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THE *HSIEN TSUNG CHI*
(An Early Ch'an (Zen) Buddhist Text)

The *Hsien Tsung Chi*^a [Illuminating the Essential Doctrine] is one of the most philosophically important of the writings of the Ch'an master Ho-tse Shen-hui^b (670–762), a disciple of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng. Recent studies based upon texts discovered in the Tun-huang caves of China have clearly shown that during his own lifetime, Shen-hui was considered the most important disciple of Hui-neng. Moreover Shen-hui was a central figure in the development of the Ch'an school and the apparent cause of the division of Ch'an into the schools of 'North' and 'South'.¹ Following the turmoil of the An Lu-shan rebellion of 755, Shen-hui emerged as the most honored Ch'an master in the empire and became the founder of his own school of Ch'an which was called the Ho-tse sect.^c This school continued for six generations, terminating with the famous Ch'an and Hua-yen patriarch Tsung-mi^e (780–841).

The *Hsien Tsung Chi* stands out among the Shen-hui texts for several reasons. It was composed last among the writings of Shen-hui and thus records his most mature thought. According to the biographical entry on Shen-hui in the *Ch'uan Teng Lu*^f (Transmission of the Lamp), the *Hsien Tsung Chi* was written sometime after Shen-hui's arrival in Lo-yang, which was in 745 when Shen-hui was already 75 years old.² Some scholars place it as late as 753.³ Another fact which lends importance to this text is that it exists in two different versions. One is the version translated below, taken from the *Ch'uan Teng Lu* where it occurs in fascicle 30 (Taishō 2076, 458c25–459b6). In addition, several different versions of the same text were discovered among the Tun-huang manuscripts. These texts were edited and published in Japan thanks to the efforts of D. T. Suzuki, and other variants were made available because of the labor of Dr. Hu Shih.⁴ The wording of the Tun-huang versions is significantly different in several places, and is shorter by approximately 150 Chinese characters, although the essential thought expressed therein does not appear to be significantly altered. A few of the major differences between these two versions will be indicated in the notes but we will not attempt a full study of these differen-

ces at this time. Finally, the *Hsien Tsung Chi* is of special importance because of the five texts we have by Shen-hui,⁵ this appears to have been an actual composition by Shen-hui rather than the recollections of his disciples which were posthumously collected. Being the only text actually written by Shen-hui himself, and having been composed during his later years, we can expect that it will contain the points which Shen-hui felt to be most essential.

The text of the *Hsien Tsung Chi* itself is a sort of brief outline summarizing the essential doctrines of Shen-hui, and seems to accurately reflect the key insights of the Southern school of Ch'an Buddhism as well. Because the text is so terse, we find no attempt at explanation or justification — just a long series of brief interconnected assertions. We must look to the other texts of Shen-hui for a complete understanding of what is being said and how the ideas are related to each other.

The text naturally divides into four parts:

- (1) Brief introductory phrases which capsulize the essential teachings of Shen-hui.
- (2) Exposition and development of the central doctrines.
- (3) Discussion of the transmission of these doctrines (which guarantees their fidelity and value as the teachings of the historical Buddha himself).
- (4) Discussion of the robe of Bodhidharma which serves to authenticate the line of transmission in China.

Philosophically, the most important themes of the *Hsien Tsung Chi* relate to what Shen-hui calls the 'essential doctrine' (*tsung*⁶). These are the fundamental insights upon which his school is based. They generally tend to center around *Prajñā*⁷ which might be rendered 'intuitive wisdom', 'intuitive insight' or perhaps 'non-dualistic wisdom'. The importance of *Prajñā* for Shen-hui is further emphasized by the fact that the Tun-huang versions of the *Hsien Tsung Chi* [Illuminating the Essential Doctrine] are entitled 'Stanzas on the *Prajñā*-wisdom by which there is Sudden Awakening to Non-arising' (*Tun-wu wu-sheng pan-jo sung*¹).⁸

Both versions of the text begin with the term 'no-thought' (*wu-nien*¹), which is one of the most important technical terms of the Southern school of Ch'an Buddhism. We intend to deal with this notion in greater detail at another time, but it can be briefly described as a term which generally functions both epistemologically and psychologically, and perhaps even

metaphysically as well. In its fundamental usage it seems to describe a mental state wherein things are seen without confusion and without discrimination, and can be taken to be equivalent to *nirvikalpa*^k or simply *Prajñā*-insight. It is not so much a state of thoughtlessness as it is a state wherein false or erroneous thoughts (*wang-nien*^l) have disappeared. The term also includes the affective sense of *an-hsin*^m which implies being free from anxiety, tension, doubt, etc.

