

The Amida Sutra

(Skt. Smaller Sukhavativyuha Sutra)

(Ch. Amituo jing)

(Jp. Amida kyo)

Translated by Karen Mack from the Chinese according to the Japanese Pure Land interpretation found in the contemporary Japanese translation of the Jodo Shu Research Institute, published in Kyōka Kenkyū (Journal of Jōdo Shu Edification Studies), No. 14, 2003

Translation by Imperial Edict of the Qin

Kumarajiva, Yao-Qin dynasty Dharma Priest of the *Tripitaka*¹

I (Ananda) heard the following from the Buddha, Shakyamuni. At one time Shakyamuni was at the Jetavana garden in Shravasti.² As many as twelve hundred and fifty people assembled, and they were especially eminent monks. They were all illustrious practitioners known as arhats who had eliminated their delusions and were of great renown.³ Among them, the elders Shariputra, Mahamaudgalyayana, Mahakashyapa, Mahakatyayana, Mahakausthila, Revata, Suddhipanthaka, Nanda, Ananda, Rahula, Gavampati, Pindola Bharadvaja, Kalodayin, Mahakapphina, Vakkula, and Aniruddha, were outstanding disciples.⁴ There was also a vast number of bodhisattvas; the most excellent among them were the Dharma Prince Manjushri, the Bodhisattva Ajita, the Bodhisattva Gandhahastin, and the Bodhisattva Nityodyukta.⁵ In addition, innumerable celestial deities such as Indra had gathered.⁶

Then the Buddha Shakyamuni explained to the elder Shariputra: “To the far west of this world (of delusion), beyond as many as ten trillion buddha-worlds, there’s another world called Ultimate Bliss with a buddha whose name is Amitabha, who is there even now teaching the Dharma.⁷ Shariputra, do you know why that buddha-world is called Ultimate Bliss? It is because the people who live there never experience suffering; they are mantled in multitude forms of happiness. For that reason it is called

Ultimate Bliss.

“Also, Shariputra, the world is adorned with seven railings, with seven rows of gauze curtains with little bells, and surrounded by seven rows of trees.⁸ All are set with four kinds of jewels, which adorn the world throughout. For that reason this world is called Ultimate Bliss.

“Again, Shariputra, in that world there are lotus ponds whose shores are decorated with seven kinds of jewels.⁹ The ponds brim with waters of eight good qualities and the floor of the ponds are lined with sand of gold.¹⁰ The ponds are surrounded by steps on their four sides made of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, and crystal. Above are pavilions lavishly adorned with the seven jewels of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, coral, red pearls, and agate.¹¹ There are lotuses blooming in the ponds, and their flowers are as large as the wheel of a cart. The blue flowers emit a blue light; the yellow flowers emit a yellow light; the red flowers emit a red light; and the white flowers emit a white light. Each of the lotus flowers glows, weaving an harmonic scene while emitting a subtle fragrance. Shariputra, this land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment so that whatever one lays eyes upon will bring about awakening.

“Also, Shariputra, in Amitabha Buddha’s land of Ultimate Bliss, there is always heavenly music playing. Moreover, the ground is made of gold, and flower petals float down from the skies six times every day.¹² Early every morning, the people there gather the petals into their flower baskets and travel to ten trillion buddha-worlds to offer them in worship to the buddhas. Having become mealtime during this activity, they return in an instant to Ultimate Bliss, take their meal and then practice mindfulness by walking. Shariputra, the land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment to follow the Buddha path and awaken to enlightenment.

“Furthermore, Shariputra, in the land of Ultimate Bliss there are various birds of brilliant coloring, such as white egrets, peacocks, parrots, *sharikas*, *kalavinkas*, and *jivamjivakas*.¹³ The birds sing six times a day in exquisite voices. Their very singing expresses Amitabha’s teachings, such as the Five Roots of Goodness, the Five Powers, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path.¹⁴ When the people of the land of Ultimate Bliss hear the bird’s voices, all of their thoughts are dedicated to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

“Shariputra, do not assume that these were born as birds as a result

of misdeeds in former lives. This is because in the land of Ultimate Bliss, the three unfortunate realms of hell, hungry ghosts, and animals do not exist. Shariputra, you will not even hear the names of these three realms in the land of Ultimate Bliss. How could it be said that one could fall into one of these unfortunate realms when they do not in fact exist? Amitabha Buddha manifested these birds in the hope that they would transmit these teachings with their songs.

