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金刚经释义意见	Comments on Interpreting the Diamond Sūtra
滔滔尘世，患起人心，心迷外境，自居于奴。遂迷声色，迷货利，迷武力，迷邪说，一切皆迷信，而以我是为众迷之根。佛求人类自觉，要人根本打破自己之迷信，人乃反以迷信目之，宁非怪事。	In this tumultuous world, afflictions arise in people's minds. Deluded by external circumstances, they make themselves slaves. Thus they are deluded by sensual attractions, wealth and profit, military force, and pernicious doctrines; all are forms of blind belief. Yet the belief in a self is the root of all these delusions. The Buddha seeks humanity's awakening and asks people fundamentally to break through their own blind beliefs; yet people instead dismiss his teaching as superstition. Is this not strange?
经者，佛与诸大弟子讨究众生迷悟之根源，阿难等结为典籍者也。后人依据以考证自己之心地，如何而出凡入圣，如何而超登觉岸，其理至显，其义又至密。故依据文字语言以形示者曰“显”，印证心地神悟而难表者曰“密”。	A sūtra is a text compiled by Ānanda and others from the Buddha's discussions with his great disciples concerning the roots of sentient beings' delusion and awakening. Later generations rely on it to examine their own mind-ground: how to pass from ordinary life to sagehood, and how to cross to the shore of awakening. Its principle is clear, while its meaning reaches depths that words can scarcely express. Therefore, that which is expressed through written words and language is called “exoteric,” while that which confirms the mind-ground's spiritual awakening yet is difficult to articulate is called “esoteric.”
“金刚经”为一切凡圣悟心之门，了悟无明妄心，即是妙慧真心，故曰悟心。三界以心为主，心名为地，能观心者，究竟解脱，故又名一切凡夫入如来地顿悟法门。	The Diamond Sūtra is the gateway through which all ordinary beings and sages awaken to the mind. To realize that the deluded mind of ignorance is precisely the true mind of wondrous wisdom is called awakening to the mind. The three realms are governed by mind, and mind is called the ground. Those able to contemplate the mind attain ultimate liberation. Therefore, it is also called the Dharma gate of sudden awakening by which all ordinary beings enter the ground of the Tathāgata.

惟经义深邃，倘不解如来所说义，则心地莫由证入，此读诵讲解之不可忽也。震旦人具有大乘根性，于此经最有缘，独苦不解其义。讲者每多依文解字，布段分章，此是释字，非属释义。	Yet the meaning of this sūtra is profound. If one does not understand the meaning taught by the Tathāgata, there is no way to realize and enter the mind-ground. Thus reading, reciting, and expounding it must not be neglected. The people of China possess Mahāyāna capacities and have especially strong affinities with this sūtra, yet they struggle to understand its meaning. Those who lecture on it mostly interpret characters according to the text, dividing it into passages and chapters. This is explaining words, not explaining meaning.
闻者复依文字而杂参我见，附会邪说，于心地法门，远之又远。至内地修持之女众，或比丘尼，则并此文字解亦不获闻焉。慧命所关，实为至重。夫甚深难信之法，惟信心不逆者，方能不惊不怖，所谓“是经义不可思议”。否则滞著名相，辗转生疑，甚深义趣，反为所掩，是由无真智以破外相故。	Listeners, moreover, rely on the written words while mixing in views of self and reading erroneous doctrines into the text. Thus they grow ever more distant from the Dharma gate of the mind-ground. As for women practitioners and bhikṣuṇīs cultivating in inland regions, they do not even have the opportunity to hear such explanations of the text. Since this concerns the wisdom-life, it is truly of utmost importance. Only those who trust a teaching so profound and difficult to believe can hear it without alarm or fear; this is what is meant by saying, “The meaning of this sūtra is inconceivable.” Otherwise, one becomes attached to names and appearances, repeatedly gives rise to doubt, and the profound import is instead obscured. This is because one lacks true wisdom to break through external appearances.
