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# Ch'an Commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra*: Preliminary Inferences on the Permutation of Chinese Buddhism

by John R. McRae

## *I. The Acquisition of the Heart Sūtra by Chinese Buddhists*

The *Prajñā-paramitā-hṛdaya* is a Chinese text. True, the words themselves were translated from an Indian original, and there do exist Sanskrit manuscripts to establish this authentic South Asian pedigree. There are even Chinese transcriptions of the sounds of the Sanskrit text, an extremely unusual occurrence that testifies to the use of this short scripture for the instruction of Sanskrit and its understanding as having incantational efficacy.<sup>1</sup> However, the earliest information we have about the text is all from Chinese sources, which imply that it was abstracted from the *Great Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* (Kumārajīva's translation of the 25,000-line version of the *Perfection of Wisdom*) in China rather than translated as an independent work. Also, the great translator Hsüan-tsang is even said to have acquired the text—presumably the Chinese version—in China prior to his journey to India. Hence it is less accurate to talk about the *Heart Sūtra*'s passive transmission from India as its active acquisition and use in China.

And how the Chinese did use this text! The tradition of exegesis on the *Heart Sūtra* is absolutely exceptional in the history of Chinese Buddhism. The elegant brevity and multivalent profundity of the text have made it a favorite subject of commentators from the middle of the seventh century up until the present day, and there is no other single text—nor any single group of scriptures—that has been interpreted by such a long and virtually unbroken list of illustrious authorities. Commentarial

literature does not always lend itself to quick analysis and summary, and elucidating the issues raised in a single text often requires consultation of a bewildering variety of subcommentaries and other works. Hence both traditional and modern readers have tended to look more readily to independent essays, tracts, and sermons to help them determine the doctrinal contour of an individual figure's teachings. Given the relative lack of complexity of the *Heart Sūtra* itself, however, and especially given the amenability of the text to a wide range of doctrinal interpretations and religious milieux, differences between its various commentaries can be unusually revealing as to some of the major changes in the identity and role of Buddhism in Chinese history.

#### A. Chinese Translations of the Heart Sūtra

Hsüan-tsang<sup>a</sup> (602–64) translated the *Heart Sūtra* into Chinese in 649, just a few years after his return from India.<sup>2</sup> There were at least eight other translations, from the late seventh century until sometime during the Sung; five of these were of the long version of the *sūtra*, which is no doubt later than the more widely known short version.<sup>3</sup> The intriguing question is whether there were any translations of what we now know as the *Heart Sūtra* before Hsüan-tsang, and specifically, whether it was translated as an independent work by Kumārajīva. Tao-an's<sup>b</sup> catalogue of Buddhist literature lists two similar titles that later came to be identified as referring to the *Heart Sūtra*, for both of which the translator is listed as unknown.<sup>4</sup> In two later catalogues one of these titles is attributed to Chih-ch'ien<sup>c</sup> of the Wu dynasty,<sup>5</sup> while an eighth-century catalogue attributes the other to Kumārajīva.<sup>6</sup> A Sui dynasty catalogue lists both titles as deriving from the *Ta p'in*<sup>d</sup> (see next paragraph) which here may refer to translations of the *Great Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* by Kumārajīva and others.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, the bulk of both the Hsüan-tsang and Kumārajīva translations of the *Heart Sūtra* is found in Kumārajīva's *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ching*,<sup>e</sup> also known as the *Ta-p'in*, and in Hsüan-tsang's translation of the *Ta po-jo ching*,<sup>f</sup> i.e., their translations of the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, the 25,000-line version of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*.<sup>8</sup> Hence the original effort of translation

was Kumārajīva's. Indeed, his students were quite aware of the important doctrinal ramifications of the lines "form is emptiness, emptiness is form," as is shown explicitly in the writings of Seng-chao<sup>8</sup> (374–414).<sup>9</sup> However, since the *Heart Sūtra* is not included in contemporary lists of Kumārajīva's works it was probably not translated by him as an independent work. Although the earliest titles for this short text (assuming that they apply to the text in question) identify it as an incantation text, I know of no references to its now-famous concluding mantra nor any commentaries to the text prior to the appearance of the Hsüan-tsang translation.<sup>10</sup>

Our information about Hsüan-tsang's acquisition of the text corroborates its existence in China prior to his pilgrimage to India.<sup>11</sup> However, given the slight but significant differences in the titles found in the catalogues, it is still possible that Kumārajīva's translation only attained its final form following the appearance of Hsüan-tsang's translation. This fits very well with the chronology outlined by Conze that would place the accretion of tantric ideas into the *prajñā-pāramitā* literature around the year 600.<sup>12</sup> Incidentally, there is evidence in the Tibetan Tun-huang materials for the existence of a Chinese version of the text that is no longer extant.<sup>13</sup>