'Emptiness' or *śūnyatā* (*k'ung*ⁿ) also figures prominently in the text, reflecting Shen-hui's (and also Ch'an Buddhism's) indebtedness to the Mādhyamika school. Shen-hui's understanding of emptiness seems to be completely in accord with the Mādhyamika insights and doesn't show any influences from the personal twist given to it by Fa-tsang,^o the founder of the Hua-yen^p school. In fact Shen-hui's writings seem closest in spirit to the treatises of Seng Chao^q except for the fact that Shen-hui doesn't utilize Taoist terminology to the extent that Seng Chao does.

We find the term 'suchness' (*chen-ju*, *ju*, *ju-ju*^r) used frequently, and although this term is important to the *Vijñaptimātratā*^s school of idealism, Shen-hui seems to have been most influenced by such texts as the *Nirvāṇa sūtra*^t and the *Awakening of Faith*^u which is a *Tathāgata-garbha* text. Shen-hui's rejection of the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* and the fact that central *Vijñapti-mātratā* ideas such as *ālaya-vijñāna*^v and the 'Three Natures'^w do not figure in Shen-hui's thought indicate that his indebtedness to the idealistic school of Buddhism is not very great. Further, Shen-hui's reinterpretation of *dhyāna* (*ting*^x) shows a turning away from meditational practices which were a key element of the *Vijñapti-mātratā* schools.

The term 'seeing' (*chien*^y) is also important to Shen-hui. As he says in the *P'u-t'i ta-mo Nan-tsung ting shih-fei lun*^z [Treatise establishing the true and false according to the Southern school of Bodhidharma], "All of the techniques (*kung-fu*^{aa}) which I studied for over thirty years consist only in 'seeing'."⁷ Although the term itself probably came from the common expression, "the knowing and seeing of the *Tathāgata*" (*ju-lai chih-chien*^{ab}), the emphasis upon the 'seeing' aspect does seem to be Shen-hui's own special emphasis, perhaps due to Shen-hui's desire to contrast his own understanding with the Northern school's concern with 'inspecting' (*k'an*^{ac}) and 'contemplating' or 'insight' (*kuan*^{ad}).

In general, Shen-hui's text seems to strike a balance between the

negative approach characteristic of Mādhyamika, where we find long strings of negations, and the more positive descriptions such as are found in the *Nirvāṇa sūtra* and the *Tathāgata-garbha* texts. We also find the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature's distinctive characteristic – verbal paradox – extensively utilized. For example, we see the Mādhyamika approach in lines such as the following negative passage:

Thus we come to realize that
both selves and things are, in their essence, empty,
and existence and non-existence both disappear.

Mind is fundamentally non-action;
the way is truly no-thought.
There is no thought, no reflection,
no seeking, no attainment, no this, no that,
no coming, no going.

The use of verbal paradox is a distinctive characteristic of the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature in general, and in the *Diamond sūtra* in particular it is emphasized. Shen-hui relied heavily upon the *Diamond sūtra*, and this influence can be seen in such lines as the following:

The thought which is free from thought is the thought of Suchness,
and the production which is non-production produces Reality.
Abiding through non-abiding is to be constantly abiding in Nirvana,
and acting through non-action reaches the Other Shore. ...
During every moment one grasps the ungraspable.

As for the text of the *Hsien Tsung Chi*, it is clear that it has been altered by at least one later editor, but to what extent is difficult to ascertain. If we could simply assume that the Tun-huang mss. of this text were in fact the authentic writing of Shen-hui, the problem would be easily solved. However we have no guarantee that the Tun-huang versions were not amended before the text made its way into the Tun-huang library sometime before 980, and it is very likely that they were recopied several times with the likelihood of errors increasing every time. The text translated below, taken from the *Transmission of the Lamp*, is definitely written in a more pleasing classical style and is clearer and more coherent. Stylistically it is unquestionably superior to the Tun-huang variants. We do know that the Tun-huang manuscripts were often poorly copied and show many errors – thus is not automatically true that the Tun-huang

versions are more authentic, even if they can be shown to be chronologically earlier. A detailed examination of the differences between the two texts does shed some light upon this problem, but that will be taken up in a future article. A few of the most important differences will be mentioned in the notes.

