

佛光大學

108 學年度研究所博士班招生考試試題卷

學系別：佛教學系

科目：英文佛學論文閱讀測驗

用紙第 1 頁共 4 頁

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I. Please read the following text carefully and answer the following two questions I.1-I.2.

The laity in Buddhism makes up two of the four constituent parts of the SANGHA (monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen) and the great majority of Buddhists. The ordained differ from the laity by virtue of their renunciation of the householder's life and observance of a strict code of behavior, which make them worthy and deserving, a pure and holy "field of merit." Laypeople acquire merit through giving food, clothing, shelter, and other material support to the ordained, and merit-making by laity to the ordained has been a central aspect of lay life in all Buddhist societies. Prohibitions on the ordained acquiring individual wealth, as well as prohibitions on sexual activity, make the ordained dependent upon laity for their living and the perpetuation of a religious order.

Laity in early Buddhist texts are referred to as upāsaka (laymen) and upāsika (laywomen), devoted followers of Buddhist teaching, and they are distinguished from ordinary householders. Lay followers should take proper care of the monks during the retreats, hear the dharma expounded at that time and on the monthly Posaḍha (Pāli, *Upasatha*) days; take the three refuges, follow the first five *śīlas* or moral rules (refraining from taking life, stealing, unchastity, lying, and taking intoxicants), offer robes to the monks at the end of the rainy season, undertake PILGRIMAGE, and venerate STÜPAS containing relics of the Buddha. The *Sigalovāda-sutta* (*Discourse to Sigala*) urges laity to revere their parents, spouses and children, friends and companions, and religious teachers. Instructions specifically for women direct them in various texts to be capable in work, to manage servants well, to be physically attractive to their husbands, and to manage his fortune well.

THERAVĀDA Buddhism has traditionally emphasized a strong distinction between the ordained and the laity. The *nikāyas* show that laity can reach the first three stages of sanctity (*sotāpanna*, *sakadāgāmi*, and *anāgāmi*), but they cannot become arhats. Instead, they aim for a better rebirth. Recent studies suggest, nevertheless, that the *Sutta Piṭaka* also contains a second, contrasting view on the laity, holding that laity can attain enlightenment. The *Mahāvagge Maṇḍapeyyakathā* depicts the Buddha teaching the FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS and the eightfold path to the laity, and the *Nakulapitā-sutta* (*Discourse to Nakulapitā*) has the Buddha teaching a layman about the five aggregates and the error of confusing these with the self.

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With the appearance of early MAHĀYĀNA in the first century, new concepts and practices developed, widening the laity's scope. The cardinal idea of emptiness undermined all conceptual oppositions, including that between monastics and laity. The idea of the BODHISATTVA who purposefully remains in the world to save others further undermined the dichotomy separating the ordained and laity, and the idea of the lay bodhisattva emerged. The quintessential example of the lay bodhisattva is the layman VIMALAKĪRTI, in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (*The Teaching of Vimalakīrti*), composed between the first century B.C.E. and first century C.E. Vimalakīrti expounds on the nature of emptiness, exhibiting his wisdom to an immense assembly of holy men and bodhisattvas. He ridicules their doctrinal abstractions and pretensions to a higher status than the laity. Other sūtras continue the themes of this work, sometimes introducing laywomen as the protagonists. Two such examples are Vimalakīrti's daughter in the *Candrottardārikāvyaṅkaraṇa-sūtra* (*Discourse on the Prediction Made about the Girl Candrottārā*) and Queen Śrīmālā in the *Śrīmālādevīsīmhanāda-sūtra* (*Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā*). Other Mahāyāna texts present filial piety as a kind of Buddhist morality, in a concession to the prominence of this principle especially among the laity in East Asia. The central role of the priesthood in funerary and ancestral rites in East Asian Buddhism stems from the elevation of filial piety as an ethical ideal in such works as the *Ullambana-sūtra*.