### *B. The Heart Sūtra in T'ang Dynasty Buddhism*

What was the predominant understanding of the *Heart Sūtra* at the time of its translation? Although we tend to think of this text as delineating the "heart" or quintessence of the perfection of wisdom doctrine, this is apparently not the original meaning of the title. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that in China during the seventh and eighth centuries the *Heart Sūtra* was appreciated, not as an exquisite encapsulation of Buddhist doctrine, but as a *dhāraṇī* text to be used in ritual incantation. This evidence, which has been uncovered by Fukui Fumimasa,<sup>h</sup> deserves our close attention because of its important ramifications for our understanding of the text in both the Indian and Chinese contexts.

Fukui has shown that most T'ang dynasty references to the *Heart Sūtra* cite it as the *To hsin ching*,<sup>i</sup> where *to* is the last character of the transliteration of *prajñā-pāramitā*. Other titles given to the

text in Tun-huang manuscripts are: *Po-jo to hsin ching*,<sup>j</sup> *To hsin po-jo ching*,<sup>k</sup> *Kuan-yin to hsin ching*,<sup>l</sup> *Po-lo-mi-to hsin ching*,<sup>m</sup> and *Mi-to hsin ching*.<sup>n</sup> Similar appellations occur in scriptural catalogues from T'ang China and Nara Japan and in a miscellany of materials extending into the Ch'ing.<sup>14</sup> There also exist several other Chinese Buddhist scriptures that have titles ending in the characters *hsin ching*<sup>o</sup> or "Heart Sūtra," as well as the occasional use in these texts of terms such as *hsin chou*<sup>p</sup> (lit., "heart mantra" or "mind mantra").<sup>15</sup> Fukui makes the very cogent suggestion that the term *hṛdaya* or "heart" in the title of the *Po-jo [to] hsin ching* and similar texts refers not to the "heart" or quintessence of the Buddhist dharma, but rather to *dhāraṇī* as the quintessential Buddhist practice.<sup>16</sup> Thus the doctrinal content of the *Heart Sūtra* was of importance primarily insofar as it lent power to the spiritual and ritual efficacy of the incantation.

Even so, the concise yet profound nature of the *Heart Sūtra* made it a convenient vehicle for the explanation of the Buddhist teachings, and the text was so frequently appropriated for use in doctrinal exposition that it came to be understood primarily as an exquisite statement of the Buddhist teachings.<sup>17</sup> This process of scholastic appropriation began with Hsüan-tsang's disciple Tz'u-en<sup>q</sup> (or Ta-sheng Chi,<sup>r</sup> frequently referred to as K'uei-chi<sup>s</sup>; 632–82), who wrote the first of a series of Yogācāra commentaries.<sup>18</sup> No doubt the most influential commentary in the East Asian tradition was that by Fa-tsang<sup>t</sup> (643–712), which is cited by a large number of later authors regardless of their affinities with his Hua-yen philosophy.<sup>19</sup> Advocates of T'ien-t'ai doctrine also compiled their own glosses on the text.<sup>20</sup> In addition to the large number of commentaries by members of the Ch'an school, which I will discuss below, there are also one or two texts that defy sectarian identification.<sup>21</sup> Given the nature of the text, it is perhaps not surprising that there are no Chinese commentaries based primarily on Pure Land theory.<sup>22</sup>

With regard to the Ch'an commentaries, if the impact of the scholastic commentaries was to appropriate what was originally a *dhāraṇī* text as a vehicle of doctrinal exposition, Ch'an commentators at virtually the same time sought to appropriate the text for interpretation in terms of the "contemplation of the mind" (*kuan-hsin*<sup>u</sup> or *k'an-hsin*<sup>v</sup>). Although to a certain extent the *Heart Sūtra* may have been identified with Hsüan-tsang per-

sonally, it was nonetheless an appropriate choice for use by Ch'an authorities because of its lack of manifestly sectarian identity. The evident doctrinal affinities of the *Heart Sūtra* with the Mādhyamika tradition were well in accord with the emphasis in early Ch'an on the *prajñā-pāramitā*, but in the late seventh- and early eighth-century China this emphasis was devoid of any particular sectarian implications.

## *II. Ch'an-related Commentaries on the Heart Sūtra: The T'ang-Sung Series*

We are fortunate in possessing a number of commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* written by members of the Ch'an tradition. These commentaries derive from different eras of Ch'an, and they fall into two distinct series: one beginning shortly after the appearance of Hsüan-tsang's translation and ending in the Sung, and another beginning with the founding of the Ming dynasty and proceeding through the Ch'ing. The following discussion of the T'ang-Sung series will focus on how various elements of the Ch'an hermeneutic deriving from different stages in the development of Chinese Ch'an were interposed into and superimposed onto a commentarial tradition.

