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Ta-hui and Lay Buddhists:
Ch'an Sermons on Death

MIRIAM LEVERING

Ching-shan Ta-hui Tsung-kao P'u-chüeh Ch'an-shih, usually known as Ta-hui or Tsung-kao, was a teacher in the Yang-ch'i branch of the Lin-chi line of the Ch'an (or Zen) school.¹ He was born in 1089 to an Anwei family; his teaching career took place primarily in the southern part of China during the early Southern Sung period. During most of the latter part of his life he was one of the most influential Ch'an teachers of his time.² He had thousands of students, scores of dharma heirs, and many disciples among literati and officials.³ His large following can be explained in part by the fact that he was the most prominent disciple of a famous teacher, Yüan-wu.⁴ But more important were the vigor and accessibility of his personality and his teachings, as well as his success in bringing many students, both lay and monastic, to varying degrees of progress on the path to enlightenment.

Ta-hui made many contributions to the development of Ch'an theory and method: His teaching is best known for his contributions to the understanding of the *kung-an* (or *kōan*) as a means of concentrating and focusing doubt.⁵ My purpose here is not to summarize his major contributions but to focus on one particular contribution: his development of the sermon form known as *p'u-shuo*. I have chosen this form and its use as the contribution of Ta-hui on which to focus attention because it illustrates Ta-hui's concern for the religious life and the enlightenment of laymen.

The fact that there were *p'u-shuo* sermons such as Ta-hui's in Ch'an monasteries suggests the existence of a new relationship between the laity and the Ch'an teacher. We can see five distinct steps in the development

of these new relationships. First, laity could relate to teachers as “students outside the walls” on a one-to-one basis. We find this relationship of laity to Ch’an teachers throughout early Ch’an literature from the T’ang dynasty. Second, laity could be allowed to sponsor, for the sake of earning merits, events that would take place in the monastery whether they participated in them or not and which were unconnected with their own life in any specific way. This activity would include sponsoring talks on the dharma to the monks or offering meals. This relationship would reflect the view that the practice of laity, as distinct from that of a monk, consisted primarily in performing meritorious acts for the sake of their future happiness or that of their loved ones. Third, laity could ask that meritorious acts be performed on occasions other than the usual monastic occasions, as for example in a cycle of seven-day memorial offerings to earn merit for their deceased relatives or friends. The performing of the act was done specifically to meet their needs, but the content of the sermon or sutra reading need not do so. It appears that before Ta-hui’s time and even afterward sermons on such occasions might mention directly neither the layperson, death, or grief. Fourth, a layman could join with other laity to form a society for performing acts of merit and for studying the dharma. The society would function under the aegis of the monastery and its teacher. Here laity might begin to require that their needs as people still living in the world be addressed by the monastic institution.

What we find with Ta-hui, however, is a fifth step—namely, addressing the needs of the lay sponsor not only in act or form but directly in the content of the sermon. This was clearly a sign of a new monastic concern for lay life, a new relationship sought out actively by Ta-hui himself. Thus Ta-hui’s expansion of the *p’u-shuo* form and his new use for it can be seen as reflecting a new approach to the teaching of laity. Not only did Ta-hui reject the traditional approach that sought to distinguish between monks and laity by teaching monks practice and wisdom leading to enlightenment while teaching laity only about the truth of karma and the importance of merit; he also followed the Ch’an practice of teaching selected lay students about emptiness and enlightenment and initiating them in *kung-an* or *hua-t’ou* practice while continuing to assume that for the vast majority of laity the important teaching is karma and practices to accumulate merit. Ta-hui went as far as possible beyond the distinction between teaching and practice for laity and teaching and practice for monks. He encouraged all his lay hearers to understand the profound truth of emptiness and the Hua-yen doctrine of nonobstruction and to strive for enlightenment through *kung-an* or *hua-t’ou* practice.

I shall begin by focusing upon the *p’u-shuo* form itself, showing

through a preliminary exploration of its history Ta-hui's original contribution to its development. Then we shall look closely at one *p'u-shuo* sermon to see how Ta-hui addressed the occasion of death and the emotions of bereavement on two levels in order to meet the immediate spiritual needs of grieving laity and to bring them to a higher understanding of the doctrine of emptiness and the path to enlightenment.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE *P'u-shuo* FORM

The *p'u-shuo*, or "general preaching," was the last of three major sermon forms to be developed within the Ch'an monastery. Two earlier forms, the *shang-t'ang* and the *hsiao-ts'an*, are mentioned in the earliest recension of rules for Ch'an monasteries that remains to us, the *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*, published in 1103.⁶ The *p'u-shuo* clearly grew out of these forms and resembled them in many respects, especially until the influence of Ta-hui was generally felt.

For the *shang-t'ang*, the *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei* prescribed that the abbot of the Ch'an monastery should go to the dharma seat in the Dharma Hall six times a month and address the whole assembly of monks who would be seated formally before him. The fifth day of the month and all succeeding dates whose numbers were multiples of five were specified as the days for *shang-t'ang*.⁷ For the *hsiao-ts'an* it was prescribed that preaching was to take place in the abbot's own quarters, the *fang-chang*, at least on the third, eighth, thirteenth, eighteenth, twenty-third, and twenty-eighth of the month.⁸ Both forms of preaching were open to laity, who could attend them and also ask that they be given, perhaps in connection with a financial contribution. But the laity's part seems merely to have been to earn the merit of sponsoring a preaching of the law: Reference was rarely made in the abbot's remarks to the layperson himself or to anything specific in his situation or to laity in general.⁹ Most commonly the abbot's remarks would be preceded by a question from monks and an ensuing exchange between monks and the abbot; alternatively the abbot himself would bring up a *kung-an* or make a remark of his own about the law and challenge his audience to understand, in the deepest sense, what he had said. For the most part these sermons were short, or so it seems from their recorded lengths; they were not vehicles for expanded discussion of a topic.¹⁰ For the monk, or for the lay resident following the discipline of the monastery, every thought was already directed toward developing wisdom or clearing away ignorance. In the context of such concentrated practice extended sermons would almost certainly be unnecessary and might even be harmful, particularly if heard six or twelve times a month.

In the *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei* book of rules of 1103 the *p'u-shuo* form is not mentioned. Thus we may infer that the form was not in wide use prior to 1103. Short paragraphs describing the *p'u-shuo* form do appear in the next two extant rule books: the *Ch'an-lin pei-yüan ch'ing-kuei*, completed in 1311,¹¹ and the *Ts'ung-lin chiao-ting ch'ing-kuei tsung-yao*, published in 1274.¹² In the absence of contrary evidence this would seem to indicate that the form came into wide use between 1103 and 1274.

Did Ta-hui invent the *p'u-shuo* form? If not, what was the *p'u-shuo* like before his use of it? The accounts in these rule books written more than a hundred years after Ta-hui's death do not help us to answer these questions with any certainty, as they may tell us more about the *p'u-shuo* form as it developed after Ta-hui than about the form that Ta-hui invented or found and adapted as he began his own preaching. Nonetheless they do suggest the context in which the *p'u-shuo* preaching took place, and they make a historical remark. For the reader's convenience I quote here only the later and more complete of the two, that of the rule book of 1311, pointing out in the notes significant differences between the two similar texts:

At all times when the *p'u-shuo* is given, an attendant orders the *k'o-t'ou* of the abbot's quarters [one whose duty it is to attend to guests]¹³ to hang up the sign of *p'u-shuo* in front of the Monks' Hall [the hall in which the monks lived] and the *Sangha* Hall [a hall in which the monks gathered to read sutras and eat and conduct other activities] and other halls, and also to arrange the seats in rows [for the *p'u-shuo*] in the Inner Hall or the Dharma Hall.¹⁴ [The Inner Hall was apparently used for special ceremonies or lectures, the Dharma Hall for formal preaching of the law.] When the meal is finished, the *t'ang ssu hsing che* informs the attendant and then informs the abbot.¹⁵ He strikes the drum five times. After the attendant leaves the Inner Hall he invites the assembly [of monks] to gather. He then goes in to invite the abbot to come out and take his seat.¹⁶ The ceremonial for *p'u-shuo* is the same as that for *hsiao-ts'an*.¹⁷ The teachers in the Ts'ao-tung line set up a seat in the *Sangha* Hall on the first and fifteenth of every month¹⁸ and "speak generally" to the assembly. Only the monk Ta-hui, who had mastered both the essence of the teaching and the art of preaching, did not choose time or place [but gave *p'u-shuo* whenever or wherever it suited him].¹⁹

This account certainly suggests that although Ta-hui did use the form differently from his predecessors, he did not invent it.

