On the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*

Kogen Mizuno

I The kinds and quality of pseudo-scriptures

In China, pseudo-scriptures, which were not the translations from the original scriptures but were produced in China, came into use soon after the introduction of Buddhism into that country. The number of those scriptures gradually increased in the course of time. I will trace the process by surveying the representative catalogues of the sacred scriptures. In the first place, 道安録 the *Tao-an-lou* (A.D. 374 T. vol. 55 p. 38 b) lists 26 books in 30 vols. as sham scriptures and 出三蔵記集 the *Tch’ou-san-tsang-ki-tsi* (A.D. 515 c. T. vol. 55 p. 38 c ff.) catalogues 88 books in addition to the foregoing 26. It can be inferred from this that about 114 scriptures of unauthentic kind were known in the early sixth century. Next comes 仁壽録 the *Jen-shou-lou* (A.D. 602 T. vol. 55 p. 172 b ff.), which adding both the sham scriptures and the doubtful ones lists 209 books in 491 vols. 開元釋教録 The *Kai-yuan-che-kiao-lou* (A.D. 730 T. vol. 55 p. 72 a f.), which appeared 128 years later, registers 392 books in 1005 vols. This shows how vast was the number of false scriptures. Though this amount was but a third or fifth part of the whole collection of sacred scriptures, the influence these false scriptures had over the believing public must have been far from trifling, for they were produced to meet the practical needs of the times.

What were, then, the motives of the production of these sham scriptures? The motives were as follows:

1 To relate Buddhism with the traditional folk-cults of the Chinese people and, applying Buddhism to various folk-beliefs, attribute their origin to the Buddha.

2 To conciliate Buddhism with the native thought such as Taoism or to interpret Buddhist thought in the light of Taoist ideas. As orthodox
Buddhism was gradually introduced, however, the Chinese Buddhists came to understand the difference. Yet in the field of popular belief Buddhism and Taoism remained closely interrelated. On the part of Taoism, attempts were made to imitate Buddhist scriptures.

3 There appeared scriptures that Buddhist believers preached on the strength of religious inspiration. For instance, a girl of a good family is said to have preached 21 books in 35 vols. in this manner between her ninth and sixteenth years (A.D. 499-506). Sin-hing (A.D. 541-594), the founding preacher of Buddhism of three degrees, preached many scriptures and expatiated on them.

4 Translated sutras and śāstras were too voluminous and the need to abridge them and facilitate their understanding was felt. For example, Wen-hsuan-wang (A.D. 494), a prince of Ch‘i-dynasty who was a devout believer in Buddhism and its protector, compiled 38 abridged books of extracts from various scriptures. These books, however, were rejected as pseudo-scriptures on the charge that they omit some essentials of the originals and adding superfluities, violate the sacred teaching and deteriorate the genuine scriptures.

5 Creation of new scriptures intended to adapt the correct doctrine of Buddhism to Chinese Buddhists.

Now, the criterion with which to test the genuineness of Buddhist scriptures has traditionally been to see whether or not the scripture in question contains the three characteristics as the fundamental principles of Buddhism (anityāḥ sarva-saṃskārāḥ, anātmāṇaḥ sarva-dharmāḥ, śāntaṁ nirvāṇaṁ). In this sense, India produced many holy scriptures containing these fundamental principles after the Buddha’s death. Especially the Mahāyāna sacred books were all later productions. In India, this kind of sacred books by unknown authors was attributed to the Buddha. This Indian practice might reasonably have been introduced into China, but as a matter of fact it was permitted to none to produce holy books and attribute them to the Buddha. If produced, they were rejected as pseudo-scriptures. It was for this reason that those scriptures under heading 5 in the above
enumeration were rejected as apocryphal books.

However, the fact was that in some cases the scriptures of the fifth heading were clandestinely smuggled into the group of genuine sacred books under the guise of translated scriptures. Their Chinese origin remained undetected because of their seeming semblance to translation in style and their consistency of content with true doctrine of Buddhism. These works were not grouped apart in the doubtful books, but listed as genuine translations. To this day they are treated as genuine scriptures in all the editions or publications of the sacred books.