The T'ang-Sung series of Ch'an-related *Heart Sūtra* commentaries consists of the following works:

1. A complex of three Tun-huang manuscripts, one anonymous, one bearing an obviously fictitious or untraceable attribution (its author is usually identified as a monk who died before Hsüan-tsang translated the *Heart Sūtra*), and one written by Chih-shen<sup>w</sup> (609–702), who is remembered in Ch'an as a student of Hung-jen<sup>x</sup> (600–74) and as the precursor of two important early Ch'an lineages from Szechwan.<sup>23</sup>

2. A Tun-huang text written in 727 by Ching-chüeh<sup>y</sup> (683–ca. 750), an important author belonging to the early Ch'an faction now known as the Northern school. When Ching-chüeh wrote his *Chu to hsin po-jo ching*<sup>z 24</sup> he was already an accomplished author, having written a now-lost commentary on the *Diamond Sūtra* and one of the two earliest proto-historical accounts of the development of Chinese Ch'an, the *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*<sup>aa</sup> ("Records of the Masters and Disciples of the *Laṅkāvatāra*

*Sūtra*]).<sup>25</sup> Taken together, the Chih-shen complex of manuscripts and Ching-chüeh's commentary display increasing evidence of the growing early Ch'an hermeneutic.

3. A very widely used commentary by Nan-yang Hui-chung<sup>ab</sup> (d. 775), who was invited to Ch'ang-an in 762 and became famous as a successor to the so-called Sixth Patriarch of the orthodox Ch'an tradition, Hui-neng.<sup>ac</sup> (Since Hui-neng died in 713, this relationship was probably not based on any direct contact between the two men.) Hui-chung's commentary installed early Ch'an ideology into the tradition of commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* in a fashion that would remain acceptable to the Ch'an tradition through the Sung. During the Edo Period in Japan, and possibly as early as the Southern Sung, Hui-chung's text was circulated within a set of three Ch'an commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra*.<sup>26</sup>

4. A set of verses attributed to Bodhidharma, the legendary founder of Ch'an, an attribution that is patently absurd for chronological reasons. The verses themselves are a very sensitively written product of the early ninth century or so.<sup>27</sup>

5. A commentary attributed to Ta-tien Pao-t'ung<sup>ad</sup> (732–824), whose biography is largely obscure.<sup>28</sup> This is a unique text that seems to have been largely ignored in Ch'an studies. Although internal evidence reveals that it must have been altered or emended sometime after Ta-tien's death, it seems to derive from the golden age of classical Ch'an in the middle or latter part of the ninth century.

6. Two Sung dynasty commentaries, by Fu-jung Tao-k'ai<sup>ae</sup> and Tz'u-shou Huai-shen<sup>af</sup> (d. 1131). These were widely distributed along with Hui-chung's contribution as the "three commentaries" on the *Heart Sūtra*. These two texts are relatively unimaginative, a fact that may indicate the basic incompatibility of the Sung dynasty approach to Ch'an with the enterprise of textual exegesis.<sup>29</sup>

7. A text that was written by a Chinese monk most famous for his missionary activities in Japan.<sup>30</sup> The monk in question was Lan-ch'i Tao-lung<sup>ag</sup> (Rankei Dōryū; 1213–78), who was one of the earliest and most important transmitters of Sung dynasty Ch'an to Japan. Although there may be methodological dangers involved in the use of this text to represent the Chinese tradition, I believe that Tao-lung's *Heart Sūtra* commentary—in contrast



to the two listed in item 6—is an exquisite example of the application of the Sung dynasty “high Ch’an” approach to the use of religious texts.

Briefly put, this T’ang-Sung series manifests two major characteristics: first, the gradual interpolation of distinctive early Ch’an terminology and ideas into the interpretation of the text, and second, the superimposition on this interpretive foundation of the “encounter dialogue” style of Ch’an repartée. Due to limitations of space, I will only point out the highlights of these two developments, but two basic implications should be obvious: (a) that the early Ch’an interpretive structure was surprisingly long-lasting and (b) that the addition of classical Ch’an elements in fact reveals the fundamental disinclination of the Ch’an tradition to engage in textual exegesis.

#### *A. Proto-Ch’an: The Chih-shen Complex of Commentaries*

An examination of the Chih-shen complex of commentaries reveals usages that are characteristic of or even unique to early Ch’an texts. For example, the most striking feature of the anonymous manuscript is its inclusion of the following verses:

Well [should you] view the mind (*k’an-hsin*<sup>ah</sup>), view the mind correctly;

view the mind in the locus of the mind.