《金刚经》以无住为宗，专言破相，相破则无分别，是谓降伏其心。至无分别智之解释，多至廿余种，甚深甚深，不能尽说，要以离我相为第一，以我相为分别之根，即今日人心骚乱之根也。	The Diamond Sūtra takes non-abiding as its principle and focuses on seeing through appearances. When appearances are broken through, there is no discrimination; this is called subduing one's mind. There are more than twenty explanations of non-discriminating wisdom—profound indeed, profoundly so—and they cannot all be fully set forth. Yet foremost is to be free of the mark of self, for the mark of self is the root of discrimination and also the root of the unrest in people's minds today.
智者了解心体真相，认识种种分别，尽属妄想缘影，不为所迷。真理即明，一切无所疑惑，自心方有把柄。把柄者，即宗下称为巴鼻是也。以有巴鼻，遂得受用。清净安乐，常恒不变，是为常乐我净。	The wise understand the true nature of mind and recognize that all kinds of discrimination are merely illusory, conditioned shadows; they are not deluded by them. When truth becomes clear, all doubts are dispelled, and only then does one gain a handle on

	one's own mind. This handle is what the Chan school calls babi, a footing in practice. With that footing, one can experience the benefit of practice. Purity and peace, constant and unchanging—this is permanence, bliss, self, and purity.
此我字，乃不变之巴鼻，非我相之我，是又名为住处。此住字，乃安立义，非住著之住。若心有住，即为非住，言有所住著，即不住于菩提也。故一为破疑，一为安住，此天亲所以分《金刚经》为二十七段疑。	The word “self” here refers to that unchanging footing, distinct from the self posited by the mark of self; it is also called an abiding place. The word “abiding” here means establishing, not attachment. If the mind clings to anything, it does not truly abide; to say that there is something to which one is attached is to say that one does not abide in bodhi. Thus, one is for dispelling doubts and the other for abiding securely. This is why Vasubandhu divided the Diamond Sūtra into twenty-seven doubts.
而无著复立十八住也，讲者离此二论即不合弥勒慈尊所说经旨，等同魔说，心地法门，终无依据。骥陆不敏愿以一知半解，告诸同参。并说其讲法次第如下：	Asaṅga, moreover, established eighteen abidings. Lecturers who depart from these two treatises do not accord with the meaning of the sūtra as taught by the compassionate Maitreya; their teaching is tantamount to the words of Māra, and the Dharma gate of the mind-ground will ultimately have no basis. With my limited understanding, I, Xianglu, would like to share what I have learned with fellow practitioners and set out the following sequence for expounding the sūtra:
一、释文	I. Explaining the Text
应参各家所注。将全经词注，分别解释。就文生义，使听者便于直解，是为释文，以下为释义。	One should consult the annotations of various commentators. Explain the vocabulary and annotations throughout the sūtra, item by item, deriving the meaning from the text so that listeners may readily understand it directly. This is explaining the text; what follows is explaining its meaning.
二、释疑	II. Resolving Doubts
应参天亲二十七疑。分段剖讲，另立一表，提纲摄要，点清眼目，并以白话注释，以便读者至紧要关键处彼此勿含糊放过。务在前后贯通，彻底明了。盖此经于微细疑处，不表其起因，但明其断处。故必依文觅根，寻其疑因起于何处，方得究竟。《金刚经》多重文复句，而义各有别，不能但依文字直讲也。	One should consult Vasubandhu's twenty-seven doubts. Analyze and explain the text in sections, preparing a separate table to outline the essentials and clarify the key points, with explanations in plain language, so that at crucial junctures readers will not let ambiguities pass unchecked. The aim is to read earlier and later passages together until their meaning is clear. For, with regard to the subtle

	points of doubt in this sūtra, the sūtra leaves their causes unstated and shows only where the doubts are resolved. One must therefore seek their roots in the text and discover where and how the causes of doubt arise; only then can one reach the ultimate understanding. The Diamond Sūtra contains many repeated passages and sentences, yet their meanings differ in each case. It cannot be explained merely by following the words directly.
