

# A Study of the *Guan-wu-liang-shou-jing*

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This paper investigates the formation and the construction of the *Guan-wu-liang-shou-jing* 觀無量壽經 (*Guan-jing*), one of the three main sūtras of Pure Land Buddhism.

The *Guan-jing* has neither an original Sanskrit version nor a Tibetan translation. The only one Chinese version is that which is said to have been translated by Kālayaśas in the first half of the fifth century. Recent studies have proposed an idea that it was formed in Central Asia or in China. In this paper, I investigated the grounds of this argument and confirmed the idea.

As for the construction of the sūtra, it is approved that it consists of three parts. The first part is an introduction of the sūtra and the story of Prince Ajātaśatru and her mother Vaidehī. The conclusion of the investigation in this paper is that it has some relation with the story handed down by the Sarvāstivādin and was influenced by the *Guan-fo-san-mei-hai-jing*.

The second part of the sūtra is the main part and consists of 13 stages of the meditation of Pure Land and Amitābha Buddha. The analysis of the system of these stages makes clear how they are constructed to guide a person step by step to the total vision of Pure Land and Amitābha Buddha.

The third part is the description of nine grades of persons who are reborn in Pure Land. This paper treats of the relation between the three grades of the larger *Sukhāvativyūha* and the nine grades of this sūtra.