The text translated below has been taken from the *Ching-Te Ch'uan Teng Lu* (Transmission of the Lamp [compiled during the] *Ching-te* era), where it is found in the Taishō collection of Chinese Buddhist texts, Vol. 51, No. 2076, pp. 458c25–459b6. An abbreviated variant of this same text is found in the *Tsung Ching Lu*^{ae}, Chapter 99, T. 48, No. 2106, pp. 949a26–b7 where it is referred to as the *Hsien Tsung Lun*.^{at}

HSIEN TSUNG CHI
or
Illuminating the Essential Doctrine

No-thought is the essential doctrine (*tsung*^{8e}),
Non-action⁸ is its foundation.
True Emptiness⁹ is its essence (*t'iah*),
Subtle Existence¹⁰ is its activity (*yung*¹⁰).

Thus Suchness¹¹ is free from thought,
And cannot be known through thought.
Reality (*shih-hsiang*¹¹) is free from arising;¹²
How could a mind bound by form see it?

The thought of no-thought is the thought of Suchness,
And the production of non-production produces Reality.
Abiding through non-abiding is to be constantly abiding in Nirvana,
And acting through non-action reaches the Other Shore.

Suchness does not move,¹³ yet its function is inexhaustible.
Constantly thinking, yet nothing is pursued.
The pursuit is of the original no-thought.

Enlightenment¹⁴ is [the state where there is] nothing obtained;
It is the purification of the Five Eyes¹⁵
And the perfect understanding of the Three Bodies of the Buddha.¹⁶

Prajñā-wisdom is not knowledge,
Yet it manifests the Six Powers of the Buddha¹⁷
And the Four Wisdoms¹⁸ are spread.
This kind of [*Prajñā*-] knowledge is
Meditation (*dhyāna*¹⁸) which is no meditation,
Prajñā which is no *Prajñā* (*hui wu hui*¹⁹)
And action which is free from action.

The nature [of *Prajñā*] is identical with perfect emptiness,
 And in itself is the same as the *Dharmadhātu*.¹⁹
 [With *Prajñā*] the Six *Pāramitās*²⁰ are all perfect and complete,
 And the works of the way (Tao²¹) are free from defilement.

Thus we come to realize that
 Selves and things are both, in their essence, empty,
 And existence and non-existence both disappear.

Mind is fundamentally free from action;
 The way is truly free from thought.
 There is no thought, no reflection,
 No seeking, no attainment, no this, no that,
 No coming, no going.

[*Prajñā*] itself²¹ is realizing the Three Insights
 And penetrating the Eight Stages of Freedom.²²
 Through its ability (merit) one obtains the Ten Powers,²³
 Is wealthy with the Seven Valuables²⁴
 And enters the gateway of non-dualism,²⁵
 Grasping the True Principle of the One Vehicle.

The most wonderful of all wonders (*miao chung miao*²⁶)
 Is the wonder of the reality of all things (*Dharmakāya*²⁷):
 The highest of the high (*devātideva*, *t'ien chung t'ien*²⁸)
 Is the Diamond *Prajñā*-wisdom.²⁸

[Mind is] perfectly serene, always at rest,
 Yet its functioning and response are without limit.
 It acts yet it is always empty;
 It is empty yet it always acts.
 It acts yet it does not 'exist' –
 Thus it is Truly Empty (*chen-k'ung*²⁹).
 It is empty yet it is not 'nothing' –
 Thus it becomes Subtle Existence (*miao-yu*³⁰).
 Subtle Existence is Great *Prajñā*

And the Truly Empty is clear pure Nirvana.
Prajñā is the cause of Nirvana;
 Nirvana is the result of *Prajñā*.
Prajñā is without any seeing [yet] it can see Nirvana.

