāramitā texts, would be worthy of our attention.

Conze painted the following picture regarding the formulation of Prajñāpāramitā literature: First there was the *mātrkā* 本母 – numerical summaries of the Abhidharma. Towards the end of Aśoka’s reign, the *mātrkā* differentiated into two kinds of relatively independent works: the traditional Abhidharma and the Prajñāpāramitā, and Śāriputra comes to be the representative of the former (Migot, 1954, pp. 511-541). In early Prajñāpāramitā literature (especially the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*) two major tendencies can be seen. Namely: the item-by-item refutation of the Abhidharma; and the affirmation of Mahāyāna. In order to establish its own uniqueness, Mahāyāna Buddhism needed a “tangible target” (for criticism). This role fell upon the Hīnayānists, represented in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* by the *śrāvakas* 声闻 and the *pratyekabuddhas* 辟支佛, and the personified representative of them is Śāriputra – the most important adherent to original Buddhism and a great disciple of the Buddha (Conze, 2000a, pp. 4-5). In early Mahāyāna works especially Prajñāpāramitā literature, Śāriputra came to represent those with a lesser form of knowledge. Thus in Mahāyāna texts, he became the recipient of the higher wisdom he had not received from the Buddha. His standing was regarded as even lower than that of the other two transmitters of Prajñāpāramitā literature: Subhūti and Pūrṇa (Conze, 2000a, pp. 6-7).

Lopez Jr. also points out that in the *Heart Sūtra*, Śāriputra, this foremost disciple depicted in Hīnayāna Buddhism is however a person to be taught. This image is entirely consistent with that found in many Prajñāpāramitā literature such as the *Fahua jing* 《法华经》 (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*) and the *Weimo jing* 《维摩经》 (*Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*), in which he only serves as a “setoff” figure to Mahāyāna bodhisattvas (Lopez Jr., 1988, p. 8). Therefore, we need not share Nattier’s surprise in wondering what role Śāriputra has in the *Heart Sūtra* and why is he involved at all.

9. Conclusions

From all the above analyses, we can see that no simple answer can be given to the question of whether the *Heart Sūtra* is an authentic text. In this article I have broken up the question into a number of related issues in a less than rigorous manner. These issues and their conclusions are as follows:

- 1) Early versions of the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* are originally copied sutra extracts 抄经. Applying the very rigorous criteria of some of the ancient Chinese Buddhist

bibliographers, they can even qualify as “apocryphal texts”. But most ancient Buddhist scholars, even contemporary academics, may view them as mere copied texts. In terms of its literary attribute, the earliest Chinese *Heart Sūtra* is not even a *sūtra* but a *dhāraṇī*. In this sense therefore, the question of “apocryphal-ness” does not arise;

2) Chinese *Heart Sūtra* – Kumārajīva version

This version is not translated by Kumārajīva. It is not even a translated work but a copied sutra extract. Its core section is copied from the *Large Sūtra* translated by Kumārajīva (or the *Large Sūtra* quoted in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* 《大智度论》). It has also included a *dhāraṇī* taken from one of Atikūṭa’s translated works. Naturally the Kumārajīva version could only be later than this work of Atikūṭa. It also appeared later than the Xuanzang *Heart Sūtra*;

3) Chinese *Heart Sūtra* – Xuanzang version

This is not a translated text. Even if it is, it could not have been done by Xuanzang himself. But he did probably edit a prototype of the *Heart Sūtra* he obtained in Sichuan. About this copy we know nothing for sure. We can only know that it must have consisted at least two parts: One part contains extracts from Xuanzang’s *Da bore jing* 《大般若经》, the other a *dhāraṇī*. The latter is the ultimate reason why Xuanzang became heavily reliant on the text. It is also the reason for the high regard the *Heart Sūtra* received from the general public in Tang. To them, a “tantricized” Prajñāpāramitā text is of more interest;

4) Chinese *Heart Sūtra* – Other Later Versions

Apart from the above two versions, other Chinese versions of the *Heart Sūtra* (including a Sanskrit transliteration in Chinese) are translated from Sanskrit or Tibetan works (of dubious sources). But they are unquestionably translated works;

5) Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* – Short-form

To some extent, the wordings of the extant short-form Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* have indeed been influenced by Chinese grammar and aesthetic taste, which shows that it is very “likely” to have been back-translated from Chinese. However, many questions remain unresolved. For instance, my present studies show that many doubts remain regarding some of Nattier’s proofs for her back-translation theory.