A somewhat different historical account is given by Ta-hui himself:

A hundred years ago there was no *p'u-shuo*. But in the period from Hsi-ning to Yüan-yü [between 1068 and 1094] when the monk Chen-ching lived at Tung-shan Kuei-tsung,²⁰ there began to be *p'u-shuo*. Chen-ching's great purpose was to bring students of the Way to enlightenment.²¹

This passage suggests that Chen-ching K'o-wen (1025–1102) was the originator of the *p'u-shuo* form in the Lin-chi school of Ch'an. Ta-hui's statement became the accepted view of the origin of the form in later tradition, as is evidenced by the following summary of the tradition on the subject by Muchaku Dōchū in Japan in 1716:

P'u-shuo is a form of ascending the dharma seat [to preach]. *Shang-t'ang* is also [a form of] ascending the dharma seat. The difference is that in the *p'u-shuo* one does not burn incense or wear the dharma robe. The practice of *p'u-shuo* began with Chen-ching; the "three Buddhas" also practiced it. But only with Ta-hui did it begin to flourish.²²

The historical accuracy of this traditional view is difficult to assess due to the nature of our sources. Chen-ching has left us a collection of "Recorded Sayings," but in them we find no record of a *p'u-shuo*.²³ The "three Buddhas" must refer to three disciples of the Lin-chi master Wutsu Fa-yen (?–1104) whose names or nicknames included the word "Buddha" (Fo): Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in in (1063–1135), known as Fo-kuo (Buddha Fruit); Fo-chien (Buddha Mirror) Hui-ch'in (1059–1117); and Fo-yen (Buddha Eye) Ch'ing-yuan (1067–1120). Of these three only two have left "Recorded Sayings" still extant, namely Yüan-wu and Fo-yen.²⁴ In both cases we do find *p'u-shuo*.

P'u-shuo BY TA-HUI'S PREDECESSORS

What were *p'u-shuo* like before Ta-hui? How did they differ from *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an*? To what extent were laity their sponsors? To what extent are the needs of laity reflected in their occasions, their form, or their content? The existence of *p'u-shuo* in the records of Yüan-wu and Fo-yen gives us some evidence with which to address these questions.

Yüan-wu (1063–1135) was perhaps the most eminent Ch'an teacher in the Lin-chi school during his lifetime. For this reason his "Recorded Sayings" are particularly extensive when compared to those of most of his contemporaries. Nevertheless we find in these records only one example of a *p'u-shuo*. This sermon in its recorded form runs some 1,400 words.²⁵ It is a straightforward discourse on the law and contains no specific reference to lay practice or to laity. A large part of it is an account of Yüan-wu's own search for the truth and his initial enlightenment experience. It is a lively and witty sermon describing certain fundamental truths of the dharma and the freedom that realization of them brings; it exhorts students to plunge in and realize these truths for themselves. It is, however, much longer than the average length of Yüan-wu's *shang-t'ang* or *hsiao-ts'an* as recorded; the former average 200 words and the latter 442

words.²⁶ It was also clearly given on a special occasion,²⁷ but there is no mention of lay sponsorship.

Yüan-wu's dharma-brother, Fo-yen (1067–1120), also left extensive "Recorded Sayings" that have survived to the present.²⁸ In them we find nine talks designated as *p'u-shuo* and thirty-nine talks recorded immediately after them under the heading of *shan-yü* (Good Words); these latter may or may not have been delivered as *p'u-shuo*, but since the format of the "Recorded Sayings" is ambiguous, and since they are identical in form and length to the nine that are clearly marked *p'u-shuo*, I shall consider them here tentatively as such. This impression is strengthened by the appearance immediately after them of a tenth clearly marked *p'u-shuo* that is further identified as having been given at the request of a layman.²⁹ The first nine *p'u-shuo* average 460 words each; the following thirty-nine average 420 words each. The final sermon for a layman is approximately 1,140 words; it is the second longest of the sermons.

In content none of Fo-yen's *p'u-shuo* (or *shan-yü*) make reference in the body of the sermon to a lay donor or to his situation, past history, or needs. The first of the nine *p'u-shuo*, for example, devotes most of its 320 words to types of Ch'an sickness, a subject of great interest to monks engaged in trying to "throw away body and mind" in the practice of *kung-an* inspection or silent concentration but of very little relevance to laity.³⁰ The forty-ninth sermon, the one designated as being given for a layman, seems to be similar in content and form to those that preceded it which were clearly addressed to "students of the Way," a term that in Fo-yen's sermons appears to refer only to those who had entered the monastery to study. More information about the layman or the context might reveal that the sermon was directed to the needs of the sponsoring layman, but no sign of such an intention appears in the text.

P'u-shuo BY TA-HUI'S CONTEMPORARIES

Hsü-t'ang Chih-yü (1185–1269) suggests that "since the 'three Buddhas' all [teachers] have had *p'u-shuo*."³¹ This remark raises the question whether Ta-hui's contemporaries also gave *p'u-shuo* sermons and, if so, whether their sermons differed in form, length, intended audience, or manner of address from those of Ta-hui's predecessors or from those of Ta-hui himself. To answer these questions I have made a preliminary survey of the surviving records of thirty-eight of Ta-hui's contemporaries and juniors in four different Ch'an schools.³² The appendix presents the detailed results of this survey for the benefit of the reader who has greater curiosity about the history of the form. Here I offer only a summary of my findings in the following list and a few observations on the way in which the form was used during Ta-hui's lifetime:

- I. *P'u-shuo* by Ta-hui's Predecessors in Existing Records:³³
 1. Chen-ching K'o-wen (1025-1102): none
 2. Fo-chien Hui-ch'in (1059-1117): no record
 3. Fo-yen Ch'ing-yüan (1067-1120): nine (400 words average); thirty-nine (420 words average); one (1,140 words)
 4. Fo-kuo Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in (1063-1153): one (1,400 words)
- II. *P'u-shuo* by Ta-hui's Approximate Contemporaries in Existing Records:³⁴
 1. Hsüeh-t'ang Tao-hsing (1089-1151): two (280 words and 540 words)
 2. Shan-t'ang Seng-hsün (dates unknown): one (560 words)
 3. Hsüeh-feng Hui-k'ung (1096-1158): two (180 words and 400 words)
 4. Fo-hai Hui-yüan (1115-1169): three (1,280 words, 800 words, and 820 words)
 5. P'u-an Yin-su (1115-1169): one (1,120 words)
 6. Sung-yüan Ch'ung-yüeh (1132-1202): two (1,224 words and 700 words)
- III. *P'u-shuo* by Ta-hui in Existing Records:³⁵
 1. *P'u-shuo* in one *chüan*: fourteen (in some texts thirteen or fifteen) (2,503 words average)
 2. *P'u-shuo* in four *chüan*: sixty-six (2,294 words average)
 3. Total: eighty *p'u-shuo* (2,346 words average)

The first thing that may strike the reader on glancing at the list is that *p'u-shuo* sermons were recorded very infrequently: In most cases for a given teacher only one to three *p'u-shuo* were recorded. Were they in fact given so infrequently? It is possible that a much larger proportion of those given may not have been recorded than in the case of the *shang-t'ang* or *hsiao-ts'an* sermon forms. Thus one may presume that either *p'u-shuo* were infrequently given or else they were not regarded as a very serious occasion for teaching. This then raises the question of why so many more were recorded for Fo-yen and for Ta-hui than for any other teacher. Was it a matter of their skill with the form or their attitude toward it? Or was it simply that they gave *p'u-shuo* far more frequently than others did?

Second, *p'u-shuo* as recorded were generally short; the majority were recorded in well under a thousand words.

Third, *p'u-shuo* were not in wide use. In the records of thirty-eight of Ta-hui's contemporaries and juniors we have *p'u-shuo* by only six different teachers.

Fourth, the form for *p'u-shuo* was apparently identical to that of the *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an*: All three most often began with a question

and answer exchange between monk and teacher and then continued with comments by the teacher arising out of that exchange. Alternatively the teacher himself would bring up a *kung-an* or a remark on the law. It seems to be only in the ritual forms accompanying the *p'u-shuo* that it differs in structure from the *hsiao-ts'an* and *shang-t'ang*.