I.1 Please write a summary with 200-300 words in Chinese. (30%)

I.2 According to the above text, are there differences among Buddhist traditions regarding the role of laity? If yes, how are they different? (20%)

II. Please read the following paragraphs carefully and answer the following short questions II.1 – II.6.

The concept (tathāgatagarbha) was developed further in later writings like the *Śrīmālādevī-sūtra* (*Discourse of Queen Śrīmālā*), where the term refers to an inner potential that enables beings to become buddhas. Were it not for the tathāgatagarbha, this sūtra states, beings would be unable to feel aversion for suffering or to seek NIRVĀṆA. The sūtra identifies the tathāgatagarbha as the dharmakāya of the buddha, which pervades all beings. The dharmakāya is said to have the four perfections (*guṇa-pāramitās*) of eternality, bliss, self, and purity, an assertion that has led some to question whether the tathāgatagarbha teaching might expound a form of Hindu monism, in which case it might contradict such fundamental Buddhist doctrines as ANITYA (IMPERMANENCE), ANĀTMAN/ĀTMAN (NO-SELF/SELF), and DUḤKHA (SUFFERING).

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A closely related concept to the tathāgatagarbha is the *buddhadhātu*, usually translated as “buddha-nature,” a term first used in the NIRVĀṆA SUTRA with the famous phrase “all beings possess buddha-nature.” Like the tathāgatagarbha, it expresses the Mahāyāna conviction that all beings have the potential for buddhahood.

The only Indian Buddhist treatise devoted to the tathāgatagarbha is the fifth-century *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Chinese, *Baoxing fenbie dacheng jiujiing yaoyi lun*; *Analysis of the Source of the [Buddha] Jewel*). The *Ratnagotravibhāga* identified the tathāgatagarbha as “thusness mingled with pollution” (*samālā tathatā*), whereas the dharmakāya is identified as “thusness apart from pollution” (*nirmalā tathatā*). Thusness means supreme truth apprehended by nondiscriminating wisdom. The MADHYAMAKA SCHOOL understood *thusness* to mean the emptiness of all dharmas, but the *Ratnagotravibhāga* insisted that while the tathāgatagarbha is empty of *kleśas*, it is not empty of the virtues of the buddha, “which are more numerous than the sands of the Ganges.” This assertion that something is ultimately “not empty” is also found in several YOGĀCĀRA SCHOOL texts. Additionally, the *Ratnagotravibhāga* uses traditional Yogācāra categories for analysis, which further suggests possible ties to the Yogācāra school.

A central teaching of the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, derived from the *Jñānālokālaṅkāra-sūtra* (*Discourse on the Ornamentation of Wisdom*), is that nirvāṇa, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, ought to be understood as the nonorigination, rather than the extinguishing, of suffering and illusion. The mind is pure by nature, and suffering arises only when irrational thought (*ayoniśomanaskāra*) originates illusions, attachments, and cravings. One who has reached the truth does not give rise to illusions. The expression “cessation of suffering” refers to the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, which is unborn and unproduced. Because all beings have the dharmakāya within them, they have the capacity not to originate suffering.

The tathāgatagarbha teaching was far more popular in East Asia than in India or Tibet. In India no school was organized around the tathāgatagarbha teaching, and in Tibet, only the Jo nang pa centered itself on the tathāgatagarbha teaching. But the *Ratnagotravibhāga* and the sūtras expounding the tathāgatagarbha were translated into Chinese shortly after their composition, and heavily influenced important Chinese treatises like the AWAKENING OF FAITH (DASHENG QIXIN LUN). An extensive debate over the buddha-nature of the ICCHANTIKA (the worst of beings), provoked further interest in the doctrine. The tathāgatagarbha teaching was accorded the highest place in the doctrinal classification schemes of such notable HUAYAN SCHOOL figures as FAZANG and ZONGMI (780–841), and became a focal point of both Tiantai and Chan school teachings.

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Short answer questions: answer the following questions in either English or Chinese:

II.1 What does the term “tathāgatarbha” refer to? (4%)

II.2 What concept is closely related to tathāgatarbha? (4%)

II.3 What are Chinese Buddhist schools that include the tathāgatarbha teaching? (4%)

II.4 In the *Śrīmālādevī-sūtra*, what are the four perfections of tathāgatarbha in terms of the dharmakāya of the buddha? (4%)

II.5 In the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*, how is “thuseness” being identified in different perspective than the one in the Madhyamaka School? (4%)

II.6 Based on the above paragraphs, write a summary with 200-300 words in Chinese. (30%)