The mind does not perceive the locus of nonbeing (*wu-so*<sup>ai</sup>).

View the mind, and the mind will become peaceful of itself.

This locus is both emptiness and form;

the five *skandhas* are provisionally called a person.

There is no mind that can concentrate thoughts—

let it flow and achieve truth by itself.

Form and mind are fundamentally empty and serene;

a false endeavor is the discrimination of feelings.

Moving but not obstructing the principle;

in accord with words but completely without names.<sup>31</sup>

The terms “view the mind” and “locus of nonbeing” are litmus test indicators of Northern school doctrine from around the beginning of the eighth century, and the attitude that the

mind should be allowed to “flow and achieve truth by itself” is also found in early texts. Although the distinction is not maintained throughout these three commentaries, notice that in the passage just introduced the terms “form” and “mind” (*se*<sup>aj</sup> and *hsin*<sup>ak</sup>) are substituted for the scriptural pair of “form” and “emptiness” (*se* and *k’ung*<sup>al</sup>).

The Chih-shen commentary uses several phrases and terms characteristic of certain later texts, but it is also unaware of a number of early Ch’an concepts. Ching-chüeh’s commentary understandably contains a greater proportion of these distinctive terms and concepts.

*B. The Pinnacle of Early Ch’an: Hui-chung’s Commentary*

The commentary by Hui-chung contains a statement of the most mature phase of early Ch’an, written just as the acrimonious divisiveness that had arisen in the middle of the eighth century was being resolved but before the encounter dialogue style of classical Ch’an practice had become predominant. The maturity of this message can be seen in the way in which Hui-chung places *hsin*, “mind,” at the very center of his interpretation. This emphasis on mind is a direct extension of the early Ch’an interest in the “contemplation of the mind.”

The following is Hui-chung’s explanation of the *sūtra*’s denial of the existence of suffering, accumulation, extinction, and the path (the Chinese rendition of the four noble truths). Hui-chung’s first explanation is from the perspective of cultivation:

Since the mind has that for which it seeks and attaches itself to *dharmas*, therefore it is called “truth.” To energetically cultivate realization with the mind unceasingly thirsting for it is called the “truth of suffering.” To extensively examine the *sūtras* and treatises, greedily seeking the wondrous principle, is called the “truth of accumulation.” To eradicate the various false thoughts, so that one seeks permanent tranquility, is called the “truth of extinction.” To distantly transcend troubling disturbances, devotedly cultivating the principle of the Buddhas, is called the “truth of the path.”<sup>32</sup>

Hui-chung’s second explanation, which follows immediately on the first, is from the perspective of the realized sage:

[To understand that] the mind is fundamentally pure and numinous, with no need for recourse to cultivating realization, is called the "truth of suffering." [To understand that] the [Buddha]-nature incorporates the myriad *dharmas*—and how could one depend on seeking—is called the "truth of accumulation." [To understand that] false thoughts are not generated (*wu-sheng*,<sup>am</sup> "birthless") and fundamentally of themselves permanently serene is called the "truth of extinction." [To understand that] serenity is permanently nondual, with false and true not confused, is called the "truth of the path." . . . If you comprehend that there is no mind (*wu hsin*<sup>an</sup>), then how can the four truths exist? Therefore it is said, "no suffering, accumulation, extinction, and path."<sup>33</sup>

I should emphasize that Hui-chung's explanation of these passages is not simply a free and unlearned interpretation of the text. Early Ch'an texts frequently utilize a process known as "contemplative analysis" (*kuan-hsin shih*<sup>ao</sup>), in which traditional terminology and concepts are drastically and creatively reinterpreted so as to pertain to the early Ch'an practice of the contemplation of the mind. This was an extremely important process in the generation of early Ch'an religious ideology, since it allowed Ch'an to play and experiment with its received terminological and doctrinal tradition and to produce its own new conceptual paradigms, appropriating that tradition to serve its own approach to Buddhism. This style of total reinterpretation may indeed be linked with a decline in the understanding of conventional Indian Buddhist doctrine in China insofar as it indicates a growing emphasis on individual practice rather than doctrinal systems, but it should not be interpreted in simplistic terms as a lack of understanding.

