



# 衆生隨類各得解

## Living Beings According to Their Kind Attain Understanding

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我們的佛經翻譯小組分別來自美、英、中三個國家，彼此的文化背景不同。大家在一起合作20多年了。翻譯宣公上人淺釋的《華嚴經》第廿六品：〈十地品〉時，大體上是我負責中文的理解，Mr.Kellerman(柯果民)負責英文文法修飾，恒順法師平衡各方意見做最後的修訂。

2023年10月的《金剛菩提海》雜誌，刊登了上人講解的〈楞嚴咒句偈〉最後一句——第554句。恒順法師在編輯這篇文章的譯文時，把英譯的初稿拿到我們小組來討論。初稿是別人翻譯的，我們的工作是最後的校對整理。之前都是恒順法師自己校訂楞嚴咒句偈解，但是最後一句他請我們幫忙。

上人的開示和一般世俗的文章有所不同，其有特殊的功能——其中之一就是衆生隨類

Our team of Buddhist texts translators consists of members from the United States, Great Britain, and China. With over twenty years of experience working together, each of us brings our cultural background to our translation work. When translating the commentary by Venerable Master Hua on *The Avatamsaka Sutra*: Chapter 26, “The Ten Grounds,” I was in charge of ensuring Chinese comprehension, while Mr. Kellerman was responsible for refining English grammar. Dharma Master Heng Shun then provided the final editing, taking consideration of the opinions of all parties involved.

The October 2023 issue of the *Vajra Bodhi Sea* journal features an explanation of the last line of the Shurangama Mantra, line 554, by Venerable Master Hua. When editing the English translation of this article, Dharma Master Heng Shun presented the initial draft to our group for discussion. The translation was done by someone else, and our task was to carry out the final proofreading and editing. Previously, he had done the final edit by himself, but for the last line he brought us all in the help.

The lectures of the Venerable Master are not like ordinary lectures. They have special functions, One is that “all living beings understand them according to their kind.” When

各得解。我們翻譯上人的開示時，如果每句都按文字直譯，大多數情況是下可行的。對其中的一些語句，必須要根據讀者可能的根性和文化背景進行處理。如果翻譯者對所針對讀者的情況理解不夠，這些特殊功能可能就莫名其妙地消失了。這個問題在第554句的講解中可以看得很清楚，下面舉三個例子。

第一個例子出現在對以下偈頌的解釋。

「罪障消滅善業全」：你的罪障消滅，善業才能全。你罪障不消滅，善業也不能全。這都是對待法。

初稿：“Offenses and obstruction are extinguished and wholesome deeds completed.” When your offenses and obstruction are extinguished, your good deeds will be accomplished. If your offenses and obstruction are not vanished, your good deeds won’t be accomplished, either. **These two aspects correspond to each other / This is the principle of relativity.**

定稿：“The obstacles of offenses are extinguished and wholesome karma is completed.” When your obstacles of offenses are extinguished, your good karma will be accomplished. If your obstacles of offenses are not extinguished, your good karma won’t be accomplished. **These two aspects are binary opposites.**

「對待法」這幾個字，在上人的口語中有特定的涵義，很少看到世間人這樣用。在解釋楞嚴咒第137、161、213、232、366句時也出現過。「對待法」的意思是相對的；不是絕對、「不二」的。初稿中的譯文，注重的是「善」、「惡」之間的關係——把這個關係理解為「相對的法the principle of relativity」。如果讀者注重的是「善惡法」不同於「不二法」，可考慮用「二元性」這個詞來翻譯。照顧到兩類不同根性讀者的理解，上面最後一句可以改進，翻譯為：These two aspects are binary opposites. Or it is a situation of duality.

we translate the Master’s lectures, it is possible to provide a literal translation for most of the sentences. However, Some sentences may need to be revised based on the potential disposition and cultural background of the readers. Without a sufficient understanding of our readers, these specialized functions may disappear. We can clearly see this issue in the explanation provided in line 554. Here are three examples.

The first example occurs in the interpretation of the following verse.