Next is the issue of approach. Historically and geographically, the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is not a uniform edition, nor is it a completely homogeneous text. If we were to

maintain that it is indeed a back-translation by Xuanzang, or by someone his contemporary, we need to first recover the Sanskrit edition of his time before any meaningful comparison can be made. But Nattier's article foreshadows no such important discussion, and has thus rendered any comparative studies of manuscripts impossible. But even if we can prove that the extant short-form Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is in fact a Chinese back-translation, we still cannot logically rule out completely the probable existence of a Sanskrit original. This situation is similar to the case with the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*. Before its Sanskrit original was discovered at the Potala Palace by Japanese scholars, we did have a back-translated Sanskrit version of this work from Tibetan. Even if one can find fault with this back-translated version, one still cannot imply from this that an original Sanskrit original has never existed [sic]. For the *Heart Sūtra* though, such probability (of having a Sanskrit original on top of a Sanskrit back-translation) is indeed very low.

Furthermore, Nattier's supporting logic (for back-translation) is that the Chinese *Heart Sūtra* predates the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra*. But logically this is only a necessary condition for back-translation from Chinese into Sanskrit to hold true, but is not itself an absolute condition [sic]. In other words, as long as the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* predates the Chinese *Heart Sūtra*, back-translation is proven false, but if it is the other way round, back-translation is not necessarily true [translator's note: because the existence of a back-translated Sanskrit version does not necessarily rule out the existence of a Sanskrit original, as exemplified by the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra* mentioned above]. In fact, due to the destructions experienced by Indian Buddhism domestically, many early Chinese Buddhist texts are left without their Sanskrit originals. Even when their Sanskrit counterparts are found, they generally appeared later than the Chinese texts. But of course (late appearance) does not necessarily mean that they are all back-translations from Chinese.

By raising the above doubts, I do not mean to deny that the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* could be a back-translation. As I mentioned earlier, I had my doubts (of its authenticity) when I first read the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* many years ago, and it was Nattier's article that has addressed my doubts. I just feel that prudence is never a bad idea in academic research.

If we step back and assume that the early version of the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* is indeed back-translated from Chinese, the question then is: by whom? As I mentioned, although Xuanzang certainly played an important role in the transmission of the *Heart Sūtra*, I personally think he is unlikely its translator. I form this view after considering the discrepancies between the Xuanzang version and the Sanskrit version, and between the Hōryūji version and the Xuanzang version; as well as the discrepancies between his Indology background and certain expressions in the text that are inconsistent with Sanskrit grammar and mode of expression of Prajñāpāramitā texts. If indeed a back-translation does exist, it would probably be the work of a prolific writer, living after the Early-Tang period, who made his pilgrimage to India. Of him

we have little specific knowledge. But at least we know he was not particularly familiar with Prajñāpāramitā literature written in Sanskrit.

If indeed Xuanzang did not back-translate the *Heart Sūtra*, then what exactly was his role in its transmission? Many records point to his association with the *Heart Sūtra*, while other evidence clearly show that he was not involved in its translation in either direction. Reconciling these findings would require further research in the future;

6) Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* – Long-form

This text evolved from the short-form Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* and must have been an Indian work. With the passing of time, the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* became more aligned with Indian aesthetic taste apart from its increase in size. In later days, both the short-form version and the long-form version became the source copies of new translations of Chinese *Heart Sūtra*. One problem remains unresolved though: Under what circumstances did the Sanskrit *Heart Sūtra* increase in scope and size? How did it evolve specifically, and along what pattern? These questions, compared to the previous one, may not be too hard to resolve. I hope I still have the interest and the time in the future (to resolve them), or to see them satisfactorily resolved by other scholars;