“Shariputra, in the land of Ultimate Bliss, a pleasant breeze wafts, swaying the rows of trees colored with various jewels and waving the gauze curtains with little bells, stirring an exquisite melody. This is just as though hundreds of thousands of musical instruments were being played in unison. For all who hear this melody, their devotion to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha is spontaneously deepened. Shariputra, in this way the land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment so that whatever one hears will bring about awakening.

“Shariputra, why do you suppose this Buddha is called Amitabha? Shariputra, this Buddha emits immeasurable light, shedding light upon all the worlds of the ten directions without obstruction. For that reason this Buddha is called Amitabha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light. Also, Shariputra, the lifespan of this Buddha and those in the land of Ultimate Bliss is immeasurably long of incalculable aeons.^{1 5} For that reason this Buddha is called Amitayus, the Buddha of Immeasurable Life. Shariputra, from the day Amitabha achieved enlightenment until the present day, an eternity of ten aeons has already passed. In addition, Shariputra, this Buddha has an immeasurable number of disciples, practitioners called arhats (who have eliminated their passions), whose numbers are incalculable. So are the numbers of the bodhisattvas also incalculable. Shariputra, in this way the land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment for sentient beings to achieve enlightenment.

“Moreover, Shariputra, all sentient beings born in the land of Ultimate Bliss will never veer from the Buddhist path on their way to enlightenment. The vast majority have the virtue of becoming a buddha in their very next life. Their numbers are so vast as to be unknowable by calculation, and can only be explained in terms of counting for immeasurable incalculable aeons.

Shariputra, those sentient beings who now hear of this Pure Land

should aspire to achieve Birth in this land of Ultimate Bliss because there they can join these virtuous beings. However, Shariputra, those that aspire to be born in this land cannot rely merely on the roots of goodness acquired through spiritual practices or the effects of virtuous merit. (Then what should they do to attain this Birth?)¹⁶

“Shariputra, should good men and good women hear of the teaching of Amitabha and assiduously recite the *nenbutsu* invocation, “Namu Amida Butsu” (Homage to Amitabha Buddha) for one day, two days, three, four, five, six, or seven days, or more, then at the end of their lives, Amitabha Buddha will appear before their very eyes with his entourage of bodhisattvas and saintly disciples from the land of Ultimate Bliss. For that reason, in their last moment they will be without anxiety and Amitabha will bring them forthwith to be born in Amitabha Buddha’s land of Ultimate Bliss.

“Shariputra, I clearly see the benefit of this (that Amitabha Buddha’s salvation is without fail) and therefore explain to you that sentient beings hearing this teaching should aspire to be born in Amitabha’s Pure Land (to assuredly attain Birth there).

“Shariputra, as I have now praised the sublime virtue of Amitabha, (who established the *nenbutsu* for Birth), so are there buddhas (with buddha-worlds) to the east such as Akshobhya Buddha, Merudhvaja Buddha, Mahameru Buddha, Meruprabhasa Buddha, and Manjudhvaja Buddha as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River.¹⁷ Each from their own lands, have extended their vast tongues encompassing a billion world systems, pronouncing these words of truth: ‘All of you should believe in *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation.*’¹⁸

“In addition, there are buddhas (with buddha-worlds) to the south such as Candra Suryapradipa Buddha, Yashaprabha Buddha, Maharciskandha Buddha, Merupradipa Buddha, and Anantavirya Buddha as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River. Each from their own lands, have extended their vast tongues encompassing a billion world systems, pronouncing these words of truth: ‘All of you should believe in *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation.*’

“Furthermore, there are buddhas (with buddha-worlds) to the west such as Amitayus Buddha, Amitaketu Buddha, Amitadhvaja Buddha,

Mahaprabha Buddha, Mahaprabhasa Buddha, Ratnaketu Buddha, and Suddharasmiprabha Buddha as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River.¹⁹ Each from their own lands, have extended their vast tongues encompassing a billion world systems, pronouncing these words of truth: ‘All of you should believe in *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation.*’