Fifth, the extant *p'u-shuo* were rarely recorded as having been sponsored by laity. Only the one sermon by Fo-yen refers to a lay sponsor.

Sixth, in the content of these *p'u-shuo* there is little indication that they were addressed to an audience that included laity. In some cases *p'u-shuo* may have been longer and more discursive than *shang-t'ang* by the same teacher, although not necessarily longer than the *hsiao-ts'an*. But the *p'u-shuo* do not refer in any way to the particular requirements of lay practice or lay life; even in the one case mentioning lay sponsorship we find no reference to the layman, to the occasion in his life that led him to sponsor the sermon, or to his intention in doing so. The strongest impression one receives on reading these sermons is that they were regarded primarily as devices for teaching monks, just as were the *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an*.

TA-HUI'S USE OF THE *P'u-shuo* FORM

What we have seen of the use of the *p'u-shuo* form by predecessors and contemporaries of Ta-hui suggests that it was generally regarded as a sermon similar in form and purpose to the *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an*, though perhaps less formal. Ta-hui's use of the *p'u-shuo* differs from his use of the *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an* as well as from his colleagues' use of the *p'u-shuo*.³⁶ It is my contention here that these differences indicate a deliberate altering of the *p'u-shuo* form to enable it to serve the specific purpose of communication with lay or partly lay audiences.

First, many more of Ta-hui's *p'u-shuo* were recorded than had ever been the case before. We have approximately eighty *p'u-shuo* by Ta-hui in present records, including a volume of *p'u-shuo* in four *chüan* that circulated separately from his *Recorded Sayings*. As the reader has surely noted already, Fo-yen Ch'ing-yüan is the only other teacher among those surveyed who left a record of more than five *p'u-shuo*.

Second, Ta-hui's *p'u-shuo* average over 2,300 words in length—nearly double the length of the longest *p'u-shuo* prior to his time. In practice this means that Ta-hui allowed himself the scope to introduce a number of themes and develop a number of ideas. Whereas I have argued above that short sermons are more suited to the practice of monks, I am suggesting here that the lengthening of the form made the *p'u-shuo* more useful for addressing audiences that included laity.

Third, fifty-five of Ta-hui's eighty *p'u-shuo*, or 69 percent, are given at the request of laity.

Fourth, where a *p'u-shuo* is given at a layman's request, Ta-hui always acknowledges the lay sponsor by name and almost always refers also to the lay sponsor's intention to transfer the merit earned in sponsoring the *p'u-shuo* to another person or to use it to further the development of his own wisdom. This acknowledgment is not allowed to usurp the main function of teaching, but it is always made. When a monk or another teacher invites Ta-hui to preach, there is usually no reference to him in the *p'u-shuo* itself.

Fifth, and most important, Ta-hui departed from the usual practice in that he addressed the specific needs of the lay donor in the body of the sermon itself. Ta-hui almost always told his hearers more about the donor than his name; and when he saw that the occasion for the sponsorship reflected a personal need, as in sermons immediately following the death of a relative, he addressed the needs of the sponsor directly.

Ta-hui did not alter the outlines of the *p'u-shuo* form as he found it: His *p'u-shuo*, like those of his predecessors, begin with an exchange between himself and monks and then continue with a paragraph-long comment on some aspect of the questions or answers. His retention of these traditional openings shows that he was concerned to retain the meaning of the *p'u-shuo* as an occasion for the teaching of monks. But he simultaneously expanded the form, used it (or had it recorded) more frequently, and added remarks that made it a more direct means of addressing lay sponsors and lay needs.

How did Ta-hui himself conceive of the *p'u-shuo* form? Although it is tempting to read too much into it, one cannot help noting that Ta-hui's one recorded discussion of the *p'u-shuo* form itself pointed his listeners to the *Avatamsaka Sutra*:

Now when the ancient [Chen-ching?] established this dharma-gate, he had a [scriptural] authority for doing so. How do we know? Do you not recall that in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, in the "Departing from the World" chapter, the bodhisattva P'u-hui raised like a cloud two hundred questions and the bodhisattva P'u-hsien poured forth two thousand answers? Among them there was the question: What is meant by the name *p'u-shuo san-chieh* [literally: to preach, universally, to the three worlds]? The answer was: Sons of the Buddha, bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas, there are ten kinds of preaching to the three worlds. What are the ten? In the world of the past to preach about the world of the past; in the world of the past to preach about the world of the future; in the world of the past to preach about the world of the present. In the world of the future to speak about the world of the past; in the world of the future to speak about the world of the present; in the world of the future to speak about the

inexhaustible [the infinite]. In the present world to speak about the past; in the present world to speak about the future; in the present world to speak about equality. That makes nine worlds. In addition, if one sees one's own single thought as penetrating the nine worlds as if it were a string linking together a number of pearls, then this single thought binds all as the tenth world. Therefore it is said that in the present world one preaches to the three worlds, for this single thought makes them one.³⁷

Let us restate the idea of this passage a little more concisely. One of the accomplishments of the bodhisattva—one that must at first seem mysterious, even miraculous—is to be able to preach to a variety of realms simultaneously, so that persons in different worlds all hear him at once. Here the separate worlds at issue are the worlds of the past, the present, and the future. P'u-hsien Bodhisattva explains that one thought in the present can contain and unite all the worlds of the past, present, and future, if that thought is the transcendent thought of the enlightened mind. To preach in the present through this one mind that unites them all is to preach in all nine modes at once.

We can connect this passage to a more immediate and mundane plane. If enlightened mind unites and communicates with all realms, and reveals their unity and interrelation within one indivisible totality, then it is possible to preach on different levels of understanding to mixed audiences and to transcend the distinction between monk and laity, between practice inside the monastery and practice beyond its walls. All the different audiences of monks and laity respond to preaching that comes from the one mind of enlightenment, for it is that one mind that penetrates and grounds their separate beings. Ta-hui grounded his understanding of his own mission in the world on the *Avatamsaka's* stress on unity, generality, and totality: The title "*p'u-shuo*" and the scriptural authority that he cites are particularly suited to express his self-understanding and his intention in using the form.³⁸

A SERMON FOR THE DEAD: THE OCCASION

Although many different occasions in the life of laity brought them to the monastery to sponsor *p'u-shuo*, and Ta-hui correspondingly addressed many different lay needs, among the most striking examples of *p'u-shuo* as "ministry" to laity are to be found in Ta-hui's sermons on the occasion of memorial offerings by laity on behalf of their dead relatives and friends.

Making offerings of wealth or of the law to earn merit for the dead is an ancient but controversial practice in Buddhism.³⁹ The idea that one can perform good acts and devote their good fruits to the future welfare of

the dead is a development of the idea of merit as transferable, an idea that arose first in connection with the Buddha's offering gifts of his surplus merit to his disciples.⁴⁰ In the specific case of transfers to the dead, it was generally agreed that such transfers were most needed and most efficacious during the forty-nine days immediately after death when a dead person would be in an intermediate stage of existence (*chung-yin* or *chung-yu*) between his last birth and his next. In this period good karmic seeds sent to his aid might enable him to avoid the evil paths of existence and to be reborn in the human world or in one of the heavens.⁴¹ It was customary during this period to offer a meal to monks and to sponsor a reading of sutras or a preaching of the law every seven days through the forty-ninth day after the person's death.⁴² In Ta-hui's *P'u-shuo* we find three sermons recorded as given on the occasion of memorial offerings thirty-five, forty-two, and forty-nine days after the death of the donor's relative.

It was customary also to have a memorial service on the hundredth day after death; this was apparently a practice taken over from a similar Confucian custom and was generally known by its Confucian name, "the memorial of the end of weeping."⁴³ Confucians buried the body in its final resting place on this day, and on the following day they placed the memorial tablet of the deceased in the ancestral hall.⁴⁴ In the Confucian usage the service marked a transition from awareness of misfortune to hope for good fortune: On this day the deceased officially became an ancestor from whom his family could expect help.⁴⁵ Ta-hui followed the practice of conducting a service on the hundredth day, referring to the occasion by its Confucian name.⁴⁶ We also have records of sermons for the dead by Ta-hui that must have been offered well after the period of mourning had ended.⁴⁷

The *p'u-shuo* sermon we shall examine was given by Ta-hui at the request of Sung official, T'ang Ssu-t'ui.⁴⁸ T'ang Ssu-t'ui held a number of important posts in the Sung government: At the time of Ta-hui's return from exile he held the positions of signatory official of the Bureau of Military Affairs and provisional executive of the Secretariat-Chancellery.⁴⁹ These high offices made him one of the four or five highest ranking officers of the state. T'ang's daughter, whom we know only as Lady T'ang, had recently died at age twenty-two. In the opening section of the sermon Ta-hui says that today's sermon is due to the intention of the minister to transfer merit to his deceased daughter Lady T'ang on the occasion of the forty-second day after her death. The purpose of this transfer is to contribute to her happiness in the world of the dead. To this end the minister has ordered Ta-hui to ascend the dharma-seat and propagate wisdom (*prajñā*).