7) Background of the Initial Formulation of the *Heart Sūtra*

The appearance of the *Heart Sūtra* as an independent text occurred at the peak of early Tang at a time when tantric Buddhism was widespread. Thus at its inception, this “*sūtra*” was formulated as a *dhāraṇī*, and was regarded as a short tantric text with specific protective and exorcist religious functions. Therefore, against this background, some of the seemingly unreasonable elements (pointed out by Nattier) can be explained with relative ease. These include: The absence of Subhūti and the presence of Avalokiteśvara in his place – this is because the core of the *Heart Sūtra*, as mentioned, is a *dhāraṇī*; as with other Prajñāpāramitā *dhāraṇī*, it became prevalent after the proliferation of tantric Buddhism, when Avalokiteśvara assumed an over-riding status); the briefness of the text – this is because, as mentioned, all tantric Prajñāpāramitā texts are brief; the absence of a standard 3-part format of a *sūtra* – this is because it is fundamentally not a *sūtra* but a popular *dhāraṇī*). With the fading of tantric favour from Chinese Buddhist thoughts, and with the rise of sects having a greater Chinese characteristic – especially Chan (Zen) Buddhism, the non-dualistic Prajñāpāramitā idea of “form and emptiness” of the *Heart Sūtra* became increasingly valued by the elites of the Buddhist intelligentsia;

8) The Importance of Comparative Studies in Buddhist Philological Research

Buddhist philological studies differ from traditional Chinese philology. Since many languages are used in Buddhist literature, mastering multiple Buddhist scriptural

languages becomes crucial in Buddhist philology. In the studies of Chinese Buddhist philology, never before has anyone attained such acclaimed height as Prof. Seishi Karashima 辛島靜志, who can be said to have pointed an eye-opening way forward for present and future scholars in multilingual approach. Likewise, Nattier's studies has also shown that cross-lingual approach is able to exhaustively expose existing blind spots of issues that would otherwise be glossed over by an intra-lingual approach. Therefore, in closing, I would once again appeal to the Chinese Buddhist circle that in the training of young researchers in philology, the foundation must be, and must always be, the learning of scriptural languages.

References

- Bureau, A., 1955. *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit Véhicule*. Saigon: Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient.
- Brough, J., 1950. Thus have I heard.... *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol.13, pp. 416-426.
- Burgess J., 1882. *Notes on the Amarāvati Stupa*.
- Buswell, Robert J., 1990. *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Conze, E., 1948. Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya. *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, pp. 34-47.
- Conze, E., 1956a. Kauśika prajñāpāramitā-sūtra. *Sino-Indian Studies*, pp. 115-118.
- Conze, E., 1956b. Svalpākṣarā prajñāpāramitāsūtra. *Sino-Indian Studies*, vol.2, pp. 113-115.
- Conze, E., 1973. *Perfect Wisdom: The Short Prajnaparamita Texts*. Totnes: Buddhist Publishing Group.
- Conze, E., 2000a. *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt.Ltd.
- Conze, E., 2000b. *Thirty years of Buddhist Studies*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt.Ltd.
- Eckel, M., 1987. Indian Commentaries on the Heart Sūtra: The Politics of Interpretation. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, pp. 69-79.
- Hannya, S., 1922-3. Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya-Sūtra, Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts. *The Eastern Buddhist*, pp. 163-175.
- Hikata, R., 1958. *Suvikrāntavikrāmi-pariprechā prajñāpāramitā sūtra*. Fukuoka: Kyushu University.
- Lamotte, E., 1954. sur la formation du Mahayana. *Asiatica* (Festchrift F. Weller), pp. 381-386.
- Lancaster, L., 1977. *Prajnaparamita and Related Systems: Studies in Honour of Edward Conze (Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series 1)*. Group in Buddhist Studies, UC Berkeley.
- Leumann, E., 1912. *zur nordarischen Sprache und Literatur*. Strassburg: K.J. Trübner.
- Lopez, Jr. Donald S., 1988. *The Heart Sūtra Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries*. ALBANY: State University of New York Press.
- McRae, J., 1988. Ch'an Commentaries on the Heart Sūtra: Preliminary Inferences on the Permutation of Chinese Buddhism. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 87-115.