“Moreover, there are buddhas (with buddha-worlds) to the north such as Arciskandha Buddha, Vaishvanaranirghosa Buddha, Duspradharsa Buddha, Adityasambhava Buddha, and Jaliniprabha Buddha as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River.²⁰ Each from their own lands, have extended their vast tongues encompassing a billion world systems, pronouncing these words of truth: ‘All of you should believe in *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation.*’

“Additionally, there are buddhas (with buddha-worlds) in the lower regions such as Simha Buddha, Yashas Buddha, Yashahprabhasa Buddha, Dharma Buddha, Dharmadhvaja Buddha, and Dharmadhara as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River. Each from their own lands, have extended their vast tongues encompassing a billion world systems, pronouncing these words of truth: ‘All of you should believe in *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation.*’

“Also, there are buddhas with buddha-worlds in the upper regions such as Brahmaghosa Buddha, Naksatraraja Buddha, Gandhottama Buddha, Gandhaprabhasa Buddha, Maharciskandha Buddha, Ratnakusuma Sampuspitagatra Buddha, Salendraraja Buddha, Ratnotpalashri Buddha, Sarvarthadarsha Buddha, and Sumerukalpa Buddha as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River.²¹ Each from their own lands, have extended their vast tongues encompassing a billion world systems, pronouncing these words of truth: ‘All of you should believe in *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation.*’

“Shariputra, why do you think this discourse was given the appellation *The Discourse that tells of all the buddhas who praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha and who offer protective salvation?*

Shariputra, if good men and good women hear the name of this discourse and the name of Amitabha Buddha praised by all the Buddhas, these good men and good women will be protected by all the buddhas and all will (after Birth) attain supreme perfect enlightenment without veering from the Buddhist path. For that reason Shariputra, all of you take these words of mine and of all the Buddhas, accept them and believe in them.

“Shariputra, whosoever (contemplating Amitabha’s land of Ultimate Bliss) aspires to Birth in Amitabha’s land of Ultimate Bliss in the past, present, or future, they will all (after Birth) attain supreme perfect enlightenment without veering from the Buddhist path, having attained Birth in the past, present, or future. That is the reason, Shariputra, those among good men and good women who sincerely believe, if they vow to attain Birth in the land of Ultimate Bliss (and recite the *nenbutsu*) they should assuredly attain that Birth.

“Shariputra, in the same way I praise the inconceivable virtue of all the buddhas for their protective salvation (given because their hearts were moved by the *nenbutsu* practitioners), all the buddhas also praise my inconceivable virtues: ‘Shakyamuni Buddha, you have accomplished this most difficult and unprecedented achievement. While being in this present world full of the five corruptions—the corruption of the age, the corruption of views, the corruption of virtue, the corruption of human character, and the corruption of shortening lifespans—you have attained supreme perfect enlightenment, and furthermore, you have explained this teaching (of Ultimate Bliss and Birth there through the *nenbutsu*), difficult to believe for being beyond the common understanding of this world, for the sake of sentient beings.’^{2 2}

“Shariputra, you should remember this. While being in this present world full of the five corruptions, I have accomplished this most difficult achievement and attained supreme perfect enlightenment. In addition, for the sake of the people of this world, I have explained this teaching (of Ultimate Bliss and Birth there through the *nenbutsu*), difficult to believe for being beyond the common understanding of this world. For that reason, all of the Buddhas praise me for this ‘most difficult achievement.’”

When Shakyamuni Buddha finished explaining this sutra, Shariputra and all the monks, the realms of celestial beings, people, and the *asura* demons,^{2 3} having heard the words of the Buddha, rejoiced in these

words, accepted them, and believed in them. They then paid homage to Shakyamuni and departed.

¹ This was a translation project sponsored by the government by order of an imperial edict. Kumarajiva (350-409) was a monk born in the Kucha region of Western China during the period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties. When the Kucha kingdom was taken over by the former Qin, he was compelled to live as a prisoner, but when that kingdom was then taken over in turn by the Later Qin, he was brought to Xian, the capital of China. After that he became a major translator of Buddhist sutras—translating the *Heart Sutra*, *Lotus Sutra*, and *Vimalakirti Sutra*, among others—and trained a large number of disciples. His achievements are highly regarded in the history of Buddhism. The Yao-Qin dynasty refers to the Later Qin kingdom (384-417), one of the kingdoms during the Sixteen Kingdoms period of ancient China. It is referred to as Yao-Qin because the kingdom was founded by Yao Chang. The term “Tripitaka” denotes those monks who are fully versed in the teachings of Buddhism. The Tripitaka (“three baskets”) refer to 1) the Sutras (the discourses of Shakyamuni), 2) the Vinaya (rules of conduct for the Buddhist clergy), and 3) the Abhidharma (treatises explaining the teachings of Shakyamuni)—hence, meaning someone who has mastered the entirety of the Buddhist teaching.