A SERMON FOR THE DEAD: THE TEACHING

What distinguished the way in which Ta-hui addressed laity on the subject of grief and death from the way he addressed monks? The first observation one can make is that the doctrines of karma, transmigration, and rebirth receive far more emphasis than one would expect in sermons addressed to monks.⁵⁰ In this sermon Ta-hui uses the doctrines of karma and transmigration as they apply to the case of Lady T'ang and others in order to comfort the bereaved. The deceased has led a good life and built up good karma toward enlightenment. The result has been a peaceful and clear mind at the time of death. This in turn is a definite sign of a desirable rebirth to come. Ta-hui says:

I have heard that Lady T'ang's character was lofty and that she knew of the Buddha's teaching. She must in the past have planted the wisdom seeds of *prajñā* deeply, thereby being enabled in this life to believe in this great matter.⁵¹ At the moment of abandoning consciousness she was clear in mind and died with her hands folded in the Amitābha *mudrā*. This is just what [Tsong-mi]⁵² talked about: "To do correct⁵³ things is awakened mind; awakened mind does not come from emotions. At death it can turn karma." He added a note to this: "Correctness is the correctness of principle (*i-li*), not the correctness [righteousness] of benevolence and righteousness." If people follow correct principle in their actions, at the moment of death,⁵⁴ they will then be able to fold their hands and form a *mudrā* [and will feel] no pain or distress. If in life they follow correct principle, in death they will surely be able to turn the course of karma [for the better]. If so, then it is certain that they will be reborn in the Pure Land.⁵⁵ There is no possible doubt.

One need not grieve nor be apprehensive about the fate of one so protected by good karma. Death is no more than a transition, a taking off of old worn-out clothes and a donning a new ones:

I have heard that your excellency has been in deep grief and that your excellency's pain and hurt have not yet ended. How can one use one's limited energy of spirit to weep for an insensible soul? For the dead lady, her death is like suddenly taking off worn-out garments she has been wearing for many years and then going to be reborn in a heaven or a Buddha-land or some other place. Since the dead and the living are separated, what is the use of crying?⁵⁶

Turning to the reverse side of the coin, Ta-hui stresses in powerful images the terrors that death presents to one who has not prepared for it. Here his aim, of course, is not to comfort but to exhort his hearers to seek enlightenment:

Tsong-mi went on to say: "That which does things with no correctness is crazed, confused mind. Crazed, disordered mind turns this way and that

according to feelings. At death it is entangled by karma." That is to say, when the four great elements part and scatter, and consciousness⁵⁷ becomes dark and confused, those who in their lifetimes were passionately attached to love are ensnared by love; those who were passionately attached to gold and precious jewels are ensnared by gold and jewels. At that time one's thoughts fly off like wild horses;⁵⁸ karmically determined consciousness rules one's mind, and ghosts and demons move in. This kind of person, because he has acted incorrectly and become entangled by karma, enters an evil rebirth. If there are no heavens, then that is that. If there are, then a superior man will be born there. If there are no hells, then that is that. If there are, then base men will enter them.

Here we find a subtle shift: No longer is it good karma which guarantees a safe and calm passage through the transition of death; it is the enlightened mind alone that can do so. Although good works lead to enlightenment, and thus are valuable, it is not enough to perform good works. One must actively seek enlightenment. Death comes quickly—if one does not haste to find enlightenment, one will be overcome by pain and confusion, fear and desire. Death is the moment of testing. However successfully one has maintained a façade of virtue and wisdom, it will fail one at the approach of death:

I often see men of the world loving pretense all their lives. When they come to the thirtieth day of the last month of the year [the day on which all accounts must be settled before the start of the new year, a metaphor for the day of death], all the sufferings of the five *skandhas* appear at once. At that time both their hands and their feet are revealed [that is, the reality behind the pretense becomes impossible to hide], for at times of drawing near to life and death, fortune and misfortune, pretense is both impossible and useless. Only the real thing will do.

What then is the "real thing" that can respond to the event of death? Ta-hui raises this question:

What is the "real thing"? For example, Lady T'ang was twenty-two years old this year. Tell me, twenty-two years ago, before she came to Minister T'ang's family to be born, where did she dwell?⁵⁹ If you do not know where she came from, then birth is a great matter. And did this great distress of her sudden death exist then or not? Her mind was clear and untroubled as if death were like throwing away old shoes—just where did this one moment [of her mind's activity] go? If you do not know where it went, then death is a great matter. Therefore it is said: "Impermanence [that is, death] is coming quickly; the question of life and death is a great matter."⁶⁰ A Confucian also said, "Death and life are great."⁶¹

Death is not only the moment of testing; it also poses the ultimate question, for death and birth are the ultimate riddles that confront the

unenlightened mind. In one way, death for Ta-hui is perhaps the ultimate *hua-t'ou*. A person who does not know what will happen to him after death, not in the sense of where he will be reborn but in the sense of who he ultimately is, does not know the most important truth about himself. He is confused by his form, the worldly embodiment of his desires, and does not see into his true nature. The riddle of death is a form of the riddle of the meaning of existence that, if one is to be wise, he must confront and solve for himself. The fact of the inevitability of death and the shortness and unpredictability of our span in human form also determine the manner of our confrontation with the riddle of the meaning of existence. Death throws into high relief our ignorance and its consequences and imbues our search for wisdom with a sense of urgency. Thus the concern of death allows Ta-hui to arouse in his lay and clerical listeners the motivation to seek enlightenment.

Grief too is to be understood as an inevitable concomitant of the karmic bond between close relatives. It is one's karma from many births that causes one to be attached to one's child, for example:

What parents love, how can they not long for? If this were so, then one's nature endowed by heaven could be destroyed. Moreover, body, hair, and skin are all inherited from our parents. When my body is in pain, then the body of my father and mother are also in pain. Since parents suffer pain this way, is it possible to talk about their not longing for and thinking [distractedly about departed children]?

Ta-hui's wisdom and compassion appear in his refusal to urge the bereaved not to grieve. Not to grieve, he says, would be unnatural. Instead, grieve with your whole mind, feel and express all of your feelings. When the feelings of grief exhaust themselves, in that still moment is your opportunity for reflection and enlightenment. The natural expression of grief leads to an occasion for the development of wisdom:

Some teach people not to think [longingly and distractedly about the departed], but this understanding is one-sided.⁶² If you want to overcome distress, then today you must feel distress. If you wish not to have your mind occupied with distracted thoughts [of your child], then today you must allow it to be so occupied. Go over and over it in your mind until the habit formations of love are eliminated and you will naturally reach the place of no thinking, the place of no distress. If today I were to urge you not to think, not to be distressed, that would be like pouring oil on a fire to put it out.⁶³

In yet another sermon Ta-hui suggests:

Therefore if you want to cry, just cry; if you want to think [distractedly], just think. When suddenly the moment arrives when you realize that you have cried

so much that thought and attachment are exhausted, then examine your thoughts.⁶⁴

Ta-hui thus uses the belief in karma and transmigration, and the understanding of grief that they offer, to comfort, to explain, and to mobilize emotions that might motivate a serious search for enlightenment. It is the inexorability of karma that makes death a great matter on the provisional level of truth, the level on which the unenlightened live their lives. Karma is within its own sphere all-powerful. Even Śākya-muni, who can empty all forms and complete the wisdom of the ten thousand dharmas, cannot extinguish determined karma. How much less then can the ordinary person?

But Ta-hui does not neglect to offer his lay followers his ultimate understanding of death. This message, of course, is that death is empty, a nonevent, because there is no self—no one, that is, who can be said to have been born to die. To realize this is to realize the emptiness of karma and thereby transcend it; this is the only way out of the clutches of karmic retribution.