It is interesting that the most popular Ch'an commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* is the one that places the strongest emphasis on the concept of mind, as well as offering the most thought-provoking comments on the identity of form and emptiness. Instead of concentrating on these terms themselves, as did earlier Ch'an commentaries, Hui-chung resolutely shifts the focus to the mind and its attendant *dharmas*. There is here no distinction between epistemology and ontology: Form and emptiness are but two modes of manifestation and nonmanifestation that occur depending on whether the mind either "arises" (*ch'i*<sup>ap</sup>) or is imperceptible.<sup>34</sup>

We should also observe Hui-chung's frequent use of reflectively paired perspectives. At one point, Hui-chung understands *śūnyatā* as the seamless reality inherent in all things, the awareness of which is obliterated by deluded thinking: "When the mind arises there is form, and when the mind is imperceptible there is emptiness." However, Hui-chung immediately reverses his terms when describing the situation of ordinary unenlightened people, using "emptiness" to refer to the unreality of the world as it is seen by foolish sentient beings. This emptiness, this foolish misapprehension of reality, disappears at the moment of enlightenment: "When the mind is taken as existent there is emptiness, and when the mind is taken as nonexistent there is being."<sup>35</sup>

This tendency to alternate between two different interpretations of the same term or concept is characteristic of early Ch'an texts. As in the redefinition of the four noble truths, Hui-chung defines reality from the perspectives of both the unenlightened but earnest practitioner and the confirmed sage. This may be considered, in fact, as Ch'an's unique extrapolation from the dyad of form and emptiness in the *Heart Sūtra*. The key to enlightenment, and thus the essential distinction between the two perspectives, is the ability to "counterilluminate" the mind-source so as to understand its crucial role and to achieve the essential "nonarising" or "nonactivation" (i.e., the absence of intentionalized mentation) of the mind.

### *C. Ta-tien's Commentary and the Classical Ch'an Hermeneutic*

One of the truly exceptional *Heart Sūtra* commentaries still extant is that attributed to Ta-tien Pao-t'ung. Ta-tien was a student of Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien<sup>39</sup> (700–90), who along with Matsu Tao-i<sup>40</sup> is one of the figures most closely associated with the efflorescence of classical Ch'an. Very little is known about his biography, but Ta-tien is remembered for his contacts with the literatus Han Yü.<sup>41</sup> Internal evidence suggests that Ta-tien's *Heart Sūtra* commentary was edited sometime during the middle or latter part of the ninth century.<sup>37</sup>

The following passage provides a hint at the transition that took place during the eighth and ninth centuries from early to classical Ch'an:

Form and emptiness are of a single type.<sup>38</sup> From the *buddhas* above to the insects below, each and every [sentient being] is fundamentally completely emptiness. The eyes are unable to see form—they can only see true emptiness. The ears are unable to hear form—they can only hear true emptiness. Although divisible into eighty-four thousand [different experiences], all perceptive and cognitive activity (*chien-wen chüeh-chih*<sup>39</sup>) derives from the six senses. Form and emptiness are not different: this is the wondrous principle of true emptiness . . .

If you wish to eradicate birth and death, then just illuminate and destroy from a single sensory capacity. You will be instantly empty and serene, you will instantly receive your self from before the eon of emptiness.<sup>39</sup> Serene but constantly illuminating, illuminating but constantly serene.<sup>40</sup> Serene but without anything that is serene, you only perceive emptiness. Empty yet without anything that is empty, the eighty-four thousand sensory efforts and false thoughts suddenly end in a single moment. Persons are empty, and *dharma*s are empty. The path of words is cut off, and the locus of mental activity is extinguished. To make the thoughts move is to be in opposition; to evaluate it is to be in error. If you can penetrate to the bottom of this without depending on anything, you will instantly receive [this understanding]. There are no persons and no *buddhas*.<sup>41</sup>

The basic doctrinal thrust of classical Ch'an was Ma-tsu's insistence that every human action was a function of the Buddha-nature, and this passage from Ta-tien's commentary takes a similar tack in absolutizing the activities of the senses. Eyes and ears do not perceive mere form and sound (their respective categories of phenomenal reality); instead, they see and hear only true emptiness. Any sensory capacity may be used as the vehicle of enlightenment, as long as one "illuminates and destroys," i.e., illuminates so as to eliminate any dualistic distinctions, from that one perspective.<sup>42</sup> Ta-tien's commentary is explicitly subitist regarding the experience of enlightenment: "Empty yet without anything that is empty, the eighty-four thousand sensory efforts and false thoughts suddenly end in a single moment." This is the early Ch'an agenda rendered more extreme by the innovations of Ma-tsu and his followers.

