

## Forgery and Compilation of Buddhist Scriptures:

### The *Yijiao sanmei jing* and the *Shelifu wen jing*

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As a working hypothesis, Chinese Buddhist scriptures (sutras) can be classified into the following categories:

1. Translated Scriptures, i.e. scriptures translated into Chinese from original Indic texts;
2. Apocrypha, namely scriptures composed in China and containing elements peculiar to Chinese Buddhism;
3. Compiled Scriptures, i.e. scriptures compiled in China by making exclusive use of Indian elements.

In order to explore in concrete terms the similarities and differences between category 2 and 3 above, I shall examine the *Yijiao sanmei jing* 遺教三昧經 and the *Shelifu wen jing* 舍利弗問經. The former is an apocryphon, now extant only in fragments collected from later citations. The latter, however, has been regarded by scholars as a genuine translation of an Indian Mahāsāṅghika text.

In my paper, I will suggest that the *Yijiao sanmei jing* is an apocryphon, and that the *Shelifu wen jing* is not a genuine translation but a scripture which was compiled in China, probably soon after Faxian's 法顯 return from India, and that it contains some elements peculiar to Chinese Buddhism. This in turn forces us to exercise caution on its status as a source about Indian Buddhism.

According to both scriptures, during the Śrāvakayāna age, in India there were five Buddhist groups or *nikāyas* and the monks of each group wore robes of different colors. Numbering the *nikāyas* as five, however, is problematic, and even more peculiar is the assertion that *nikāyas* wore robes different in color. This notion, which is also found in the *Shelifu wen jing*, is difficult to accept as Indian in origin but easily explained if we consider the *Yijiao sanmei jing* as a Chinese apocryphon. Hence, we can suggest that the part of the *Shelifu wen jing* dealing with the robes' color reflects a Chinese indigenous character.