² The Japanese version, on which this English translation is based, is an interpretation of the Chinese sutra. Interpolations added in the Japanese version and not found in the Chinese will be signified in this translation by parentheses. Buddhist sutras often have as their basic format Ananda recounting a sermon by Shakyamuni. Ananda is one of the ten major disciples of Shakyamuni, each of whom is “foremost” in something. Ananda, a paternal cousin of Shakyamuni, was in constant attendance of Shakyamuni and heard a great number of his lectures. Hence, he was known among Shakyamuni’s disciples as “foremost in hearing the sermons” (*tamon daiichi*). The merchant Anathapindika donated to Shakyamuni a park of trees, and the monastery built there was called Jetavana Monastery. The merchant’s name means “he who generously gives alms” or “he who feeds the solitary,” for that reason he is called Anathapindika. According to tradition, the merchant Anathapindika bought the land of the park owned by Prince Jeta to donate it to the monks and Prince Jeta donated the trees, for that reason it is also called the Jeta-Anathapindika Grove. Shravasti was the capital of the kingdom of Kosala in ancient India, and was one of the regions in which Shakyamuni was active.

³ The term “arhat” derives from “worthy of respect and offerings” and can also be translated simply as “worthy.” It refers to a practitioner who has attained the highest enlightenment.

⁴ Shariputra was Shakyamuni’s disciple foremost in wisdom (*chie daiichi*). He was the leader of Shakyamuni’s disciples, although he died before Shakyamuni. Along with Shariputra, Mahamaudgalyayana was one of Shakyamuni’s leading disciples and was foremost in supernatural power (*jinzū daiichi*). Like Shariputra, he died before Shakyamuni. Mahakashyapa was Shakyamuni’s disciple known as foremost in ascetic practices (*zuda daiichi*) for eliminating desire. He had a large number of followers before becoming a disciple of Shakyamuni, and led the monastic community after Shakyamuni’s death. Mahakatyayana was Shakyamuni’s disciple foremost in discourse (*rongi daiichi*), for explaining Shakyamuni’s lectures in an easily understandable manner. Mahakausthila was Shakyamuni’s disciple foremost in debating the Buddha’s teachings (*mondō daiichi*), often held in unison with Shariputra. According to one