- Migot, A., 1954. Un grand disciple du Buddha: Śāriputra. vol. XLVI, pp. 405-554.
- Mironov, N. D., 1927. Buddhist Miscellanea. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* April, pp. 252-279.
- Mironov, N. D., 1961. A List of Fragment of Brahmi Mss. Belonging to Count Ohtani. 西域文化研究第四中央アジア古代語文獻. 京都: 西域文化研究會編, p. 93.
- Monier-Williams, 1899. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Müller, F. M., 1881. *Buddhist Texts From Japan*. Clarendon Press.
- Müller, F. M., 1884. *Buddhist Texts from Japan*. Clarendon Press.
- Nattier, J., 1992. The Heart Sūtra: A Chinese Apocryphal Text? *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol.15 (2) 1992, pp. 153-223.
- Pine, R., 2004. *The Heart Sutra: The Womb of Buddhas*. Washington, D.C: Shoemaker and Hoard.
- Ringgren, H., 1947. *word and wisdom, studies in the hypostatization of divine qualities and functions in the Ancient Near East*. Lund: Haken Ohlssons Boktryckeri.
- Suzuki D.T., 1934. *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, III. London: Luzac.
- Suzuki D.T., 1935. *Manual of Zen Buddhism*. Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society.
- Tokuno, K., 1990. The Evaluation of Indigenous Sutras in Chinese Buddhist Bibliographical Catalogues. Hawaii: *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*. Univ of Hawaii Press, pp. 31-74.
- Tomabechi, T., 2009. *Adhyardhaśatikā Prajñāpāramitā: Sanskrit and Tibetan texts*. Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.
- Vaidya, P.L., 1961. Svalpākṣarā prajñāpāramitāsūtra. 出处: Mahayanasutrasamgraha I.
- Warder A.K., 1970. *Indian Buddhism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Willemen, C., 1973. A Tantric Heart Sūtra. *Samadhi*, pp. 2-11.
- Yuyama, A., 1977. *Buddhist thought and Asian Civilization. Essays in Honor of H. V. Guenther.*, pp. 286-292.
- 奥風栄弘, 2011. 高貴寺藏梵文『般若心経』について. 印度學佛教學研究, 卷 59(2), pp. 955-952.
- 曹凌, 2009. 中國佛教疑偽經綜錄. 上海: 上海師範大學碩士論文.
- 陳玉蛟, 1988. 《現觀莊嚴論》初探. 中華佛學學報, 卷 第二卷, pp. 157-204.

- 程正, 2007. 傳達摩撰『般若波羅蜜多心經頌』の譯注研究. 駒沢大学仏教学部論集., pp. 259-278.
- 池田溫, 1992. 講座敦煌 5: 敦煌漢文文獻. 東京: 大東出版社.
- 方广錡, 2006. 中國寫本大藏經研究. 上海: 上海古籍出版社.
- 福井文雅, 1983. 般若心經觀在中國的變遷. 敦煌學, Issue 6, pp. 17-30.
- 福井文雅, 1985. 新出「不空訳」梵本写本般若心經. 出处: 仏教学論集: 中村瑞隆博士古稀記念論集. 東京: 春秋社, pp. 229-246.
- 福井文雅, 1987. 般若心經の歴史的研究. 東京: 春秋社.
- 福井文雅, 2000. 般若心經の総合的研究: 歴史・社会・資料. 无出版地: 春秋社.
- 慧立、彦惊, 2000. 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳. 孫毓棠、謝方點校 编辑 北京: 中華書局.
- 季羨林等校注, 1985. 大唐西域記校注. 北京: 中华书局.
- 紀贇, 2011. 從口頭到書面-佛教文獻傳播方式的改變及大乘佛教的興起. 出处: 2011 佛學研究論文集-第一屆國際佛教大藏經學術研討會. 高雄: 佛光山文教基金會, pp. 1-94.
- 蔣忠新, 1997. 旅順博物館藏梵文《法華經》殘片. 无出版地: 旅順博物館、創價學會.
- 林光明, 2000. 心經集成. 臺北: 嘉豐出版社.
- 林光明, 2004. 梵藏心經自學. 臺北: 嘉慧出版社.
- 林韵柔, 2008. 唐代《佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經》的譯傳與信仰. 法鼓佛學學報第三《心經》
- 刘淑芬, 2008. 滅罪與度亡: 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經幢的研究. 上海: 上海古籍出版社.
- 落合俊典, 2011. 刑部郎中封無待撰『注心經并序』本文と小考. 国際仏教学大学院大学研究紀要, 5, 卷 15, Hubert Durt 教授退職記念号, pp.1-52.
- 吕澂, 2005. 印度佛学源流略讲. 上海: 上海人民出版社.
- 梅尾祥云, 1932. 理趣經の研究. 无出版地: 高野山大學出版部.
- 梅維恒, 2004. 《心經》與《西遊記》的關係. 唐研究, pp. 45-64.
- 明法比丘, 2007. 攝阿毗達摩義論表解. 无出版地: 法雨道場.
- 南条文雄, 1979. 懷舊錄. 東京: 平凡社.
- 平川彰, 2004. 印度佛教史. 台北: 商周出版.