One of these examples is 金剛三昧經 the Kin-kang-san-mei-king (Vajra-samādhi-sūtra) (T. vol. 9, N. 273), whose unauthenticity the writer of this article proved several years ago. Eminent Japanese scholars have already proved the Chinese origin of 梵網經 the Fan-wang-king (T. vol. 24, N. 1484), 菩薩瓊珞本業經 the P’ou-sa-ying-lo-pen-ye-king (T. vol. 24, N. 1485), 仁王般若波羅蜜經 the Jen-wang-pao-jo-po-lo-mi-king (T. vol. 8, N. 245) and many others, to the general acceptance of the theory in learned world. As to 大乘起信論 the Ta-tch'eng-k'i-sin-louen (The Awakening of the Faith of Mahāyāna, T. vol. 32, N. 1666), however, the translation theory and the Chinese-creation theory are proposed and the learned circle has not yet reached agreement as to which is which.

The Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king, which is now in question, was branded as a sham sūtra from the first. It has never been listed as a genuine translation. The thought content of the book, however, does not necessarily conflict with the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism.

II The Explanatory Remarks on the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king

As for 法句經 the genuine Fa-kiu-king (Dhammapada), we have the 2 vols. one translated by Chih-ch'ien and other co-translators in the first half of the third century. This book consists of 39 chapters, 26 chapters in the middle

On the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* (K. Mizuno)

part of which correspond to the Pāli *Dhammapada* and the others are the partly translation of the *Udāna-varga* (the *Dhammapada* of the Sarvāstivāda school) and others. But the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* is quite different in substance of content from the genuine *Dhammapada*, though they have the same title (*The Fa-kiu-king*).

The *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* had long been lost and known to none till it was discovered at Touen-houang in the present century (T. vol. 85, N. 2901). Its commentary has also been discovered (T. vol. 85, N. 2902). This *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* is missing from most of the Chinese catalogues of Buddhist books. This book, it seems, has never been brought to Japan. From these facts we can infer that generally little was known about this book. The catalogues which list this book as one of sham books are the following three:

1. The *Ta-tang-nei-tien-lou* (A. D. 664, T. vol. 55, N. 2149). In its vol. 10 (p. 335c), we find the registration in the group of unauthentic scriptures. The notes appended at the end say that these pseudo-scriptures are often found in the private libraries of many temples. The above-quoted bodhisattva is the one whom the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* makes the hearer of the Buddha’s sermons. This indicates that the book registered here is evidently the same as the existing *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*.

2. The *Kai-yuan-che-kiao-mou-lou* (A. D. 730, T. vol. 55, N. 2154). In its vol. 18 of pseudo-sūtras (p. 667c), we find the entry. The attached note says, “The second vol. tells about Pao-ming bodhisattva and this book is generally used in one-vol. form. Though this book has the same title as the genuine *Fa-kiu-king* its content is different. So this book belongs to the group of pseudo-sūtras.”

3. The *Tcheng-yuan-che-kiao-mou-lou* (A. D. 800, T. vol. 55, N. 2157). In its vol. 28, we find the same entry as the one in the *Nei-tien-lou*.

Further, the *Ta-tcheou-k’an-ting-mou-lou* (A. D. 695, T. vol. 55, N. 2153) lists under the title of the *Fa-kiu-king* the one-vol. one and the two-vols. one separately in the catalogue of the existing sacred books (its vol. 13). Of these two, the two-vols. one is the *Fa-kiu-king* of genuine kind, but the
On the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* (K. Mizuno) (13)

one-vol. one may be the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*. If it is so, this catalogue seems to list the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* in the group of genuine scriptures.