*“The obstacles of offenses are extinguished and wholesome karma is completed.” When your obstacles of offenses are extinguished, your good karma will be accomplished. If your obstacles of offenses are not extinguished, your good karma won’t be accomplished. These two aspects are binary opposites.*

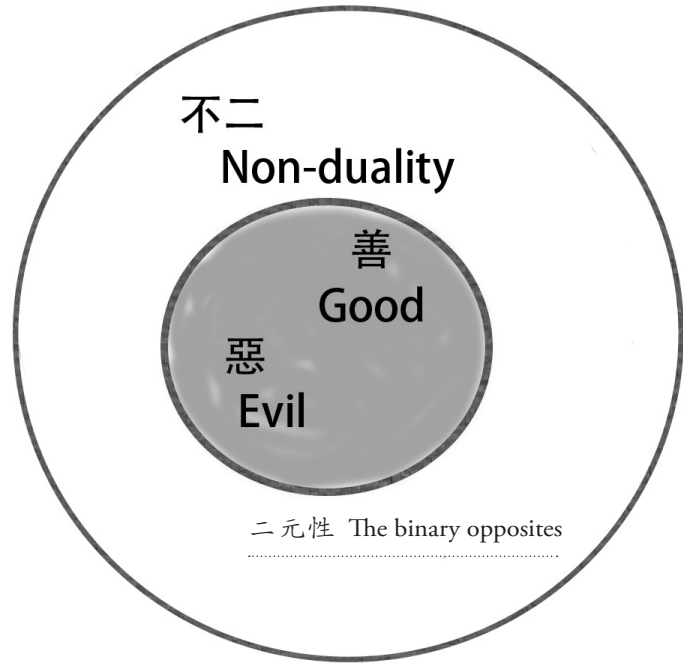
Initial draft: “Offenses and obstruction are extinguished and wholesome deeds completed.” When your offenses and obstruction are extinguished, your good deeds will be accomplished. If your offenses and obstruction have not vanished, your good deeds won’t be accomplished, either. **These two aspects correspond to each other / This is the principle of relativity.**

Final draft: “The obstacles of offenses are extinguished and wholesome karma is completed.” When your obstacles of offenses are extinguished, your good karma will be accomplished. If your obstacles of offenses are not extinguished, your good karma won’t be accomplished. **These two aspects are binary opposites.**

The phrase “對待法 duì dài fǎ” in the last sentence, in Venerable Master’s spoken language, has a special meaning. It is unusual to see others using it like this. It also appears when explaining lines 137, 161, 213, 232, and 366 of the Shurangama Mantra. It means “relative,” not “absolute” or “non-dual.” The previous translation predominantly emphasizes the correlation between good and evil, thus conceiving it as relative dharma. When emphasizing the distinction between “good and evil,” and “non-duality” we can consider incorporating the term “duality.” Considering two distinct types of readers with varying perspectives, the last sentence above can be improved as: **These two aspects are binary opposites./ Or it is a situation of duality.**



相對法 The principle of relativity



另外兩個例子出現在文章最後一段。

《楞嚴經》就是教人去欲斷愛，教人不犯淫欲。這一件事是所有的學者辦不到。為什麼他一天到晚抱著老婆和小孩？因為辦不到，故不能說這是好的，所以要說是假的，即是吃不到葡萄，就說是酸的一樣道理。[編按：請參看2023年10月刊楞嚴咒句偈淺釋]

第二個例子是這一句，「為什麼他一天到晚抱著……？因為辦不到……」

初稿：If they were able to do this, then they would not always be **so attached to...**

定稿：If they were able to do this, then they **would not embrace ...**

初稿再譯回中文是，「如果他們做得到，就不會總是這麼執著於……」。定稿是依原文的直譯。

第三個例子是最後一句，「因為辦不到，故不能說這是好的，所以要說是假的，即是吃不到葡萄，就說是酸的一樣道理。」

初稿：Because they can't follow the Sutra's teachings, they cannot say that the Sutra is good. Instead, they say that it is false. This is the same principle as one who is unable to get grapes to eat,

There are two additional examples mentioned in the final paragraph of this article.

*The Shurangama Sutra is meant to teach people to get rid of desire, cut off sensual love, and not to commit the offense of licentiousness. This is something those aforementioned scholars are unable to do. Since they are unable to do this, they thus assert that the Shurangama Sutra is false. There is no other reason. By saying this, they confuse everyone. Why do they say that the Shurangama Sutra is false? It is because they are unable to follow what the Sutra says. If they were able to do this, then they would not embrace their wife and children all day long. Because they can't follow the Sutra's teachings, they cannot say that the Sutra is good. Instead, they say that it is false. This is just sour grapes.*

The second example is this sentence,

Initial draft: If they were able to do this, then they would not always be **so attached to** their wife and children.

Final draft: If they were able to do this, then they **would not embrace** their wife and children all day long.

The final version is a literal translation of the original text.

The third example is the last sentence. Because they can't follow the Sutra's teachings, they cannot say that the Sutra is good. Instead, they say that it is false. This is just



伊索寓言「酸葡萄」  
Aesop's Fable "Sour Grapes."



who tells others that the grapes are sour (no good).

定稿：Because they can't follow the Sutra's teachings, they cannot say that the Sutra is good. Instead, they say that it is false. This is just sour grapes.