explanation, he was an uncle of Shariputra. He was born in a wealthy Brahman family, and was highly cultured. Revata was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in meditation (*zazen daiichi*) and believed to be a younger brother of Shariputra. He was praised by Shakyamuni himself for his "tranquility in austerity" (*shōyoku chisoku*) obtained through his practices. Suddhipanthaka followed his brother in becoming a disciple of Shakyamuni, but due to his bad memory, he could not remember even one teaching. However, under the guidance of Shakyamuni, he was able to rid his heart of desires and finally achieved arhathood during a moment of fervent cleaning. Nanda was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in disciplining the faculties (*chōbuku shokon*). He was a child of Suddhodana, King of the Shaka clan, and a stepbrother of Shakyamuni. After Shakyamuni renounced secular life, Nanda was expected to become head of the Shaka clan, but following Shakyamuni's lead he also renounced secular life. It is said that because he was a handsome young man, he was burdened by passion finally eliminated through Shakyamuni's guidance. Rahula was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in esoteric practices (*mitsugyō daiichi*). He was the son of Shakyamuni, born while Shakyamuni was still a prince, and followed Shakyamuni's lead in renouncing secular life. He performed solitary practices in emulation of Shakyamuni. According to one explanation, the *Miscellany of the Precious Treasury Sutra* (*Za baozang jing*, scroll four), Gavampati and his three brothers realized arhathood after renouncing secular life to receive the teaching from Shakyamuni, expressed as follows: all phenomenon is impermanent, all that arises becomes extinguished, and with the end of arising and ceasing, comes the bliss of nirvana (*shogyō mujō, zeshō meppō, shōmetsu metchi, jakumetsu iraku*). He is said to have saved the Buddha's disciples from a flood with his spiritual powers. His name literally means King of Bulls. Pindola Bharadvaja was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in the "lion's roar" (*shishiku daiichi*), which proclaims the Buddha's teaching. He excelled at expounding the doctrine, but was reproved by Shakyamuni for showing off his spiritual powers before a lay audience. Due to his embarrassment, he left the fold to propagate Buddhism on his own. From ancient times in Japan, it became part of popular belief that rubbing the appropriate part of his image would heal the injury or ailment. Kalodayin was a childhood friend of Shakyamuni, who was born on the same day as Shakyamuni as the son of a minister in the Kapilavastu kingdom governed by the Shaka clan. The first portion of his name, *kalo*, is an appellation meaning black, whether because he was naturally dark complexioned or because his skin turned dark after having saved Shakyamuni from snake venom. There was another monk with the same name found in the Buddhist scriptures, who was repeatedly reproved by the Shakyamuni. Initially, he was not able to fully embrace his teaching, but finally was able to become an arhat due to Shakyamuni's guidance. Mahakapphina was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in teaching and guidance (*kyōkai daiichi*), especially for those who had renounced secular life. Despite having inherited the throne, he renounced secular life to follow Shakyamuni. Although having great spiritual powers, he nevertheless practiced meditation assiduously. Vakkula was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in health and longevity (*mubyō daiichi*). Despite having practiced meditation in solitude, he was nursed on his deathbed even by those disciples he had never personally guided or taught. Aniruddha was Shakyamuni's disciple foremost in divine sight (*tengen daiichi*). After renouncing secular life, he was scolded by the Buddha for falling asleep during sermons; he then repented and vowed never to fall asleep again. Although he became blind as a result, he gained the spiritual power to see into the future and peoples' hearts, thus becoming known for his divine sight. When he was sewing his robe, the Buddha helped him thread his needle since he could not see to do so himself.

⁵ Manjushri's name has also been translated as "Wonderful and Auspicious" and "Wonderful Virtue," and "Prince of Dharma", referring to his accomplished understanding of Shakyamuni's enlightenment. He explains core teachings in many scriptures, especially in the body of the *Prajna paramita* sutras. Ajita may be an alternative name for Maitreya. Gandhahastin is also translated as "Musky Elephant," the etymology of which refers to the virility of a male elephant. The etymology of Nityodyukta's name is "one who works with diligence to save all sentient beings."

⁶ Indra was originally an Indian deity adopted as a guardian of Buddhism, having the characteristics of a god of thunder or a warrior god.

⁷ The Chinese says "in the western direction from here." The Japanese translation adds an interpretation and description of where "here" is based on the Sanskrit term, *Saha*, which refers to the mundane world with the connotation of suffering. The Sanskrit term is also translated into Chinese as the "land of adversity." Ten trillion buddha-worlds is literally "10 x 10,000 x 100,000,000."

⁸ These gauze curtains, called *ramō*, are decorated with beads that the Sanskrit version describes as small bells. The Japanese version adds that the curtains are hanging in the sky. For more on the Japanese interpretation of the position of the curtains see also the *Taima mandara kasetu* by Shōdo (1642-1701) in *Nihon bukkyō Zenshū* v. 63, pp. 43-44.

⁹ Neither the Chinese nor Japanese versions specify whether the pond is singular or plural, but the Sanskrit has it as plural.

¹⁰ The eight good qualities of water: pure, cool, sweet, soft, never drying up, calm, healing, and energizing.

¹¹ The pavilions do not occur in the Sanskrit text; they have been pluralized here to match the ponds.

¹² These are petals of the *mandarava* flower, the meaning of which is "that which gladdens the hearts of those who see them," and the name of the flower is also translated as "pleasing" or "agreeable." The petals are imagined to look like honeysuckle flowers, a common motif in Buddhism imagery. The six times are usually listed in the Buddhist scriptures as morning, noon, afternoon, evening, midnight, and dawn.

