

## Acknowledgements

This book, published by the Soka Gakkai, is number 8 in its Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series. The first phase of this publication project, from 1997 to 2005, saw the publication of numbers 1 to 6 of the series in a total of eight volumes (as number 2 consists of a set of three volumes). This book is the second of the second phase of publications, which began at the beginning of the fiscal year 2006 (April) and runs through March 2011. The volume presents a romanized text of the Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscript from the Société Asiatique (No. 2), Paris. In the Introduction, I have attempted to present a research report on the text. It would be best if the reader examines this and the text in conjunction.

The publication of this volume owes much to the warm understanding and support of Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) lay Buddhist organization, and the organization's members in 190 countries and regions around the world. Mr. Ikeda pursues an active and impressive dedication to global peace building. He and the members of the Soka Gakkai (in Japan) and the SGI are engaged in wide ranging efforts for the peace and well-being of humankind, developing a global, grassroots network for peace and humanism. I would like to express here my sincere gratitude to them all.

SGI President Ikeda began engaging dialogues with leading intellectuals from around the world in the 1970s. Many of these dialogues have been published. Mr. Ikeda's dialogue partners during the 1970s include:

Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi (*Civilization, East and West* [Japanese], 1972), Arnold J. Toynbee (*Choose Life: A Dialogue*, 1975 [Japanese], 1976 [English]), Konosuke Matsushita (*On Living* [Japanese], 1975), André Malraux (*Changes Within: Human Revolution and the Human Condition* [Japanese], 1976), and René Huyghe (*La Nuit appelle l'aurore* [*Dawn after Dark*], 1980 [French]).

To date, the number of persons with whom he has engaged in dialogue amounts to some 7,000.

I have greatly benefited from and enjoyed reading these discussions between Mr. Ikeda and these first-rate intellectuals and experts in various fields. The extensive range of subjects and issues considered, and the plain language and clarity with which they are treated, imbues the reader with a broad knowledge and a natural ability to see an issue from multiple perspectives. One has the sense of listening to a stimulating conversation that imparts wisdom, hope, and courage. I am reminded of the way in which great figures like Shakyamuni Buddha, Socrates, and Jesus Christ employed the power of

dialogue to such effective ends.

The topics covered in these discussions, as mentioned, are extensive. In the dialogue between Mr. Ikeda and René Huyghe, the latter remarks, concerning France's contributions in pioneering Buddhist studies: "A real awareness of distant Eastern lands was wanting. And it was begun by the study of Indian philosophy, and in particular by investigations into Buddhism. In the nineteenth century, the Collège de France, to which I belong, played a pioneer role in these undertakings. True to its policy of establishing positions for research and instruction in new cultural fields, as of 1832, it devoted a chair to the study of Buddhism and awarded it to the famous scholar M.E. Burnouf."<sup>1</sup>

As I have described in the Introduction, Eugène Burnouf rendered the French version of the Lotus Sutra from a Sanskrit manuscript. Along with my thanks to SGI President Ikeda, I thus wish to express my appreciation for the Collège de France and Burnouf.

I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Minoru Harada, president of the Soka Gakkai, Mr. Einosuke Akiya, former president of the Soka Gakkai, and the organization's staff. I extend my gratitude also to the staff of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP), in particular, Mr. Yasuo Morita, former chairman of the IOP Board of Trustees, Dr. Yoichi Kawada, IOP director and incumbent chairman, and Mr. Yukito Idogawa, IOP secretary-general.

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Note

1. *Dawn after Dark* [English edition], Weatherhill, Inc., New York and Tokyo, 1991, p. 303.