We find this theme woven throughout the sermon. For example, Ta-hui opens his sermon with this statement:

If you clear a path in this direction [that is, toward knowing what it is that the Buddhas and patriarchs transmitted], you will know that although Lady T'ang was born years ago, she fundamentally was never born; her extinction today likewise fundamentally did not extinguish anything. Born and not born, like a reflection in a mirror; extinguished and yet not extinguished, like the moon in the water. The shape in the mirror, the moon in the water—both can be seen but not grasped.

At the climax of the sermon he poses this same truth in a more enigmatic form:

The realm of sentient beings originally has no increase or extinction.
 Moreover not a single person can abide in its dharmas.
 To have dharmas and no abiding is called having no dharmas;
 Having no dharmas and having no abiding is called no-mind.
 According to my understanding the Buddha also has no magic powers,
 Yet he can by means of no-mind penetrate all dharmas.

Ta-hui comments:

If you can understand “no dharmas and no abiding is called no-mind according to my understanding the Buddha also has no magic powers,” then you will understand the saying of the ancient: “On one tip of a lion’s hair a billion lion’s hairs appear; to obtain a thousand, ten thousand, only know how to grasp one.” What then is the one? Born and you do not know where you come

from, dying and you do not know where you will go. Make an effort, and in this lifetime you will grasp it.⁶⁵

And again at the very close of the sermon, in his final *gāthā*, he says:

Today the minister has completed a cycle of Buddha-deeds
 And has asked me to turn the wheel of the dharma [that is, to preach].
 The wheel that I have turned has no movement,
 The dharma that I have preached has no words.
 You must know that the departed daughter was never born,
 And now today has never been extinguished.
 Since there is no birth and extinction, and no cycle of rebirth,
 There is neither changing nor destroying of the diamond body.

The two major themes of Ta-hui's sermon—karmic retribution and the emptiness of birth and death—are reconcilable within one framework of thought, as Ta-hui elsewhere points out. Karmic causation is on one level a true and useful description of the world in which we live as unenlightened beings; if we prematurely take an "enlightened" standpoint and declare karma to be empty and therefore irrelevant, we shall find that we still suffer the unpleasant results of our evil actions, and the pains of our suffering will have their own experiential reality.⁶⁶ Karmic causation is also a true description of the path toward enlightenment: The greater our merits accumulated over many lifetimes, the greater our opportunities to hear the dharma and become enlightened. Thus meritorious acts may be considered a step toward enlightenment.

But from another point of view these two themes are difficult to reconcile. Enlightenment is after all the realization of the emptiness of karmic causality. So long as we continue to consider our deeds only in the framework of karmic retribution, we shall never be enlightened to the truth of emptiness. Furthermore, the orientation toward the proximate goals of happiness through merits seems to require a different religious approach than does the goal of an enlightenment that enables one to transcend the pleasures and pains of samsara.⁶⁷ One could imagine a number of logical and definitional moves to overcome this apparent divergence of goals; for example, one might say that it is the quality of enlightenment or selflessness (no-mind) in any act that makes it worthy of merits. But Ta-hui does not try to reconcile the two different goals. He suggests that Lady T'ang by virtue of her merits of wisdom will certainly be born in the Pure Land; he then suggests that a "correct thought" of enlightenment might free her from samsara altogether. He encourages the transfer of merits that she might avoid the three evil paths of existence in her next birth and then announces that she has never been born and has never died. Far from reconciling these two themes, he seems to play them off against one

another, using the forceful emotions evoked by belief in karmic retribution both to offer comfort to the grieving and to spur monastic and lay listeners alike to confront the riddle of death and realize the ultimate truth of emptiness.

CONCLUSION

Ta-hui transformed the *p'u-shuo* into an instrument that would permit him to address the needs of laity directly while continuing to address the needs of monks. But to say what he wanted to say, Ta-hui needed a vastly expanded sermon form. And now that we have looked at a typical sermon for the dead, we can see one of the major reasons for the expansion: In these sermons sponsored by laity two levels of truth, and two levels of practice, had to be brought together and related to one another. If Ta-hui had been preaching only to monks, mention of the truth of emptiness or of the Hua-yen understanding of totality would have been sufficient. But many laity were used to thinking of themselves as limited in their Buddhist practice to the sphere of karmically significant good deeds, birth, and rebirth. Ta-hui could have chosen simply to preach to them on this level, believing as he did that karmic causality is a crucial dimension of reality and knowing also that it was what most laity expected to hear preached to them. But Ta-hui was not content with this, for he earnestly believed that laity could develop wisdom and become enlightened even while living ordinary lives in the world. Therefore his every invocation of the provisional truth of karma was made in order to bring laity as well as monks to see the need to find the ultimate truth that transcends the truth of karma without negating it.

In the sermon on death we see this interweaving of the two levels of truth particularly clearly. The sermon is given to create merits for the deceased, and death must be confronted on that level. Yet death is not fully understood until it is seen to be empty. Understanding on the one level must be combined with understanding on the other. Practice on the level of deeds and fruits must be combined with practice toward enlightenment. Comfort and reassurance based on the fairness and regularity of karmic retribution, bolstered by the sense of something still left to be done for the departed, must be combined with the aroused emotions connected with death to spur laity and monks alike to seek enlightenment. Either level of understanding without the other would be perniciously one-sided. Death is the ideal occasion that brings together both karmic faith and the doubt which, if focused wisely, can lead to enlightenment.

To meet the needs of the laity for reassurance and counsel in their immediate grief, to confirm their karmic understanding, while at the

same time using this occasion to urge upon them the truth of emptiness as the only real solution to the riddle posed by death—such tasks require a skillful interweaving of themes in an extended talk. That Ta-hui apparently shaped the *p'u-shuo* to meet this need, and that he used it to compose sermons of the kind we have just examined, shows a constructive approach to the involvement of laity in the Ch'an school and its monastic institutions. In Ta-hui's case it specifically shows as well a commitment to the possibility of a path to enlightenment in daily life. Ta-hui's concern to show that Ch'an practice need not take place in separation from the world is a creative response to the new Ch'an lay constituency that begins to grow in the Sung dynasty.

It has been argued elsewhere that this increasing involvement of the laity in Ch'an life ruined the purity of Ch'an teaching and practice. Yet the sermon we have just examined, while certainly delivered in a new spirit, cannot be said to exemplify a watering down of the teaching or a neglect of the needs of monks in training: The teaching in both the preliminary exchanges and the body of the sermon itself may be seen to be still of a very high order. Whether Ta-hui's synthetic attempt to meet two disparate needs simultaneously brought unfortunate results for the Ch'an school in the hands of lesser followers is a subject for further study.

NOTES

The following abbreviations are used in the notes:

<i>Manji zōkyō</i>	<i>Nihon kōtei daizōkyō</i> , known also as the <i>Kyōtō Tripiṭaka</i> , printed during the years 1902–1905 by the Zōkyō Shoin of Kyoto.
<i>P'u-shuo</i>	<i>Ta-hui P'u-chüeh Ch'an-shih p'u-shuo</i> , five <i>chüan</i> , in <i>Manji zōkyō</i> , 31, 5, pp. 395a–509d.
<i>Shuku zōkyō</i>	<i>Dai-nihon kōtei daizōkyō</i> , known as the <i>Tōkyō Tripiṭaka</i> , printed during the years 1880–1885 by the Kokyo Shoin of Tokyo.
YCZESG	Kagamishima Genryū, Satō Tasugen, and Kosaka Kiyū, <i>Yaku-chū Zen-en shin-gi</i> (translated and annotated <i>Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei</i>) (Tokyo: Sōtō Shū Shūmu Chō, 1972).
<i>Zenrin shōkisen</i>	Muchaku Dōchū, <i>Zenrin shōkisen</i> (completed 1716) (Tokyo: Seishin Shobo, 1963).

This study is based on research done for my Ph.D. dissertation, "Ch'an Enlightenment for Laymen: Ta-hui and the New Religious Culture of the Sung" (Harvard University, 1978).

1. Ching-shan was a mountain in Lin-an-fu in Chekiang province; Ta-hui taught there from 1137 to 1141 and from 1158 to 1161 at two different monasteries. "Ta-hui" was an honorary name given by the emperor just before his death.