¹³ *Hamsa* is the name of the first bird as it occurs in the Sanskrit text, but the name of the bird in the Chinese text is not an exact equivalent. In any case, it is imagined to be a white waterfowl with a long bill and is variously translated into English as egret, swan, or goose. A *sharika* is a mythological bird translated into Chinese as a "bird of a hundred tongues." It is also interpreted to be a myna bird because it is supposed to be able to speak human languages. A *kalavinka* is a mythological small bird that sings with a lovely voice. In the traditional Japanese court dance form *gagaku*, there is a specific dance called *karyobin* (Skt: *kalavin*) performed by a young boy wearing a vermilion red costume with brightly colored feathers. A *jivamjivaka* is a mythical species of hawk or eagle with two heads. The "jiva, jiva" cry of the bird means "life" in Sanskrit, and so it is also referred to as "the bird of longevity."

¹⁴ The five roots of goodness are faith, endeavor, mindfulness, mental concentration, and wisdom. These eliminate hindrances and provide the motivating power to attain enlightenment. The five powers are the next step attained after practicing the five roots of goodness, and prevent bad practices: the power of faith which obstructs false teachings, the power of endeavor which keeps the mind and body alert, the power of mindfulness which prevents false thoughts, the power of mental concentration which prevents distraction, and the power of wisdom which destroys delusion. The seven factors provide mental conditioning for attaining enlightenment: mindfulness,

investigation of phenomena, endeavor, rapture, serenity, concentration, and equanimity. The Noble Eightfold Path is the method of realizing enlightenment: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

¹⁵ A *kalpa*, in Sanskrit, according to one explanation is 4,320,000,000 years long. Metaphorically, it is said to be longer than it would take to empty an iron castle seven kilometers square full of poppy seeds by removing one poppy seed every hundred years, or longer than it would take to wear away a rock seven kilometers square by a heavenly maiden flying down once every hundred years to brush the rock with her robes.

¹⁶ This phrase is added in the Japanese to bridge these two paragraphs and explain their relation.

¹⁷ Only the names of many of these buddhas are known with little further information available. The conversion of their names into Sanskrit is based on the Sanskrit text found in Nakamura Hajime, et. al., *Jōdo Sanbukyō* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004 ed.), pp. 127-131 and 155-158.

¹⁸ A vast tongue is one of the thirty-two physical attributes of a buddha. In ancient India, touching the tongue to the nose was a demonstration of the truth of one's words. A billion world systems in the Chinese text literally reads "three thousand great thousands" meaning one thousand to the third power. These Buddhist world systems are comprised of the "three realms": the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of non-form. The Japanese version adds that the virtue of Amitabha is praised for establishing the *nenbutsu* for Birth and furthermore the Buddhas offer protective salvation because their hearts were moved by the *nenbutsu* practitioners.

¹⁹ There is a long standing debate on whether Amitabha and Amitayus are the same buddha or not. However, here Amitayus is praising Amitabha, so it would be inconsistent if they were the same Buddha in this case. Furthermore, the Sanskrit has Amitaskandha for Amitaketu, and the latter Mahaprabhasa does not occur in the Sanskrit at all.

²⁰ The Sanskrit has two more buddhas, Dundubhisvaranirghosa and Prabhakara, omitted from the Chinese text.

²¹ The Sanskrit includes Indraketurdhvajaraja.

²² According to the *Bodhisattvabhumi sutra*, the corruption of the age occurs when there is a change for the worse, such as the outbreak of famine, epidemic, and warfare (Skt. *kalpa-kasaya*; Jpn. *ko-joku*). The corruption of views occurs when views become based on unskillful teachings and wrong thinking (Skt. *drsti-kasaya*; Jpn. *ken-joku*). The corruption of public morality occurs when violence and fighting, and lies and fraud are accepted (Skt. *klesha-kasaya*; Jpn. *bonno-joku*). The corruption of human character occurs when there is loss of respect for seniors, no fear of punishment in the afterlife, virtues and almsgiving are not practiced, and the precepts and regulations are not obeyed (Skt. *sattva-kasaya*; Jpn. *shujo-joku*). The corruption of shortening lifespans occurs when the lifespan of human beings becomes limited to a hundred years (Skt. *ayus-kasaya*; Jpn. *myo-joku*).

²³ *Asura* demons are one type of the demi-gods who upon hearing the Buddha's sermon vowed to protect the Buddhist doctrine. Originally they were gods, and in later times were considered demons. In the Buddhist scriptures they often fight voraciously with other deities, but nevertheless consistently lose.