三、释住	III. Explaining Abiding
无著立十八住，其义微矣，尤妙在理旨显畅。此“住”字，即住于菩提之住。亦应列表同上，参讨其精微处也。然必释疑而可明住，故讲释宜在后。	Asaṅga established eighteen abidings, whose meaning is subtle indeed; what is especially wonderful is the lucidity of their principle and purport. The word “abiding” here means abiding in bodhi. One should likewise make a table, as above, and investigate its refined subtleties. Yet one must resolve the doubts before the abidings can be understood, so this exposition should come afterward.
四、释旨	IV. Explaining the Purport
全经大旨，无非无住生心，然千万语不能尽此微妙。二十七疑与十八住，论似不同，理实不异。以一住中含有两疑三疑，或一疑中含三住四住，应再一一拈出，将全经大旨按两表对讲，缩小范围，以清读者眼目。于紧要处隐微处，纵未能尽合经旨，与二大士所说，要以不离本心地为主。如此或得一二亲切处也。	The central purport of the entire sūtra is nothing other than giving rise to mind without abiding anywhere, yet countless words cannot exhaust this subtle wonder. The twenty-seven doubts and the eighteen abidings analyze the text differently while expressing the same underlying principle. A single abiding may contain two or three doubts, or a single doubt may contain three or four abidings. These should again be identified one by one, and the central purport of the whole sūtra should be explained by comparing the two tables, narrowing the scope in order to clarify the reader's understanding. At crucial and hidden points, even if one cannot wholly accord with the sūtra's purport and with what the two great bodhisattvas taught, one must take as primary the principle of not departing from one's original mind-ground. In this way, one may perhaps come to a firsthand understanding of a point or two.
五、释心	V. Explaining the Mind
以上四种说法，仍属表面上解悟、解知，尚非心地上证悟证知。不由修证下手，不见实相。空口讲演，纵说得	The preceding four modes of exposition remain at the level of intellectual understanding. Direct

明白透畅，到底毫不相干，终不能归证到净土成就门去。	realization and knowledge of the mind-ground go further. Without beginning from cultivation and realization, one cannot see the true nature of things. Talk alone, however clear and thorough, does not bring about that realization. It cannot lead to accomplishment in the Pure Land.
经云：“若乐小法者，则于此经，不能听受读诵，为人解说”。可见听受者，亦须明白般若相貌，方可心领神会。	The sūtra says: “Those who delight in lesser teachings cannot hear and accept this sūtra, read and recite it, or explain it to others.” It is thus clear that those who hear and receive it must also recognize how prajñā manifests before they can take the teaching to heart.
到此讲时，不能按照经文，分章布段的细说，直须离开文字，将“心”字反复讨论，互相参证：如何观心？如何修持？如诸境前来，八风如何不动？如何提照空蕴，乃至妄心缘起？如何澈悟无生等类……是必以经印心，以心印空，归到实用，至金刚地。	When expounding this point, one cannot follow the sūtra word by word, dividing it into chapters and sections for detailed explanation. One must directly leave words behind and repeatedly investigate the word “mind,” mutually examining and confirming it: How does one contemplate the mind? How does one cultivate? When all circumstances arise before one, how can one remain unmoved by the eight worldly winds? How does one sustain awareness and contemplate the emptiness of the aggregates, and discern how the deluded mind arises through conditions? How does one thoroughly awaken to the unborn? And so forth. One must use the sūtra to confirm the mind, use the mind to confirm emptiness, return to practical application, and reach the Vajra Ground.
如此对参，不独听者获益，讲者受惠不浅矣。故释心云者，释心不可得，用反复讨论之法以讲《金刚经》耳。	This shared inquiry benefits the listeners and the lecturer alike. Thus, to explain the mind means to explain that the mind cannot be grasped, using repeated discussion as the method for expounding the Diamond Sūtra.
愚见如是，幸高明有以惠教焉。	Such is my humble view. I hope that those of greater insight will kindly offer their guidance.