- 山田龙城, 1977. 梵語佛典の諸文献. 无出版地: 平樂寺書店.
- 山田龙城, 1988. 梵語佛典導論. 臺北: 華宇出版社.
- 沈九成, 1988. 般若波羅蜜多心經疏義 (二). 內明, 7, 卷 196, pp. 3-12.
- 沈九成, 1988. 般若波羅蜜多心經疏義 (一). 內明, 6, 卷 195, pp. 3-13.
- 释厚重, 2005. 觀音與媽祖. 臺北: 稻田出版有限公司.
- 万金川, 2004a. 敦煌石室《心經》音寫抄本校釋序說. 中華佛學學報, 卷 17, pp. 95-121.
- 万金川, 2004b. 石室《音經》音寫抄本校釋初稿之一. 佛學研究中心學報, 卷 9, pp. 77-118.
- 王紹峰, 2004. 道宣文獻語匯研究. 成都: 四川大學博士後論文.
- 王文顏, 1997. 佛典疑偽經研究與考錄. 臺北: 文津出版社.
- 渥德爾, 1987. 印度佛教史. 北京: 商务印书馆.
- 吴汝鈞, 1983. 佛學研究方法論. 臺北: 臺灣學生書局.
- 吴汝鈞, 1992. 佛教思想大辭典. 臺北: 臺灣商務印書館.
- 辛岛静志, 1991. 法华经中的乘 (yana) 与智慧 (jnana) ——大乘佛教中 yana 概念的起源与发展. 出处: 季羨林教授八十华诞纪念论文集. 南昌: 江西人民出版社, pp. 607-643.
- 辛島靜志, 2009. 《法華經》的文獻學研究——觀音的語義解釋. 中華文史論叢, 卷 95, pp. 199-229.
- 熊娟, 2010. 漢文佛典疑偽經研究. 杭州: 浙江大學博士論文.
- 徐文堪, 2011. 《心經》與《西游記》. 《東方早報》之《上海書評》, 1510.
- 杨廷福, 1988. 玄奘年譜. 北京: 中華書局.
- 姚永銘, 2003. 慧琳《一切經音義》研究. 南京: 江蘇古籍出版社.
- 殷光明, 2006. 敦煌壁畫藝術與疑偽經. 北京: 民族出版社.
- 于君方, 2009. 觀音: 菩薩中國化的演變. 臺北: 法鼓文化.
- 张淼, 2006. 佛教疑偽經思想研究. 南京: 南京大學博士論文.