This commentary is also remarkable for its inclusion of encounter dialogue material and its use of poetically evocative explanations. My favorite is the reference to "solitary brilliance

illuminating alone, like an autumn moon."<sup>43</sup> Another intriguing line is its inclusion of a variant of a saying most frequently associated with Mao Tse-tung: "If one wants to travel a thousand *li*,<sup>au</sup> a single step comes first."<sup>44</sup> The commentary also contains a line from the *I ching*<sup>av</sup> used by Liang su<sup>aw</sup> and Han-yü to express identity of the sage and the common man: "to develop one's nature to perfection through the understanding of Principle" (*ch'iung-li chin-hsing*<sup>ax</sup>). This line had already been noticed by Kumārajīva's students, but it also occurs in the sayings of Nan-ch'üan P'u-yüan<sup>ay</sup> (748–834) and Tsung-mi's<sup>az</sup> *Yüan jen lun*.<sup>ba45</sup> Another passage that incorporates encounter dialogue phraseology is the following:

Sentient beings do not believe that this mind is the Buddha, but the *buddhas* have many types of expedient means by which to point at sentient beings and make them see their own fundamental natures. How blue, the emerald-green bamboo—it is entirely true suchness; you must see true suchness for yourself. How profuse, the yellow flowers—they are universally *prajñā*; you must see *prajñā* for yourself. [The monk] Chia-shan<sup>bb</sup> said, "There is nowhere that the Tao is not." He also said, "To see form is to see the mind. Sentient beings only see form and do not see the mind." If you are able to penetrate this to the ultimate, then while walking along, thinking of this and that, things will force themselves together (?) and you will suddenly see it for yourself. This is called "seeing the [Buddha]-nature" (*chien-hsing*<sup>bc</sup>).<sup>46</sup>

In other words, this commentary gives doctrinal explanations based on a combination of early and classical Ch'an teachings, with occasional elaborations done in the rhetoric of classical Ch'an encounter dialogue.

#### D. Lan-ch'i Tao-lung's Commentary and Sung dynasty Ch'an

The *Heart Sūtra* commentary by Lan-ch'i Tao-lung (Rankei Dōryū) carries on the emphasis on the mind that appeared so strongly in Hui-chung's commentary. Indeed, it is surprising how Tao-lung reaches back into his own tradition for terms and explanations reminiscent of early Ch'an. This may have been the conscious effort of a man teaching what he must have felt

was a relatively ill-prepared Japanese audience.

The most intriguing feature of Tao-lung's commentary is the very consistent structure of his remarks on the text: After virtually every compound or phrase in the *sūtra*, Tao-lung begins with a primary definition. Usually, these definitions are reasonably faithful to the original meaning of the scripture. After weaving in other ideas suggested by the definition, the gloss almost always ends with what can only be called a "capping phrase" in idiosyncratically Ch'an language. Although lacking in the sense of dialogue with the sages of the hallowed past, Tao-lung's proclivity to conclude each gloss with an inexplicably pithy comment is reminiscent of the approach taken in works such as the famous *Pi-yen lu*<sup>bd</sup> ("Blue Cliff Records"). Thus both the presence of such comments in encounter dialogue language and their location within the text reveal the impact of Sung dynasty Ch'an rhetorical conventions on this commentary.

Tao-lung's style is readily apparent in his interpretations of the lines from the *sūtra* equating form and emptiness, which also reveal his continued emphasis on the centrality of mind. The "capping phrases" are given in italics:

**Śāriputra (She-li-tzu<sup>be</sup>),**

The universal sameness of body and mind is called *She*. Wisdom and sagacity and called *li*. The myriad *dharmas* are generated by the mind, hence it is said *tzu*. Where is the location of the generation of great wisdom? *The rabbit pushes the wheel through the waves of the Milky Way.*

**form does not differ from emptiness,**

Form is originally generated from emptiness. The deluded person sees form as being outside of true emptiness. Form arises from the mind. [The enlightened person] comprehends that the mind is originally without the characteristic of form. If you revert to the senses you will understand; if you follow their illuminations you will not. *Let them have heads of ash and faces of dirt!*

**emptiness does not differ from form.**

Emptiness is manifested dependent on form; form reverts to emptiness. Therefore, form and mind are without anything on which they rely. Therefore, if you are enlightened to the emptiness of the mind you will naturally [realize] the emptiness of they myriad *dharmas*. *What would you say, then, about true emptiness? Carp on the mountain, thatch under water.*

**Form is emptiness,**

Form is the function (*yung*<sup>bf</sup>) of emptiness; emptiness is the essence (*t'i*<sup>bg</sup>) of form. The myriad waves do not transcend the water. [Tao-lung] shouted a single shout, saying "Guest and host are distinct!"

**emptiness is form.**

Emptiness is the essence of form; form is the function of emptiness. [Tao-lung] scolded, saying "The matter begins from the repetition!"<sup>47</sup>

The doctrinal niceties in this passage are overwhelmed by Tao-lung's concluding remarks. Are we to understand them as explications of the expository statements they follow? Or is Tao-lung merely trying to get us to stop trying to understand form and emptiness with our rational minds? Further study may indicate that Tao-lung's use of two radically different types of expression—one explanatory, one performative—is related to the reflexive pairing of the perspectives of the practitioner and the sage that occurs in Hui-chung's text. Even if this turns out to be the case, Tao-lung's commentary has a disjointed quality because of its use of such different types of material. Tao-lung felt the need to explain Buddhism to his Japanese audience in the traditional Ch'an fashion, but at the same time he could not but recreate for them the spirit of Sung dynasty Ch'an as he knew it.

