

Notes on the Chinese composite version of the Golden Light Sutra

Here I have listed some of the major differences between this Chinese composite version and the Emmerick English version, after whatever changes I have made:

Chapter 9 of the English version is left as the last part of Chapter 8 in the Chinese translation, as it originally appears in Chinese. Therefore, total number of chapters of the Chinese composite version is one less than the English version.

Chapter 15 of English version has an additional introductory paragraph with Bodhisattvasamuccaya, while the Chinese version has a different introduction. The concluding paragraph is shorter or more condensed in Chinese.

Chapter 17 of English version. The concluding section where the different persons of the tale are identified to be past rebirths of different people during the Buddha's time is very short in the Chinese version, even after replacing with an equivalent passage from another Chinese translation.

Chapter 18 of English version. The introductory five paragraphs of the preparation of the seat etc are missing, instead they are replaced by a different introduction in the Chinese translation. I have left it as it is without changing.

Apart from amending some typographical errors in the Chinese version I have not make much changes to it, even though there are many minor differences compared to the English version. This does not affect the sense/meaning of the sutra. This is because in general when they differ I prefer the Chinese translation which seems more fluent and meaningful to me and also because the Chinese is in verse form and it is too hard for me to make changes and yet still fit them back into the verse.

Regarding the Tibetan translation, I have compared the chapter divisions and the beginning and end of each chapter with the English and Chinese. I try to make the Chinese comes close to them, at least in terms of length. Although both Tibetan and English versions have 19 chapters, the actual divisions of them are different. I have opted to maintain the original Chinese translation, keeping to a total of 18 chapters.