"Tsung-kao" was Ta-hui's original dharma name taken when he first entered the *sangha*. "P'u-chüeh" was a posthumous honorary title given by the emperor just after Ta-hui's death. "Ch'an-shih" means Ch'an teacher, his title. See Tsu-yung, comp. and ed., *Ta-hui P'u-chüeh Ch'an-shih nien-p'u*, *Shukuzōkyō*, *teng* 8, pp. 1-16a.

2. After studying with a series of teachers from different schools of Ch'an, Ta-hui went to study with Yüan-wu K'o-chin in 1124. He had his first decisive enlightenment experience in 1125 and moved south with Yüan-wu in 1127. Until 1137 he lived in relative obscurity either with Yüan-wu or by himself in Kiangsi and Fukien. In 1137 he was invited to Ching-shan Neng-jen Ch'an-yüan where he attracted a considerable following. In his fourth year there he was banished to Heng-chou in Hunan province; after nine years there he was commanded to move his residence to Mei-chou in Kuangtung province. In 1155 he was pardoned and allowed to resume his status as a monk. After a slow progress north he was again invited to head a monastery on Ching-shan; at this time he was sixty-nine years old. He retired four years later and died two years after that. Despite the long period he spent far from the capital at the height of his career, his acclaim upon returning north was that of the most outstanding Ch'an teacher of his time. A glance at dharma lineage charts—as in Yanagida Seizan, ed., *Zenke Goroku II* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1974), pp. 434-435 or elsewhere—will show how many of the prominent Ch'an teachers of the next generation were Ta-hui's students; Ta-hui's dharma descendants predominated in the Lin-chi school for several generations. Ta-hui's writings and *Recorded Sayings* entered the canon very soon after his death; that they were read both critically and appreciatively for a long time afterward is shown in the writings of Chu Hsi, Dōgen, and the Ming dynasty Ch'an teacher Han-shan Te-ching, among others.

3. Some sense of Ta-hui's following among literati and officials can be gained from reading his *P'u-shuo* and his *Letters*. For bibliographical information on his *P'u-shuo*, see note 35. Ta-hui's *Letters* can be found in his *Yü-lu*; they also circulated separately in many editions. For an annotated translation into Japanese see Araki Kengo, *Daie sho* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1969).

4. Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in (1063-1135) was the most influential teacher of his time in the Yang-ch'i branch of the Lin-chi line. He is best known as the author of the final layer of commentary in the *Blue Cliff Records* (*Pi-yen lu*).

5. The most interesting treatment of Ta-hui in connection with this development is by Yanagida Seizan, "Kanwa Zen ni okeru shin to gi no mondai," in *Bukkyō ni okeru shin no mondai*, edited by the Nihon Bukkyō Kyōkai (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1963), pp. 141-163. In English, Suzuki Daisetz frequently mentions Ta-hui in connection with doubt and the function of the *kung-an* (*kōan*). See for example his *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, 2nd series (London: Luzac and Co., 1933), pp. 10-18, 24, 75-78, 289-291, 303-305; *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), pp. 90-91; and *Living by Zen* (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1949), pp. 171-173.

6. Kagamishima Genryū, Satō Tasugen, and Kosaka Kiyū, *Yaku-chū Zen-en shin-gi* [translated and annotated *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*] (Tokyo: Sōtō Shū Shūmu Chō, 1972), pp. 1-28, give information on texts and history of this work, as well as a Japanese translation. (A text may be found also in ZZ 2.16. 5, pp. 438a-471c.)

7. YCZESG, pp. 71-75.

8. Ibid., pp. 78-85.

9. See my survey of Yüan-wu's *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an* in note 36.
10. See note 36 below.
11. A text may be found in ZZ 2. 17. 1; a paragraph on *p'u-shuo* is on p. 36c. For the date of this work, see YCZESG, p. 2.
12. A text may be found in ZZ 2. 17. 1; a paragraph on *p'u-shuo* is on pp. 15b-c. For the date of this work, see YCZESG, p. 2.
13. See Muchaku Dōchū, *Zenrin shōkisen* (completed 1716) (Tokyo: Seishin Shobō, 1963), pp. 299-300.
14. *Ts'ung-lin chiao-ting ch'ing-kuei tsung-yao* mentions only the Inner Hall; ZZ 2.17. 1, *chüan hsia*, p. 15a.
15. The *t'ang ssu hsing che* was an assistant to the *wei no*, one of the chief administrative officers of the monastery; see *Zenrin shōkisen*, p. 299.
16. *Ts'ung-lin chiao-ting ch'ing-kuei tsung-yao* adds here: "Those in attendance and the two groups of officers of the monastery bow." For more information on the two groups of officers, see *Zenrin shōkisen*, pp. 219-221.
17. *Ts'ung-lin chiao-ting ch'ing-kuei tsung-yao* adds here: "[Earlier] books of rules do not mention [the *p'u-shuo*]."
18. *Ts'ung-lin chiao-ting ch'ing-kuei tsung-yao* adds: "When the *shang-tang* is over."
19. *Ts'ung-lin chiao-ting ch'ing-kuei tsung-yao* omits this last sentence about Ta-hui.
20. Kuei-tsung temple was on Lu-shan in Nank'ang prefecture in Kiangsi province. What the connection to Tung-shan was I have not been able to trace. Chen-ching K'o-wen was abbot of Lu-shan Kuei-tsung Ssu.
21. *Ta-hui P'u-chüeh Ch'an-shih p'u-shuo*, five *chüan*, in *Manji zōkyō*, 31, 5, p. 460a.
22. *Zenrin shōkisen*, p. 433.
23. This result of my own search is confirmed by Muchaku Dōchū; see *Zenrin shōkisen*, p. 436.
24. I base this statement on Yanagida Seizan, ed., *Zenke goroku* II, pp. 423-514, especially pp. 435 and 485-491. Yanagida does not know of a "Recorded Sayings" for Fo-chien Hui-ch'in.
25. Yüan-wu's *p'u-shuo* can be found in *Yüan-wu Fo-kuo Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, *chüan* 13, in T 47.774-775.
26. See note 36 below.
27. It was a *kao-hsiang p'u-shuo*. For differences between this and other kinds of *p'u-shuo*, see *Zenrin shōkisen*, p. 436.
28. Fo-yen Ch'ing-yüan's *p'u-shuo* can be found in *Fo-yen Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, *chüan* 5, in *Ku-tsun-su yü-lu*, *chüan* 31, ZZ 2.23. 4, pp. 280b-296a.
29. Ibid., pp. 295a-296a, "*Wei Li She-jen P'u-shuo*."
30. Of course a layman might desire to hear a sermon on this topic.
31. *Hsü-t'ang Chih-yü Ho-shang yü-lu*, *chüan* 4, ZZ 2. 26. 4, pp. 360d-366b.
32. See the appendix for a complete list.
33. See notes 24, 25, and 28 above.
34. See the appendix for references.
35. The most complete bibliographical work on Ta-hui to date is by Ishii Shūdō. See especially his "*Daie Goroku no kisoteki kenkyū* (jo)," *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgakubu kenkyū kiyō* 31 (March 1973): 283-306, for his analysis of texts of Ta-hui's *P'u-shuo*. He concludes that there are basically two kinds of texts, *p'u-shuo* in four *chüan* and *p'u-shuo* in one *chüan*. The *p'u-shuo* in *Manji*

zōkyō used for this study is a combination of the two: first the one in four *chüan*, then the one in one *chüan*. The *p'u-shuo* included in *Ta-hui P'u-chüeh Ch'an-shih yü-lu* (T 47.811-942) is a version of the one-*chüan* text. One-*chüan* texts have thirteen to fifteen sermons.

36. For purposes of comparison I have made a study of Ta-hui's use of the more traditional *shang-t'ang* sermon form. Some 213 of Ta-hui's *shang-t'ang* are listed in his *Recorded Sayings*. Those that have no stated connection with laity or lay sponsorship are notably short in their recorded form, averaging about 130 words each. Only 15 of the 213 are sermons in which laity are either the sponsor or the occasion of the remarks. These 15 are a bit longer, averaging 358 words each. Of these 15, at least 4 can be clearly identified as meeting the needs of laymen in connection with death. Thus if the sample of 213 may be taken as representative, Ta-hui in the *shang-t'ang* kept his remarks very short and only about 7 percent of the time used this form for addressing laymen.