Engaging though it may be, Tao-lung's text highlights the fundamental incompatibility between the commentarial enterprise and the dominant thrust of Sung dynasty Ch'an. His capping phrases are an attempt to enter into dialogue with the text, not to explain it, and this particular Indian *sūtra* cannot talk back to him. The Ch'an tradition was never interested in scriptural exegesis in its own right, and once the early Ch'an appropriation and reinterpretation of the *Heart Sūtra* was completed by Hui-chung, there was little more that the Ch'an tradition could derive from within the text. Indeed, the emergence of Ch'an was in part a reaction against the scholastic tradition, and the snippets of encounter dialogue material apparent in the commentaries by Ta-tien and Tao-lung are not intrinsically related to the content of the text. That we have so few Ch'an-related *Heart Sūtra* commentaries dating from the Sung dynasty is no doubt an indication that the primary orientation of the



"high Ch'an" of the Sung was fundamentally at odds with the goals and methods of textual exegesis.

### *III. Ming T'ai-tsu and the Ming-Ch'ing series of Heart Sūtra Commentaries*

The second series of *Heart Sūtra* commentaries begins from a fundamentally different perspective from that of the T'ang-Sung series. The catalyst that made this series of commentaries possible was the complex approach toward Buddhism taken by the founder of the Ming, Emperor T'ai-tsu<sup>bh</sup> (r. 1368–98). Although his government placed severe and in some ways arbitrary institutional restrictions on Buddhism, T'ai-tsu himself promoted the emergence of a syncretic approach to the three teachings of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. In addition, he showed a personal interest at least initially favoring Buddhism as an ideology of governance, in part by sponsoring the compilation of new commentaries on a selection of basic Buddhist scriptures (in 1377–79) and by providing an imperial preface for the *Heart Sūtra*.<sup>48</sup>

Even long after T'ai-tsu's death, when changes in Ming society had rendered many of his institutional innovations impracticable, his legacy was felt in the efforts taken by scholars and officials in order to recreate the pristine order they perceived in the early years of the dynasty. The *Heart Sūtra* thus continued to be a focus of interest by both lay and ordained Buddhists throughout the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties, to the extent that the number of commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* written during these dynasties is several times that of previous eras.<sup>49</sup>

More important than the numerical popularity of the *Heart Sūtra* is that this text appealed to a much wider assortment of commentators. Quite a few of the Ming commentaries use this short scripture as a vehicle for the presentation of theories concerning the unity of the Three Teachings. Among these are a short work by the iconoclastic and even antisocial Confucian Li Chih<sup>bi</sup> (1527–1602), who became a Buddhist monk in 1588 only as a social expedient, and a much longer work by the great syncretist Lin Chao-en<sup>bj</sup> (1517–98).<sup>50</sup> Lin Chao-en's work is in-

triguing in the image it reveals of the Confucian academy, with questions and answers between Lin and his students.

Several of the Ming works, by both monks and laymen, include comments based on the idiosyncratically Ch'an style of encounter dialogue, much as in the manner of Ta-tien Pao-t'ung of the T'ang. As a group, however, they return to a more straightforward hermeneutical approach of simply attempting to explain the text according to their own interpretations. Underlying the greater apparent faithfulness to the meaning of the scripture itself is a much deeper ideological agenda: The legacy of Sung dynasty Ch'an has not been lost entirely, but the followers of Ch'an during the Ming dynasty used a different assemblage of literary sources and felt a new imperative to synthesize and restate the very basics of the Buddhist religion. For example, Ming dynasty commentaries are much more inclined than those of earlier periods to cite the *Platform Sūtra*, and Hsi Ch'ao's<sup>bk</sup> late fourth century *Feng-fa yao*<sup>bl</sup> or "Essentials of the Faith" was published together with the *Heart Sūtra* and other texts during the Ming.

Not surprisingly, the interpretations found in these Ming commentaries also refer very frequently to the texts and ideas of Confucianism and Taoism. Indeed, the very popularity of the text in such a wide range of contexts is related to the increased emphasis on mind by Ming intellectuals in general—Wang Yang-ming<sup>bm</sup> (1472–1528) is of course the primary example. What we refer to in English as the *Heart Sūtra* the Chinese took to be the "scripture of the mind," the quintessential Buddhist statement regarding the mind.