這裡我們碰到了西方諺語——伊索寓言中的「酸葡萄」。在初稿中，譯者沒有意識到這個問題，按原文的做了直譯。後來我們發現了這一情況，直接引用諺語。雖然形式上捨棄了原文的文字模式，但是更好地表達了法義。

從表面上看，以上三個例子所做的改動都不大，但它們保留了上人開示的不少特殊功能。下面把一些譯者背後的考慮介紹一下。

第一個例子，對於來自英國、德國這些有哲學教育傳統國家的人來說——「相對」就不是「絕對」、「不二」，這是非常清楚的。而萬佛

sour grapes.

Initial draft: Because they can't follow the Sutra's teachings, they cannot say that the Sutra is good. Instead, they say that it is false. This is the same principle as one who is unable to get grapes to eat, who tells others that the grapes are sour (no good).

Final draft: Because they can't follow the Sutra's teachings, they cannot say that the Sutra is good. Instead, they say that it is false. This is just sour grapes.

Here we encounter the Western idiom "Sour Grapes" from Aesop's fable. In the first version, the translator was unaware of this issue and provided a literal translation based on the original text. However, upon realizing this, we made the necessary adjustments and incorporated this idiom. Although the original text pattern has been abandoned, it better conveys the meaning of the Dharma.

The changes made in the above three examples may seem minor at first glance, but they retain many special functions in the Venerable Master's lecture. Let's talk about some key considerations for translators.

In the first example, we mentioned that "relative" is not "absolute" and "non-dual dharma." This concept is easily understood by individuals from countries with a traditional philosophical education, such as the UK and Germany. However, many of the local residents associated with the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas have not received this kind of philosophical education. Without further explanation, one may need to ponder it for some time. One of my American colleagues once said to me, "I didn't take any philosophy classes in high school. However, I enrolled in it as an elective during college, and I must say, it was very captivating."

In the second example, the translators made sentence pattern changes according to their own understanding in the initial draft, which is inappropriate. The original text focuses on the phenomenon, but after the modification, it focuses on the principle—These two kinds of defilement belong to different levels. This change reflects

城附近的本地居民不一樣，很多人沒有接受過這種哲學教育。不做補充說明，他們就需要想一陣子才行。有個美國同事告訴我，「我在中學沒接觸過哲學。到了大學才選修了這門課，發現很有意思。」

第二個例子，英譯者在初稿中按照自己的理解把原文做了形式上的改動，這是不恰當的。原文側重「事」、改動以後側重「理」——兩種煩惱屬於不同的層次。這反映出譯者根性對文字的影響。花功夫把上下文理解通順之後，這時自己悟到的只是一類眾生的看法。如果馬上下筆還是會出問題，因為還需要再看看其他類眾生的情況。不這樣做，原本本具的彈性可能就失去了。

第三個例子是諺語：「酸葡萄」。上人的解釋方法——吃不到葡萄就說葡萄是酸的——對中國人這樣講解很恰當。而英文網站對這個諺語的解釋則和我們學的不一樣。下面是兩個例子。

（一）有人做壞事，因為別人比他更成功。

（二）出於嫉妒，有人說某樣東西不重要。

如果把上人的開示直譯，西方人如果以前學的是這兩種解釋，他們不一定會悟到是在講這個諺語。翻譯時我們需要找到典故的出處。我們小組處理這一句時，是經過上網查詢才把事情明確的。

讀了上人開示，不同文化背景的眾生引起的觸動不同。柯果民的英文基本功扎實。通常我們寫出一個句子，他出聲念出來，靠感覺就把語法修辭調整好了，很少需要查詢資料。20多年前我問他，上人的英文程度如何。他說，「上人講英文時好像不流利，可是有時會冒出一個詞。而這是對西方文化瞭解極深的人才會使

the translators' influence on the text.

After taking the time to understand the meaning of context, what we realized that it represents only the perspective of one category of sentient beings. If we rush into translation without proper consideration, we will inevitably lead to numerous issues, especially when dealing with a diverse range of other sentient beings. If we fail to do this, we may lose some special functions of the original text.

The third example is the idiom “Sour Grapes.” The Venerable Master explained it in the same way we have learned in China—“If one cannot acquire grapes to eat, who informs others that the grapes are sour (inedible.)” For the Chinese, this explanation is very appropriate. But the explanation of this idiom on the English website differs from what we previously learned. Here are two examples for clarification.

(1) Bad behavior that happens because someone else is more successful.

(2) Somebody is jealous and is pretending that something is not important.

If the teachings of the Venerable Master are translated literally, Westerners who have already learned these two explanations may not recognize that the Venerable Master was referring to this particular idiom. Therefore, we must identify the origin of the allusion. To accomplish this, our team thoroughly researched this sentence online.