As for Ta-hui's *hsiao-ts'an*, I find only one recorded in Ta-hui's *Recorded Sayings*. It is approximately 175 words long and has no reference to laity. The copy of *Ta-hui P'u-chüeh Ch'an-shih yü-lu* that I used for this search is that in *Shukuzōkyō*, t'eng 8; the *hsiao-ts'an* is on p. 17b.

The reader may at this point perhaps wonder whether Ta-hui might merely have substituted one form for another, using the *p'u-shuo* form in the way that his predecessors used the *shang-t'ang* or the *hsiao-ts'an*. I have not had time to survey all the sermon forms used by all of Ta-hui's predecessors and contemporaries in the Sung in order to test this hypothesis; in the absence of such a study my argument that Ta-hui created a new way of using a relatively new form must therefore remain tentative. As a beginning, however, I have looked at the *shang-t'ang* and *hsiao-ts'an* of Yüan-wu. I have chosen Yüan-wu because his lay following was very large, at least the equal of that of Ta-hui, and because his "Recorded Sayings" are extensive. Here are the results:

1. *Hsiao-ts'an*

Total: 81

Average length: 442 words

Total invited by laity: 11 (13.5%)

Number addressing laity or their needs directly: 0

2. *Shang-t'ang*

Total: 247

Average length: 200 words

Total invited by laity: ±39 (15%)

Number addressing laity or their needs directly: 1 (?)

If we compare these figures with the ones listed earlier for Ta-hui's *p'u-shuo*, we can see that Ta-hui was not merely doing under another name something Yüan-wu had done in the *shang-t'ang* or *hsiao-ts'an*. The fact that Yüan-wu was the teacher whose dharma Ta-hui inherited, and was therefore the person whose patterns of teaching Ta-hui was most likely to adopt, makes this difference in the frequency and the manner of their addressing laity in sermons stronger evidence of Ta-hui's originality than if Yüan-wu had been merely a famous predecessor.

37. *P'u-shuo*, p. 460a. Muchaku Dōchū points out that Ta-hui is not quoting exactly from the text of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*; the question in the original passage leaves out the word *p'u* ("generally"). But later in the passage one encounters the phrase *p'u shuo* in this sentence: "Therefore the ten bodhisattvas by

means of this preach generally to the three worlds." See *Ta-fang-kuang-fo hua-yen ching*, *chüan* 53, in *T* 10.281b, beginning with "yu shih chung shuo san chieh."

38. Others discussing the form have found other scriptural sources. Muchaku Dōchū cites two, both from the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. The first is from the "Vairocana" chapter and a commentary on it where the meaning of the word *p'u* is given. The second is from the "Ten *Samādhis*" chapter, where reference is made directly to *p'u-shuo*—"preaching universally all the teachings of the Buddha." Muchaku finds this the most convincing scriptural authority for the form; see *Zenrin shōkisen*, pp. 434 and 436.

39. For some indication of the controversy, see the "Tsuizen" paragraph in Muchaku Dōchū's *Zenrin shōkisen*, pp. 573–574.

40. See Mochizuki Shinkō, *Bukkyō daijiten*, 3rd ed. (Tokyo: Seikai Shoten Kangyō Kyokai, 1960), vol. 1, p. 270, for sutra references.

41. See Matsuura Shūkō, *Zenke no sōhō to tsuizen kuyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Sankibo Busshorin, 1969), pp. 239–242. See also Mochizuki, *Bukkyō daijiten* 4:3648–3650, "*Chuu*," and 2:1809–1810, "*Shijūkunichi*." Compare *Ti-tsang P'u-sa pen-yüan ching* (translated into Chinese in A.D. 704), *chüan* 2, chap. 7: "If you can within forty-nine days after the death of their bodies create a large number of good deeds, then you will cause all the sentient beings to be able forever to depart from the evil paths [evil states of rebirth] and to be born in human or heavenly realms and enjoy supreme and marvelous delight" *T* 53.783, quoted in Matsuura, *Zenke no sōhō to tsuizen kuyō*, p. 239).

42. *Shih-shih yao-lan*, compiled by the Sung monk Tao-ch'eng in A.D. 1019: "As for the practice in the world of feasting for happiness on every seventh day, this is to 'follow to help with good' when the body is in the intermediate existence between death and birth and to make seeds for this intermediate stage, to cause him not to be reborn in an evil path" *T* 54.305.

43. Matsuura, *Zenke no sōhō to tsuizen kuyō*, p. 269.

44. *Ibid.* In the case of Chinese Buddhists, as soon as the offering on this day was finished, a tablet for the deceased was placed on the Buddhist altar where other tablets of ancestors were placed, and prayers and offerings took place there henceforth as with other ancestors.

45. *Ibid.*

46. By that time this practice was surely in general Buddhist use; see Matsuura, *Zenke no sōhō to tsuizen kuyō*, pp. 268–270. Ta-hui shows by his frequent references to graves in this sermon that he expects the body to be buried on or near that day. See *P'u-shuo*, pp. 469a–470b.

47. See for example *P'u-shuo*, pp. 450b–451b, where we find a sermon offered for a number of deceased relatives simultaneously. While it is conceivable that they might all have died at once, it is unlikely.

48. This sermon is found in *P'u-shuo*, pp. 468a–469a. Further references will not be given for passages quoted or summarized from these pages.

49. T'ang Ssu-t'ui, whose *tzu* was Chin-chih, held a number of important posts during the Sung dynasty. His biography appears in the *Sung shih*, *chüan* 371. Aside from two sermons in connection with his daughter's death, a copy of his invitation to Ta-hui to preach is included at the end of the *P'u-shuo*, and a letter to him is included in *Ta-hui shu*, *chüan hsia*. He is also mentioned in *Nien-p'u*, p. 92, where it says that he established a Wu-ai Hui. The translations of these

civil service titles in the Sung are taken from E. Kracke, *Translations of Sung Civil Service Titles* (Paris: École pratique des hautes études, 1957).

50. In what we shall call the karmic understanding, death is seen as an event in the broad context of the samsaric stream of repeated lives and deaths. In this understanding, the character of one's lives and deaths is determined by the quality of one's past deeds. Births may take place in ten planes of existence, of which the three "evil paths"—hells, the realm of hungry ghosts, and the animal realm—are the most frequent. More desirable are births in the human realm, the realm of *aśuras*, and the realm of *devas* or heavenly beings. Most desirable of all, but not frequent, are births as a bodhisattva, a *pratyekabuddha*, a *śrāvaka*, and a Buddha. It is important in this context to do good deeds to ensure in future births one's own happiness or that of others.

51. *Tz'u tuan ta-shih yin-yüan*; more exactly, "this important karmic occasion," that is, enlightenment to the dharma.

52. The text has Kuei-feng Ch'an-shih, one of the names of the famous creator of a synthesis between Ch'an and Hua-yen philosophy Kuei-feng Tsung-mi (780–841). This passage is included in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* (Taipei: Chen Shan Mei Ch'u-pan-she, second printing 1968), *chüan* 13, p. 67. Tsung-mi has supplied his own commentary on his verse.

53. "*Tso yu-i shih*."

54. Literally: "At the moment of one's repaying karmic ties and saying goodbye . . ." (*pao-yüan hsieh-shih*).

55. Literally: "the world of peace and nourishment," another name for the Pure Land.

56. *P'u-shuo*, pp. 461b–462a.

57. Literally: "spirit and consciousness" (*shen-shih*).

58. "*Ye ma*" also is used to mean "mist in the daytime" or "heat haze"; this would be another possible translation.

59. Literally: "make her person secure and establish her life" (*an-shen li-ming*).

60. This line is found in a different order in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, chap. 7. My translation follows that of Lu K'uan Yu (Charles Luk) in *Ch'an and Zen Teaching*, 3rd series (London: Rider and Co., 1962), p. 73.

61. This phrase appears in *Chuang-tzu*, chap. 5, "Te Ch'ung Fu": "*Chung Ni yüeh: ssu sheng i ta i, erh pu te yü chih pien*." Chuang-tzu puts this statement in the mouth of Chung Ni (that is, Confucius); perhaps for that reason Ta-hui says that a Confucian said it. The second half of the sentence reminds one of *Doctrine of the Mean*, chap. 10, v. 5: "*Chih ssu pu pien*."

62. Literally: "*to tsai i-pien*." It is one-sided because it recognizes a distinction between thinking and not-thinking and, instead of saying that both are empty, identifies one as preferable.