Nirvana is not produced [yet] it can produce *Prajñā*.
 Nirvana and *Prajñā* differ in name
 Yet in actuality they are the same.
 It is in accord with meanings that names are established;
 Therefore [the *Prajñāpāramitā-sāstra*^{ar}] says,
 "all things are without fixed forms".²⁷

Because Nirvana is able to produce *Prajñā*,²⁸
 it is called the *Dharmakāya* of the True Buddha.
Prajñā is capable of establishing Nirvana,
 and thus it is called the Knowing-and-seeing of the *Tathāgata*.²⁹
 This 'knowing' is knowing that the Mind is tranquil and empty;
 This 'seeing' is seeing one's un-born [Buddha] nature.
 Knowing and seeing are distinct and perfectly clear;
 They are not the same nor are they different.
 Therefore it is possible that activity and tranquility are always wonder-
 fully subtle³⁰
 and reality and appearance are identified.³¹
 To be identified is to penetrate everywhere.
 Penetration means that reality and appearance are interfused without
 obstacle.
 When the six sense-organs are free from defilement,
 it is the virtue of *Dhyāna* and *Prajñā*.
 When the six consciousnesses³² do not emerge,
 It is [due to] the power of Suchness.
 When the mind is Suchness, objective conditions vanish,
 And when objective conditions vanish,
 The mind is empty (*śūnyatā*).
 When mind and objective conditions both vanish,
 reality and appearance are identified.
 [This is] the nature and purity of Suchness.
 The mirror of *Prajñā* reflects perfectly,

Just like quiescent water which reflects a thousand moons differently:³³
It is able to see, hear, perceive and know.

It sees, hears, perceives and knows,
Yet it is always empty and tranquil.
To be empty is to be markless (*anamitta*, *wu-hsiang*³³);
To be tranquil is to be free from arising.
Then one is not attached to either good or evil,
One is not attached to either quietude or disorder;
One no longer dislikes birth or death,
One no longer rejoices in [the thought of achieving] Nirvana;
One no longer takes non-being to be 'non-being',
One no longer takes being to be 'being'.
Whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down,
One's mind is not disturbed.
During every moment one grasps the ungraspable.³⁴

The Buddhas of the Three Periods [of past, present and future]
Teach just this [same doctrine]
Which is identical [to what] the compassionate Bodhisattvas have transmitted from one to another.
After the *Parinirvāṇa*³⁵ of the World Honored One,³⁶
The twenty-eight Patriarchs in India³⁷ all transmitted the non-abiding mind
And preached the Knowing-and-Seeing of the Tathāgata
Until the arrival of Bodhidharma [to China]
Where he became the first [Ch'an patriarch].
This transmission has been handed down from generation to generation
And has never been interrupted even up to the present.

The transmission of the secret teaching³⁸ depends upon the right person.
It is like the crown jewel of a king which can never be given to the wrong person.³⁹
When one's virtue and wisdom are set as two splendid ornaments of one's self,
And one's understanding and activity are identified,

Then one will be able to establish [himself as a true successor to the patriarchs of Ch'an].

The robe [of Bodhidharma] is the proof of the Dharma and the Dharma is symbolized by the robe.

This merely indicates that the robe and Dharma are transmitted together, And there is no transmission apart from this.

Inwardly, the transmission is by the mind-seal (*hsin-in*^{at}).⁴⁰

This seal identifies with the original mind.

Outwardly, [the transmission of the Dharma is indicated by] the transmission of the robe.

The robe symbolizes the essential doctrine.

If one does not possess the robe,

Then there has been no transmission of the Dharma.

If one does not possess the Dharma,

Then he will not receive the robe.

The robe is the robe of the proof of [having received] the Dharma, And the Dharma is the teaching (Dharma) of non-arising.

To be free from arising is to be free from illusion and error;

It is the mind of emptiness and tranquility.

To know emptiness and tranquility is to realize the Dharmakāya.

To realize the Dharmakāya is to be truly emancipated.

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NOTES

* The author would like to express his indebtedness to Professor Chang Chung-yuan, a great scholar of Ch'an Buddhism who kindly and patiently answered my many questions concerning the original Chinese text thereby improving the translation considerably. However, any errors are naturally the responsibility of the author.

¹ The most important biographical work on Shen-hui has been done by Dr. Hu Shih in his *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi* ['The Posthumously Collected Works of the Master Shen-hui'], Taiwan, 1971. A recent Japanese study of great importance is Yanagida Seizan's *Shoki Zenshū shi shō no kenkyū* ['A Study of the Historical Texts of the Ch'an School's Earliest Period'], Kyoto, 1966. Jacques Gernet has published a biographical study of Shen-hui in 'Biographie du Maître Chen-houei du Ho-tsō', *Journal Asiatique* 239 (1951), 29-68. Shen-hui's relationship to Hui-neng is discussed by Philip Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, New York, 1967, pp. 23-37.

² T.51, no. 2076, fascicule 5, p. 245a-b.