Next, the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* consists of 14 chapters in all, and covers a space of a little over three pages in the Taisho Edition. This space is about a quarter of that of the genuine *Fa-kiu-king*. The genuine *Fa-kiu-king* is composed of verses alone, but this book is mostly composed of prose. Only the eleventh chapter contains 24 verses, which probably caused the whole book to be called the *Fa-kiu-king*. But these 24 verses are quite different from those in the genuine *Fa-kiu-king*.

III Quotations from the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*

Apart from these few sacred book catalogues mentioned above, the writings that ever mention or quote the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* are those related to Zen Buddhism of the Tang and the Sung period. When such quotations are made, the name of “The *Fa-kiu-king*” is used to denote the source. But in these cases, the *Fa-kiu-king* is invariably the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* and not the genuine *Fa-kiu-king*. All quotations are found to be from the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*. The following are the writings that contain quotations from the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*:

1. 達摩禪師論 The *Ta-mo-tch’an-che-louen*. This is one of those documents excavated at Touen-houang Cave. It is unauthentically attributed to Zen Master Bodhidharma (A. D. -530 c.). But its postscript contains reference to the event in A. D. 681. So this book must have taken shape by that time. It contains one quotation from Chap. 4 of the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*.

2. 大乘五方便北宗 The *Ta-tch’en-wa-fang-pien-pei-tsong*. This book has also been discovered at Touen-houang. Its authorship is attributed to 神秀 Shen-hsiu (A.D. 606-706). If we admit his authorship, the production of this book must have been in the early eighth century. Verse 14 of Chap. 11 of the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* is once quoted in this book.

* S. Sekiguchi: A Study of Dharma-Daishi (Bodhidharma) p. 448.

— 398 —
3. 諸經要抄 The Tchou-king-yao-tch’ao (T. vol. 85, N. 2819). This is also one of sham sūtras excavated at Touen-houang. As it contains the account about the Indian monk, 善無畏 Šubhakarasimha, who came to China in c. A. D. 720, the production of this book must have been later than his arrival. This book contains about eight quotations from the Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king (Vajrasamādhi-sūtra). From the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king, verse 11 of Chap. 11 is once quoted.

4. 楞伽師資記 The Leng-k’ie-shi-tseu-ki (T. vol. 85, N. 2837). This book is also one of those discovered in Touen-houang. It is a history book belonging to a Northern School of Zen Buddhism. In this book we find two quotation from the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king. The one is the first half of the 16th verse of Chap. 11 quoted in the author, 淨覺 Tsing-kiao’s (A. D. 723) introductory remarks. The other is the 17th verse quoted by 弘忍 Hong-jen (A. D. 602-675) in his remarks. Granted that Hong-jen quoted from the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king, the book seems to have taken shape by the middle of the 7th century, which is not incompatible with the fact of its being listed in the Ta-tang-nei-tien-lou (A. D. 664).

5. 歷代法寶記 The Li-tai-fa-pao-ki (T. vol. 51, N. 2075), also excavated at Touen-honang. This is a history book of a sect of Zen Buddhism. The author is 無住 Wu-chu (A. D. 714-774), a monk of that sect. We find six quotations from the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king. One quotation is the title of the scripture only. Two quotations, which lack the title of the sūtra, are those from the first half of verse 16 and the first half of verse 17 in the 24 verses of Chap. 11 of the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king. The remaining three quotations are capped with the title of the sūtra. One of the three consists of two verses (verse 13 and verse 14), the second is verse 15 and the third is a simple phrase from Chap. 2 with slight alteration of words. Moreover, it may be worthwhile to note that this Li-tai-fa-pao-ki contains about three quotations from Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king (Vajrasamādhi-sūtra).

6. 頓悟入道要門論 The Touen-wou-jou-tao-yao-men-louen (Zokuu 2. 15). This book is the work of Zen Master 慧海 Hui-hai, who is supposed to have lived till about A. D. 800. There are three quotations from the Pseudo-
Fa-kiu-king in this book. One is from Chap. 5 and the other two are verse 14 of Chap. 11 and three-fourths of verse 16.