After reading the Venerable Master's lectures, people with diverse cultural backgrounds are influenced differently. Mr. Kellerman has good English writing skills. Typically, after writing a sentence, he reads it aloud and adjusts the grammar and rhetoric instinctively, rarely needing to consult references. Over twenty years ago, I asked him about the Venerable Master's level of proficiency in English. He said, “He often spoke broken English, but sometimes a word would come up. This vocabulary is used only by people who have a deep understanding of Western culture. I genuinely have no clue about the inner workings of his mind.”

Sharing this kind of experience can be challenging when readers come from different cultural backgrounds. From a Chinese perspective, a similar scene would look like this. When Westerners use the word “hypocrite” in their speech, it doesn't surprise us. However, if someone were to say “xiāng yuàn 鄉愿,” those familiar with *Mencius* would likely pay closer attention.

Some of the teachings of the Venerable Master will deeply

用的。真不知道他的頭腦是如何運作的。」

這種境界是不同文化背景的讀者之間難以分享的。從中國人的角度來看，類似的場景是這樣的——如果西方人講話用了「偽君子」一詞，我們覺得沒什麼奇怪的。如果他說「鄉愿」，熟讀《孟子》的人，恐怕都會多看幾眼吧。

上人的開示，有些內容會對西方人有文化上的觸動。我們如果要保留這種效果，就須首先找到原來的典故，然後再請了解這些文化背景的人，依照預期的效果來決定譯文。

總結一下。對上人的開示按字面直譯，全文的主要意思會大致呈現出來了，這是第一步。其次，要根據讀者的各種根性，對文章做調整。在這一過程中，譯者也要對自己的根性有一定的瞭解，因為它對譯文的影響可能很大。

萬佛城出版的書籍，通常前面都有「佛經翻譯委員會八項基本守則」。佛典的翻譯是集體經過一定的流程來進行的。比起個人翻譯，集體運作利多弊少。

上人就曾告訴翻譯工作者，「佛子」不能譯成佛的兒子。如果不是上人明確開口，「佛子」的意思要得到大家的認同，也是一個耗時費力的過程。對這個詞，中國人大概會知道是弟子的意思。可是要說服西方人，你要拿出文字證據來。類似這樣的例子，我還知道好幾個。

古代漢譯佛典的翻譯質量很高，在文句符合梵文原意的前提之下，「眾生隨類各得解」這些功能被保留下來了。這不是偶然的，它說明當時的譯經團體對處理這兩方面的平衡問題達成了共識，並找到了圓滿解決的辦法。

如果我們希望這些功能在佛典及上人開示的翻譯中得以保留，譯經團體首先也需要對這兩方面的平衡問題有一定共識。以上舉的例子很少，規律也還不明顯。將來如果收集的例子多了，情況就會改變，團體處理這類問題的方法就可以逐漸規範化。將來如果真這樣做到了，我們的翻譯在這方面也會達到古人的程度。❀

resonate with Westerners on a cultural level. To keep this effect, we need to identify the original references, consult with people who are familiar with the cultural background, and choose a translation that achieves the expected effect.

Let's take a summary. Translating the Venerable Master's lectures will reveal the basic essence of the text. This is the initial step. Secondly, the article must be adjusted according to the various dispositions of readers. In this process, the translators must also possess a certain understanding of their own disposition, as it can significantly influence the translated text.

The "Eight Guidelines of the Buddhist Text Translation Society" can be found at the beginning of books that have been published by the City of 10,000 Buddhas. The translation of Buddhist scriptures is a collective process that follows a certain procedure. In comparison to individual translation, collective translation offers more advantages than disadvantages.

The Venerable Master repeatedly emphasized to translators that "fó zǐ 佛子" should not be translated as the "son of the Buddha." If he hadn't brought it up, reaching a consensus on the meaning of "fo zi" would have been a time-consuming process. Chinese people may recognize this word as meaning "disciple," but to persuade Westerners, providing written evidence is essential. I am aware of several other examples similar to this.

The translation quality of ancient Chinese Buddhist scriptures is quite good. The functions of "living beings according to their kind attain understanding" have been preserved. The text adheres to the original meaning of the sutra. It is evident that the sutra translation teams at that time reached a consensus on the issue of balancing these two aspects and found a satisfactory solution in translation.

To keep the essence of Buddhist scriptures and the Venerable Master's lectures in our translation, the teams must agree on the balance between these two aspects. The few examples mentioned above do not make the rules clear. However, as we continue to collect more examples in the future, the situation will change. With a standardized approach from the team, we can gradually improve our ability to deal with such problems. If this is truly achieved in the future, our translation will attain a level comparable to that of the ancients. ❀