³ Jacques Gernet, *Entretiens du Maître Dhyāna Chen-houei du Ho-tsō*, Hanoi, 1949, p. iii.

⁴ Dr. Hu Shih worked on editing the various manuscripts of Shen-hui's writings for over thirty years. The results of his labor is contained in his *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, Taiwan, 1971. D. T. Suzuki also edited and studied several of the Shen-hui texts. His studies on Shen-hui are contained in his *Suzuki Daisetz Zenshū* ['Complete Collected Works of Daisetz Suzuki'], Volumes III and XIII, Tokyo, 1968 and 1969. Not found in that series is his 'Jinne oshō no Dango to kangakubeki Tonkō shutsudo bon ni tsuite', *Ōtani Gakuhō* XVI (1935), 1-30, and *Tonkō shutsudo Jinne Zenji goroku kaisetsu oyobi mokuji*, Tokyo, 1934.

⁵ The five basic Shen-hui texts are the following:

(1) *Lo-ching Ho-tse Shen-hui ta-shih yu*^{aa} (The Words of the great master Ho-tse Shen-hui of Lo-yang). This appears in the *Ch'uan teng lu* (T. 51, 439b20-440a2). A partial translation by Robert Zeuschner was published in the *Middle Way* XLIX (1974), 45-47.

(2) *Nan-yang ho-shang tun-chiao chieh-t'o ch'an men chih-liao-hsing t'an-yu*^{av} ['The Platform Sermon of the Monk of Nan-yang on Direct Realization of One's Nature According to the Ch'an Doctrine of Emancipation Through the Sudden Teaching']. This is found in Suzuki *Zenshū*, Vol. III, and in Hu Shih, *I-chi*. It has been translated by Walter Liebenthal, 'Sermon of Shen-hui', *Asia Major* III (1952), 132-155.

(3) *P'u-t'i ta-mo Nan-tsung ting shih-fei lun*^{aw} ['Treatise Establishing the True and False According to the Southern School of Bodhidharma']. Partially translated by Gernet, *Entretiens*, pp. 81-105.

(4) *Nan-yang ho-shang wen-ta tsa-cheng*^{ax} ['Diverse Interpretations Examined Through Questions and Answers by the Monk of Nan-yang']. Also called the *Shen-hui yu lu*^{ay} ['Discourses of Shen-hui']. Partially translated by Gernet, *Entretiens*, pp. 5-80.

(5) *Hsien Tsung Chi* ['Illuminating the Essential Doctrine']. Also entitled *Tun-wu wu-shang pan-jo sung*^{ba} ['Stanzas on the Wisdom by Which There Is Sudden Awakening to Non-arising/Non-production']. Translated by Gernet, *Entretiens*, pp. 106-110, and by Wing-tsit Chan, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, I, New York, 1960, pp. 356-359.

⁶ See (5) above.

⁷ Hu Shih, *I-chi*, p. 277.

⁸ Non-action (*wu-tso*^{bb}) can have two possible senses.

(a) Literally it means 'not doing' or 'non-acting' in the sense of being without purposive discriminative actions which obscure the innate expression of *Prajñā*-wisdom. More technically, it is being free of those actions which create karmic energy.

(b) This can also mean 'not made' or 'not fabricated' and is used in the *Āgamas* as another name for Nirvana (*akṛta*).

⁹ True Emptiness (*chen k'ung*^{bc}) could also be translated as the Real Void or Absolute Emptiness. R. H. Blyth renders it as 'The Real Self-less Nature of Things' (*Zen and Zen Classics*, Vol. I, Tokyo, 1960, p. 67). This is the denial of any kind of substance or self-existent nature (*svabhāva*) in or underlying things.

¹⁰ Subtle Existence (*miao yu*^{bd}) is inevitably paired with True Emptiness. Gernet translates this as 'Transcendent Being' but this does not seem quite accurate. Subtle Existence refers to the actual existence of things - it asserts the actuality of things even though it is equally true that all things are truly empty.

¹¹ Suchness^c describes the world when seen 'as it truly is' and emphasizes a positive description unlike the term 'emptiness' which sounds quite negative and nihilistic.

Suchness points to the 'just-so-ness' aspect – the inability of words or concepts to adequately describe the way things really are.