Appendix – *Heart Sūtra* in Sanskrit, Chinese and English

Sanskrit (Conze, 2000b)	Chinese (Xuanzang, T251)	English (Conze, 1973)
<p>ārya-avalokiteśvaro bodhisattvo gambhīrāyām prajñāpāramitāyām caryām caramāno vyavalokayati sma pañca-skandhās tāṃs ca svabhāva-śūnyān paśyati sma.</p> <p>iha śāriputra rūpaṃ śūnyatā śūnyataiva rūpaṃ rūpān na pṛthak śūnyatā śūnyatāyā na pṛthag rūpaṃ yad rūpaṃ sā śūnyatā yā śūnyatā tad rūpaṃ evam eva vedanā-saṃjñā-sams- kāra-vijñānam.</p> <p>iha śāriputra sarva-dharmāḥ śūnyatālakṣaṇā, anuṭpannā aniruddhā, amalā avimalā anūna aparipūrṇāḥ.</p> <p>tasmāc chāriputra śūnyatayām na rūpaṃ na vedanā na saṃjñā na saṃskārā na vijñānam.</p> <p>na cakṣuḥ-śrotra-ghrāṇa-jihvā-kāya-manāṃsi. na rūpa-śabda-gandha-rasa-spraṣṭavya-dharmāḥ. na cakṣur-dhātur yāvan na manovijñāna-dhātuḥ.</p> <p>na-avidyā na-avidyā-kṣayo. yāvan na jarāmaraṇaṃ na jarāmaraṇa-kṣayo na duhkha-samudaya-nirodha-mārgā na jñānaṃ na prāptir aprāptiḥ.</p> <p>tasmāc chāriputra aprāptivād bodhisattvo prajñāpāramitām āśritya viharaty acittāvaraṇaḥ. cittāvaraṇa-nāstivād atrastro viparyāsa-atikrānto niṣṭhā-nirvāṇaḥ.</p> <p>tryadhva-vyavasthitāḥ sarva-buddhāḥ prajñāpāramitām āśritya-anuttarāṃ samyaksambodhim abhisambuddhāḥ.</p> <p>tasmāj jñātavyaṃ prajñāpāramitā mahā-mantro mahā-vidyā-mantro 'nuttara-mantro 'samasama-mantraḥ sarvaduḥkha-praśamaṇaḥ satyam amithyatvāt.</p> <p>prajñāpāramitāyām ukto mantraḥ. tadyathā oṃ gate gate pāragate pārasaṃgate bodhi svāhā.</p>	<p>观自在菩萨行深般若波罗蜜多时 照见五蕴皆空</p> <p>(度一切苦厄)</p> <p>舍利子 色不异空 空不异色 色即是空 空即是色 受想行识 亦复如是</p> <p>舍利子 是诸法空相 不生不灭 不垢不净 不增不减</p> <p>是故空中无色无受想行识</p> <p>无眼耳鼻舌身意 无色声香味触法 无眼界乃至无意识界</p> <p>无无明亦无无明尽 乃至无老死亦 无老死尽 无苦集灭道 无智亦无得</p> <p>以无所得故 菩提萨埵依般若波罗蜜多故 心无罣碍 无罣碍故 无有恐怖 远离颠倒梦想 究竟涅槃</p> <p>三世诸佛依般若波罗蜜多故 得阿耨多罗三藐三菩提</p> <p>故知般若波罗蜜多 是大神咒 是大明咒 是无上咒 是无等等咒 能除一切苦 真实不虚故</p> <p>说般若波罗蜜多咒 即说咒曰： 揭帝揭帝般若揭帝般罗僧揭帝菩 提萨婆訶</p>	<p>Avalokita, the Holy Lord and Bodhisattva, was moving in the deep course of the Wisdom which has gone beyond. He looked down from on high, He beheld but five heaps, and He saw that in their own-being they were empty.</p> <p>Here, O Śāriputra, form is emptiness and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, nor does form differ from emptiness, whatever is form, that is emptiness; whatever is emptiness, that is form; the same is true of feelings, perceptions, impulses, and consciousness.</p> <p>Here, O Śāriputra, all dharmas are marked with emptiness; they are neither produced nor stopped, neither defiled nor immaculate, neither deficient nor complete.</p> <p>Therefore, O Śāriputra, where there is emptiness, there is neither form, nor feeling, nor perception, nor impulse, nor consciousness;</p> <p>no eye, or ear, or nose, or tongue, or body, or mind ; no form, nor sound, nor smell, nor taste, nor touchable or objects of mind; no sight-organ element, etc., until we come to, no mind-consciousness element;</p> <p>There is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, etc., until we come to, there is no decay and death, nor extinction of decay and death; There is no suffering, nor origination, nor stopping, nor path. There is no cognition, no attainment and no non-attainment.</p> <p>Therefore, O Śāriputra, owing to a Bodhisattva's indifference to any kind of personal attainment, and through his having relied on the perfection of wisdom, he dwells without thought-coverings. In the absence of thought-coverings he has not been made to tremble, he has overcome what can upset, and in the end sustained by Nirvana.</p> <p>All those Buddhas who appear in the three periods of time through having relied on the perfection of wisdom they fully awake to the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment.</p> <p>Therefore one should know the Prajñāpāramita as the great spell, the spell of great knowledge, the utmost spell, the unequalled spell, allayer of all suffering, in truth – for what could go wrong?</p> <p>By the Prajñāpāramita has this spell been delivered. It runs like this: GONE, GONE, GONE BEYOND, GONE ALTOGETHER BEYOND, O WHAT AN AWAKENING, ALL-HAIL!</p>