

The Pronunciation of the Nembutsu (Nāmadheya-uccāraṇa) While Hoping to the Unity of NAMO

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In India, Namaste is the most beautiful expression of compliments. Originally it means that I believe you, putting one's hand, flat both together. Namas means bow, adoration in the Sanskrit and Hindi. It's also namo 南无, 南無, 那謨 in translation and 婦命 in free translation of Chinese. Mā means measure. Mita is a past passive participle of mā. It means to be measured. A is negative or contrary sense. Therefore amita is unmeasured, boundless 無量. Āyus means life 寿. Ābhā means light 光. When Namas is combined with amitāyus 無量寿, AS of namas is changed into O and A of amitāyus disappears, becomes dative 'mitayuṣe according to the rule of saṃdhi. The word namo 'mitāyuṣe in the opening statement (vandana gāthā = worship song) of Sukhāvatīvyaūha, 大無量寿經 Larger sūtra is in 20 manuscripts out of all Devanāgarī or Nevārī 36 manuscripts in the world. When it is combined with amitābhā 無量光, it turns out be namo 'mitābhāya. We can find this in 32 manuscripts.

Oṃ namo daśadiganantāparyantāloka dhātupratīṣṭhitebhyah sarvasrabuddhabodhisattvāryaśrāvaka pratyekabuddhebhyo 'tītānāga pratyutpanne bhyah || namo 'mitābhāya namo 'mitāyuṣe namo namo 'cintya guṇākārātmane || namo 'mitābhāya jināya te mune sukhāvatīm yāmi tavānukampayā || sukhāvatīm kanakavicitrakānanām manoramām sugatasutair alaṃkṛtām || tavāśrayām prathitayaśasya dhimataḥ prayāmi tām bahuguṇaratnasamcayām (Sukhāvatīvyaūha-vandana gāthā)

Fujita, Kotatsu, The Larger Sukhāvatīvyaūha. Romanized Text of the Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal 1992. This is the newest critical edition.

〈Translation〉

Oh, Bowing to all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Sacred chief disciples and Buddhas for himself alone, past, future, and present, who dwell in the unlimited and endless

world of Buddhas of the ten quarters!

Bowing to Amitābhā (Buddha of immeasurable light)

Bowing to Amitāyus (Buddha of eternal life)

Bowing again to the Buddha whose nature with many incomprehensible virtues!

Bowing victorious Amitābhā, O Saint!

I go to Sukhāvati (Pure land) through your compassion.

To Sukhāvati, with its forests, resplendent with gold.

The delightful, adorned with the sons of Buddha.

I go to it, which is full of many jewels of good virtues: And your dwelling, the famous and intelligent.

Then, Ryūkoku university has the oldest Larger sūtra of 83 leaves of palm in AD1147-67. The rest, there are 3 manuscripts by Ootani expedition. They were organized by chief abott Nishi Honganji. Kōzui Ootani. 大谷光瑞。(1902-14) 3 times, Silk road etc. By the way Tokyo university has the most numerous 6 manuscripts by Ekai Kawaguchi. 河口慧海.

The Nembutsu, it has the meaning of namo 'mitāyuse buddhāya 帰命無量寿如来¹⁾ kimyōmuryōju nyorai and namo mitābhāya buddhāya 南无不可思議光²⁾ namo fukashigikō. I take refuge in the tathāgata of Immeasurable life! I entrust myself to the Buddha of Inconceivable Light! Tathāgata is Buddha. 無量光=不可思議光

The Nembutsu is synthesis of both meanings. In the free translation, Never mind! Buddha is said, I will be responsible for your future life! (Rev. Kōgu Kagai, Takatsuki city) Wishing to come as soon as possible to my Pure Land! (Prof. Eikichi Ikeyama, He has translated Tannishō in German).

St. Shinran said that true sūtra is Larger sūtra. Because it teaches us (極重惡人=person burdened with extreme evil and extremely sins) that we are redeemed with Shinjin (prasāda) is gift of Amida Tathāgata. It's not come to the same thing with faith, der Glaube, la foi etc. The salvation is fervent wish (praṇidhāna) of Tathāgata. The Larger sūtra is True and Real Teaching! Jōdo Shinshū (True Teaching of Pure Land Way) The ultimate teaching of Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna)!

In Pali of Theravāda, Vandana is as follow;

Namo tassa Bhagavat Arahat samma Sambuddhassa!

Pali means sacred book. Theravāda has Tri-ṭṭaka 三藏=經, 律, 論 in Sinhalese, Siamese, Burmese, Khmer etc.³⁾

In modern Chinese, the sound of Namo is holding. In Táiwan, it keeps also Nāmó amidāfú. The sound of Namo is from Shàndǎo 善導 (613-81) period. Beaause many Buddhist has migrated to Táiwan through Fújiàn shěng 福建省 from Xi'ān. (西安)

On the way to Korea, it was been also wronged to Namu amitabul.⁶⁾ Hardly Namu remaind in Mantra. For example, like that 囊謨 (By Prof. 蔡沢洙) In Japan, Siddham 悉曇 is Om nam mo a mi ddhā buh⁷⁾.

St. Hōnen 法然 also teaches us to be Namo amidabutsu. (Wagotōrok
St. Shinran was taught rightful pronunciation of the Nembutsu, (Namo
amidabutsu 南无 阿弥陀仏)⁹⁾ by a good teacher St. Hōnen.

Therefore all the nembutsu sects should have the Unity of NAMO.

- 1) **नमो/मितायुषे बुद्धाय** 2) **नमो/मिताभाय बुद्धाय** 3) **Sinhalese නමෝ**
Siamese **นโม** Burmese **နမော** Khmer **នមោ**

- 4) Tibetan མོ་ཨ་མི་དེ་གེ་མེ་མོ་ 5) འཇག་མཁའ་མཁའ་ Vertical writing
6) 𐰃𐰆𐰪 7) 𐰃𐰆𐰪 Vertical writing 8) 𐰃𐰆𐰪 𐰃𐰆𐰪 𐰃𐰆𐰪 Vertical writing
writing 8') ナモム Namomu is only Shinran's letter by kana. 唯信鈔文意 (専修寺) 9) 𐰃𐰆𐰪 𐰃𐰆𐰪 Vertical writing

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