¹² Free from arising (*wu shang*^{be}) can also be translated 'unborn', 'free from birth', 'non-production', etc. It appears to refer to a denial of any self-existent nature (*svabhāva*) coming into existence or being annihilated. However this can also be interpreted as an assertion that Reality or the 'Real Form'^{aj} transcends the usual distinctions of creation and destruction. Suzuki discusses the eight arguments for 'non-arising' in his *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra*, London, 1958, pp. 380–381.

¹³ It is interesting to note that the concept of the 'unmoving' (*acalā*) played an important part of the philosophic foundation of the Northern school of Ch'an. They speak of 'form unmoving', 'mind unmoving', and then 'both form and mind unmoving' and identify this third with Suchness. For example See *Ta-ch'eng wu-shang fang-pien wen*^{bt}, attributed to Shen-hsiu, T. 85, No. 2834, pp. 1273b–1278a.

¹⁴ *Bodhi*, *p'u-t'i*.^{bs}

¹⁵ The physical eye (*māṃsa-cakṣus*), the heavenly eye (*divya-cakṣus*), the wisdom eye (*prajñā-cakṣus*), the dharma eye (*dharma-cakṣus*) and the Buddha-eye (*Buddha-cakṣus*).

¹⁶ The *Dharmakāya*, *Sambhogakāya* and *Nirmāṇakāya*.

¹⁷ The Six Powers of the Buddha, or the Six Supernatural Faculties are (1) divine sight, (2) divine hearing, (3) reading the thoughts of others, (4) remembering previous lives, (5) knowledge which destroys evil outflows, and (6) the power of intuitive knowledge which is attainable through penetrating insight.

¹⁸ These Four Wisdoms are (1) the Great Mirror Wisdom, (2) the Profound Observing Wisdom, (3) the Universal Wisdom, and (4) the Perfecting Wisdom.

¹⁹ The *Dharmadhātu* (*fa-chieh*^{bs}) is the realm of all dharmas or things. It is the totality of every world and every possible world in space and time.

²⁰ The Six *Pāramitās* are the six virtues the Bodhisattva cultivates in his path to Buddhahood. They are (1) charity or giving, (2) keeping the precepts, (3) patience, (4) zeal and progress, (5) meditation or contemplation, and (6) *prajñā*-wisdom to discern reality or truth.

²¹ The Chinese character here is just *t'i*^{bt} or 'essence'. Here it seems to refer to the 'essence of mind' which can also be considered *prajñā*-wisdom.

²² The Eight Stages of Freedom are:

- (1) to see all things as impure and reduce feelings of lust;
- (2) to reduce attachment to external phenomena;
- (3) not to give rise to illusion or error;
- (4) to contemplate boundless space transcending all form;
- (5) to contemplate boundless consciousness;
- (6) to contemplate emptiness or non-substantiality;
- (7) to contemplate the state which is beyond conceptualization;
- (8) to attain Nirvana.

²³ The Ten Powers give complete knowledge of:

- (1) what is right and wrong in every condition;
- (2) the karma of living beings;
- (3) all stages of *dhyāna* and *samādhi*;
- (4) the powers and faculties of all beings;
- (5) the desires of every being;
- (6) the actual condition of every individual;
- (7) the direction and consequence of all laws;
- (8) the causes of good and evil;

(9) the end of all beings and Nirvana;

(10) the destruction of all illusion.

²⁴ The Seven Valuables or Seven Precious Things are gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, agate, rubies, and cornelian.

²⁵ This is probably a reference to the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* which Shen-hui quoted often in his other texts.

²⁶ The so-called 'Diamond Wisdom' which overcomes all illusion.

²⁷ This phrase occurs in several places in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*, or *Ta-chih tu lun*²⁷. E.g., T. 24, no. 1509, p. 264c11; p. 265c16; p. 287a17; and p. 294c2-9. On page 287 the text says, "Both within and without, dharmas are without fixed or rigid forms, and thus they are empty".

²⁸ This sounds rather unusual, but it makes some sense if we understand it as referring to someone who has attained Nirvana (not understood as annihilation) and who thus achieves the highest wisdom (*Prajñā*). With this wisdom one perceives everything as it truly is, and so by extension it can be called the Dharmakaya or 'reality of all things'.