63. *P'u-shuo*, p. 472a.

64. *P'u-shuo*, p. 422a.

65. That is, understand and obtain it.

66. Elsewhere Ta-hui says: "Although you can say that faults in their nature are originally empty, when it comes to the point of not being able to avoid suffering the retribution, there really is pain" (*P'u-shuo*, p. 458b).

67. See Winston L. King, *In the Hope of Nibbana* (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1964), for a discussion of this dichotomy as it affects ethics.

APPENDIX

P'u-shuo by Ta-hui's Contemporaries and Juniors

In *Hsüeh-t'ang Hsing Ho-shang yü*, a short record of the sayings of Hsüeh-t'ang Tao-hsing (1089-1151), we find two *p'u-shuo* recorded. In their recorded form both are very short, 280 and 540 words respectively; they have no identifiable connection with laymen. Nonetheless, the fact that Hsüeh-t'ang is an exact contemporary of Ta-hui makes the fact that he too used the *p'u-shuo* form significant.¹ Hsüeh-t'ang was a disciple of Fo-yen, who also used the *p'u-shuo*.

In *Shan-t'ang Hsün Ch'an-shih yü*, a short record of the sayings of Shan-t'ang Seng-hsün (dates unknown, but roughly contemporary with Ta-hui), we find one *p'u-shuo* of 560 words. In this *p'u-shuo* also there is no indication of lay sponsorship or lay hearers.² Shan-t'ang was in the Huang-lung line.

In *Fu-chou Hsüeh-feng Tung-shan Ho-shang yü-lu*, two *p'u-shuo* by Hsüeh-feng Hui-k'ung are recorded. Both are short; one is 180 words, the other 400. No reference is made to laymen. Hui-k'ung lived from 1096 to 1158;³ he was in the Huang-lung line.

In *Fo-hai Hui-yüan Ch'an-shih kuang-lu*, *chüan* 3, there are three *p'u-shuo* by Fo-hai Hui-yüan (1103-1176). The longest is 1,280 words; the others are 800 and 820 words respectively. There is no identifiable connection with laymen. Fo-hai was a disciple of Yüan-wu (who also used the *p'u-shuo*) and a dharma-brother of Ta-hui.⁴

In *P'u-an Yin-su Ch'an-shih yü-lu* we find one *p'u-shuo* by P'u-an Yin-su (1115-1169), a man twenty-six years younger than Ta-hui but active during the latter part of Ta-hui's lifetime. This *p'u-shuo*, given for child novices, contains no direct reference to laymen. It is 1,120 words.⁵ P'u-an was a dharma-grandson of Fo-yen.

At the end of *Ying-an T'an-hua yü-lu*, *chüan* 10, there is appended a *p'u-shuo* by Sung-yüan Ch'ung-yüeh (1132-1202). It is 700 words. Since it is a eulogy of the monk Ying-an T'an-hua (1103-1163), it must have been given around the time of Ta-hui's death or shortly thereafter.⁶ Ying-an T'an-hua was a dharma-grandson of Yüan-wu. Sung-yüan Ch'ung-yüeh was a dharma-great-great-grandson of Yüan-wu and a dharma-grandson of Ying-an.

In *Sung-yüan Yüeh Ch'an-shih yü*, a short record of the sayings of Sung-yüan Ch'ung-yüeh (see the preceding entry), we find one *p'u-shuo* of 124 words.⁷ Here also there is no expressed connection with laymen.

The first *p'u-shuo* that I have been able to find in the Ts'ao-tung school is in *Ju-ching Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, which records sayings of Ch'ang-

weng Ju-ching (1163–1228). Ju-ching was born in the year Ta-hui died and was the mentor in China of the Japanese Sōtō teacher Dōgen. In his recorded sayings there is only one *p'u-shuo*.⁸ Dōgen testifies that his teacher was accustomed to giving *p'u-shuo* frequently.⁹

Contemporaries for Whom There Were No Recorded *P'u-shuo*

Huang-lung line

1. Huang-lung Hui-nan (1002–1069)
2. Hui-t'ang Tsu-hsin (1025–1100)
3. Chen-ching K'o-wen (1025–1102)
4. Ch'ao-tsung Hui-fang (1073–1129)
5. Chan-t'ang Wen-chün (1069–1115)
6. Tou-shuai Ts'ung-yüeh (1044–1091)
7. Chüeh-fan Hui-hung (1071–1128)
8. Kuang-chien Hsing-ying (1071–1128)
9. Ling-yüan Wei-ch'ing (?–1117)
10. Ssu-hsin Wu-hsin (1043–1114)
11. Ts'ao-t'ang Shan-ch'ing (1057–1142)
12. Ch'ang-ling Shou-cho (1065–1123)
13. Shang-feng Pen-ts'ai (no dates)
14. Pieh-feng Tsu-chien (no dates)
15. Wu-shih Chieh-shen (1080–1148)
16. Hsüeh-an Ts'ung-ch'in (1117–1200)

Yang-ch'i line

17. Pao-ning Jen-yüing (no dates)
18. K'ai-fu Tao-ning (1053–1113)
19. Yüeh-an Shan-kuo (1079–1152)
20. Fo-hsing Fa-t'ai (no dates)
21. Hsia-t'ang Hui-yüan (1103–1176)
22. Hu-chiu Shao-lung (1077–1136)
23. Ying-an T'an-hua (1103–1163)
24. Ta-sui Yuan-ching (1065–1135)
25. Chu-an Shih-kuei (1083–1146)

Ts'ao-tung line

26. Fu-jung Tao-k'ai (1043–1118)
27. Tan-hsia Tsu-ch'un (1064–1117)
28. Hung-chih Cheng-chüeh (1091–1157)
29. Chen-hsieh Ch'ing-liao (1090–1151)
30. Tzu-te Hui-hui (1097–1183)
31. Ku-yen Chien-pi (no dates)

Yün-men line

32. Wu-shan Ching-tuan (1030–1103)

33. Miao-chan Ssu-hui (1070–1145)

34. Tz'u-shou Huai-shen (1077–1132)

Notes to Appendix

1. *Hsüeh-t'ang Hsing Ho-shang yü* is in *Hsü-k'ai ku-tsun-su yü-yao*, *chüan* 4, ZZ 2.24.1, pp. 64c–68a; there are two *p'u-shuo* on pp. 66c–67a.

2. *Shan-t'ang Hsün Ch'an-shih yü* in *Hsü-k'ai ku-tsun-su yü-yao*, *chüan* 4, ZZ 2.24.1, pp. 3a–6b; there is a *p'u-shuo* on pp. 5d–6b.

3. In *Tung-shan Hui-k'ung Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, ZZ 2.25.2, we find two *p'u-shuo* on p. 140a–c.

4. *Fo-hai Hui-yüan Ch'an-shih kuang-lu*, ZZ 2.25.5; in *chüan* 3, pp. 475c–477b, we find three *p'u-shuo*.

5. *P'u-an Yin-su Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, ZZ 2.25.3, pp. 270c–271b, has a *p'u-shuo*.

6. *Ying-an T'an-hua yü-lu*, ZZ 2.25.5, *chüan* 10, p. 449a–c, has a *p'u-shuo*.

7. *Sung-yüan Yüeh Ch'an-shih yü*, in *Hsü-k'ai ku-tsun-su yü-yao*, ZZ 2.24.1, pp. 22b–23b, has a *p'u-shuo*.

8. *Ju-ching Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, also known as *T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching Ch'an-shih yü-lu*, ZZ 2.29.5, *chüan hsia*, p. 488a–c, has one *p'u-shuo*.

9. Dōgen Zenji, *Eihei kōroku*, chap. 2, as quoted in Mochizuki, *Bukkyō daijiten* 4:4422: "Sometimes in the middle of the night, sometimes in the evening or after meals, no matter what time of day, he would either strike the drum for entering his chamber and preach generally (*p'u-shuo*) or strike the drum for *hsiao-ts'an* and enter his chamber. Or else with his own hand he would hit the mallet in the Monks' Hall, and in the Illumination Hall he would preach generally (*p'u-shuo*); when the *p'u-shuo* was over he would enter his chamber. Or else he would hit the board outside the room of the head monk and preach generally in the head monk's room, and then when the preaching had finished enter his chamber." This sounds as if Ju-ching gave *p'u-shuo* not only frequently but also in total disregard of the usual forms.