7. 寶藏論 The Pao-tsang-louen (T. vol. 45, N. 1857). This book has been considered to be the work of 僧肇 Seng-chao (A. D. 374-414). But this book is supposed to have been produced at about the same time as the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king. Of course, none of the successive catalogues of the sacred books lists this book. Priests of Zen Buddhism seem to have attached much importance to this book. The book was first brought to Japan in A. D. 858. At that time the book was not attributed to Seng-chao. The catalogue listing the books brought to Japan in A. D. 1094, registers this book with explanatory note that the book was written by Seng-chao. But it is only one of hand-written copies which has that annotation. The catalogue of Buddhist books, compiled in Korea in 1090 clearly registers this as Seng-chao’s work. Thus we are led to think that the book came to be considered Seng-chao’s work by the end of the 11th century. One edition of this book has 懐暉 Huai-hui’s (A. D. 811) introductory remark attached to it. This shows that the book was in existence in the early ninth century. This book, without mentioning the name of the Fa-kiu-king, quotes the first half of verse 16 of Chap. 11 of the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king as being said in a Sūtra. The Pao-tsang-louen never mentions the name of the book quoted, even when it is quoting from other sūtras.

8. 禪源諸誥集都序 The Tch’an-yuan-tchou-ts’iu-tsi-tsu-siu (T. vol. 48, N. 2015). This is the work by Zen Master 宗密 Tsong-mi (A. D. 780-841). It quotes verse 15 of Chap. 11 of the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king. Tsong-mi often quotes from the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king in his other works too. For example, his work 圓覺經略疏註. The Yuan-kiao king-lio-chou-tchou (T. vol. 39, N. 1795) contains four quotations from the Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king. He often quotes from the Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king (Vajrasamādhi-sūtra), too.

9. 宗鏡錄 The Tsong-king-lou (T. vol. 48, N. 2016). This is a voluminous work in 100 vols. by Zen Master 延壽 Yen-chou (A. D. 907-975). This book contains vast number of quotations from various books of many kinds. We find not a few quotations from the Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king. The
quotations from the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* are about seven in number. Chap. 4, Chap. 5, and Chap. 9 provide one each. From Chap. 11, the verse 15 is quoted once and the first half of verse 16 twice and the first half of verse 16 and the first half of verse 17 once.

As will be seen from the foregoing statements, of the quotations from the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* found in various writings, those from Chap. 11 are most frequent. But besides them, we find prose quotations from Chap. 2, 4, 5, and 9. The survey of the books which quote from the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*, shows that they are confined to the works related to Zen Buddhism in China from the late seventh century to the tenth century. And most of such books quote from pseudo-scriptures like the *Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king*, too.

To sum up, Chinese Zen Buddhists of the Tang and the Sung period attached great importance to the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king*. When was it that the book was produced? There is no clue whatever to this problem. The earliest reference to this book appeared in the *Ta-tang-nei-tien-lou* (A. D. 664). So this book must have taken shape by the middle of the seventh century. It is presumable that the afore-said *Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king* took shape between A. D. 650 and 665. The probability is that the *Pseudo-Fa-kiu-king* was also produced about the same time as the *Pseudo-Kin-kang-san-mei-king*. The production of the *Pao-tsang-louen* may perhaps have followed that of those two books.

*The San-loun, 天台 the T'ien-t'ai, 法相 the Fa-hsiang, 華嚴 the Hua-yen and other schools attached great importance to the sacred books and depended solely on genuine books. They took no notice of the pseudo-scriptures. The pseudo-scriptures made no appeal whatever to them. On the other hand Zen Buddhism put great importance on the content rather than on tradition and formality. Zen Buddhists adopted scriptures on their own merits. They made no hesitation in quoting from the pseudo-scriptures, as long as their content was excellent.*

(The details on this subject will be written in Japanese in the *Journal of the Komazawa University* No. 19)