²⁹ This phrase, 'Knowing-and-seeing of the *Tathāgata*' is common even in the Pali *suttas*. The two characters 'knowing' and 'seeing' can be taken together as a compound to mean 'awareness' or 'knowledge' but Shen-hui uses them together and separated, so it was felt best to translate it as two words rather than one. K. N. Jayatilleke describes this as:

'The Knowing and Seeing One' is a characteristic description of the Buddha, and it is usually said of what he claims to know that he both 'knows and sees'. The central truths of Buddhism are 'seen'. One 'comprehends the Noble Truths and sees them'. Even Nirvana is 'seen' in a sense analogous to the seeing of a man born blind after a physician has treated him. (Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, London, 1963, p. 418).

³⁰ *Miao*.^{bj}

³¹ 'Reality and appearance' translates the combination of *t'i* and *yung* which can be translated equally well by 'unity and diversity' or 'substance and function'. An excellent article is by Kenji Shimada, 'Tai-yō no rekishi ni yosete', in *Tsukamoto Hakushi shōju ki'nen Bukkyō Shigaku Ronshū*, Kyoto, 1961, pp. 416-430.

³² These are the consciousness produced by the contact of the six sense-organs (the five senses plus mind) with their respective objects.

³³ This line is a bit peculiar. One would think that it should have been written, "... just like the moon is reflected in a thousand pools of water" This passage is not in the Tun-huang version of the text.

³⁴ Ungraspable (*wu-suo te*^{bk}), or unattainable. Because all things are produced due to causation and lack any self-nature, they are formless or markless (*animitta*) and empty (*śūnyatā*). Thus they are all ungraspable.

³⁵ This refers to the death of the Buddha.

³⁶ 'World Honored One' is simply another name for the Buddha.

³⁷ This is a significant line. Although Shen-hui constantly emphasizes the patriarchal transmission, in his other writings he speaks of eight generations of patriarchs in India making thirteen generations in all. This is clear evidence that the text has been altered by later editors after the number 'twenty-eight' had become accepted as standard in the Ch'an tradition and legends. There is no reference to the number 'twenty-eight' in the Tun-huang version of this text.

³⁸ The 'secret teaching' is not secret in the sense that something has been held back

from non-initiates. Rather it is secret because it cannot be transmitted by words or letters – it is an inner realization which must be experienced by the disciple.

³⁹ A reference to a story in the *Lotus sūtra*. T. 262, p. 38c22–28. In Kern's English translation, Chapter 13, pp. 274–276.

But to none he makes a present of his crown jewel, because that jewel only fits on the head of a king.

⁴⁰ Mind-seal has two meanings: (1) when a Ch'an master certifies his disciple, he is saying that the student's mind and the master's mind are in perfect agreement in their enlightened state, and match like a seal and the impression it makes; (2) in authorizing a disciple to be a teacher or master, the master grants the student his 'seal' which is like a 'stamp of approval'.

CHINESE GLOSSARY

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|------------|--------------------|
| a. 顯宗記 | q. 僧肇 |
| b. 荷澤神會 | r. 真如, 如, 如如 |
| c. 荷澤宗 | s. 唯識 |
| e. 宗密 | t. 涅槃經 |
| f. 傳燈錄 | u. 大乘起信論 |
| g. 宗 | v. 阿賴耶識 |
| h. 般若 | w. 三性 |
| i. 頓悟無生般若頌 | x. 定 |
| j. 無念 | y. 見 |
| k. 無分別 | z. 菩提達摩南宗定是非論 |
| l. 妄念 | aa. 神會三十餘年所學功夫唯在見字 |
| m. 安心 | ab. 如來知見 |
| n. 空 | ac. 看 |
| o. 法藏 | ad. 觀 |
| p. 華嚴 | ae. 宗鏡錄卷99 |
| | af. 顯宗論 |

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|---------------------|--------------|
| ag. 宗 | ba. 頓悟無生般若公頌 |
| ah. 體 | bb. 無作 |
| ai. 用 | bc. 真空 |
| aj. 實相 | bd. 妙有 |
| ak. 定 | be. 無生 |
| al. 道 | bf. 大乘無生方便門 |
| am. 妙中妙 | bg. 菩提 |
| an. 法身 | bh. 法界 |
| ao. 天中天 | bi. 體 |
| ap. 真空 | bj. 常妙 |
| aq. 妙有 | bk. 無所得 |
| ar. 大智度論 | bl. 慧無慧 |
| as. 無相 | |
| at. 心印 | |
| au. 荷澤神會大師語 | |
| av. 南陽和上頓教解脫禪門直了性壇語 | |
| aw. 菩提達摩南宗定是非論 | |
| ax. 南陽和尚問答雜徵義 | |
| ay. 神會語錄 | |