#### IV. Wider Ramifications

The analysis given above of the T'ang-Sung series of commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* entails conclusions pertaining to the transformation of Ch'an Buddhism that took place during the eighth and ninth centuries. In general, these commentaries reveal the gradual imposition of early Ch'an terminology and ideas onto the understanding of the text, followed by the superimposition of encounter dialogue language deriving from the classical and Sung dynasty periods of Chinese Ch'an. Con-

sidering the overall growth of the Ch'an tradition, this seems to be a perfectly natural progression.

The most intriguing by-product of this research is the apparent interest of Hui-chung and other commentators in working within a conceptual framework of mind and form rather than form and emptiness. Some years ago Robert Gimello described the shift from the apophatic style of Mādhyamika dialectic to the kataphatic discourse of the Chinese *Tathāgatagarbha* tradition during the early seventh century,<sup>51</sup> and here we may have discovered the intimation of a further development along similar lines. That is, rather than manipulate the array of implications deriving from the description of the world as either form or emptiness, the Chinese tradition became more interested in probing the identity of the enlightened sage. Also, the assertion that the mind perceives true emptiness rather than the differentiated stuff of phenomenal reality clearly implies the quest for a unitary world view that Charles Hartman has shown to be so apparent in the writings of the Confucian literatus Han Yü. Finally, there is also an exciting possibility that the formulation of this unitary world view was in some sense a preamble to major epistemic changes to come, particularly the fragmentation of imagery and the collapse in confidence regarding the possibilities of objective description that are apparent in late T'ang poetry.<sup>52</sup>

Although a detailed examination of the Ming-Ch'ing series of *Heart Sūtra* commentaries lies beyond the scope of this preliminary report, even this brief survey demonstrates the palpable discontinuity between this and the T'ang-Sung series of texts. In conclusion, I would like to comment on the implications of the distinctions between these two series of commentaries for the general issue of the role of Buddhism in Chinese history.

Too often scholars focus on the Sui-T'ang schools as representing the peak of Chinese Buddhism, with the religion's fate from the Sung onward depicted in terms of a virtually undifferentiated "decline." There are several obvious reasons for this impression of a Sui-T'ang pinnacle and ensuing decline: The widespread acceptance of the Naitō hypothesis, which takes the transformation of Chinese society during the T'ang as a major watershed in Chinese history, has led scholars to homologize the various religious developments of the post-T'ang dynasties

under the general rubric of popular religion. Since Buddhism flourished within the medieval culture of the T'ang and earlier dynasties, it is natural that scholars would think that it would assume the alternate state, i.e., decline, in the premodern culture of the Sung and beyond. And the very term "popular religion" carries the connotation that Buddhism was no longer a vital part of élite culture.

The judgment that post-T'ang Buddhism was in decline, or at least largely irrelevant, is in part the legacy of the emphasis of orthodox Chinese scholarship on the Confucian tradition, which revels in the Neo-Confucian "renaissance" that began in the Sung.<sup>53</sup> Another factor has been Japanese scholarship on Chinese Buddhism. Certainly the centuries of study of the Nara schools of Japanese Buddhism have led to built-in interpretive dispositions. In addition, the fact of Ennin's presence in China during one of the worst persecutions of Buddhism there may have helped fix the notion of the post-T'ang decline in the Japanese mind.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to these modern issues, there may be two other factors involved in the commonly held notion of the general decline of Buddhism after the T'ang: first, the nonsystematic nature of the Ch'an religious enterprise, and second, the long-range influence of the agenda set by Emperor T'ai-tsu of the Ming. In the first place, it is self-contradictory to accept the Ch'an school as the most intrinsically "Chinese" Buddhist school, whatever that generalization is supposed to mean, and at the same time to assert that the pinnacle of Chinese Buddhism occurred with the climax in systematic Buddhology by the Sui-T'ang schools. Systematic statements of religious philosophy are spectacular achievements easily and rightly susceptible to study and admiration, but they were not the *sine qua non* of Chinese Buddhism. Rather than conceiving of Chinese Buddhism as peaking during the T'ang and being replaced by Neo-Confucianism during the Sung, we should recognize that some aspects of Chinese Buddhism peaked at the very same time as the emergence of other important cultural and intellectual trends. Rather than a simplistic periodization of Buddhist and Neo-Confucian ages, I believe we have achieved a level of sophistication such that we can talk more meaningfully of major overlapping trends and processes.

Second, I suspect that Chinese Buddhism during the twentieth century is still living out the effects of Ming T'ai-tsu's institutional restructuring and doctrinal homogenization of Buddhism, which sometimes makes it hard for us to see the distinctions inherent in the older forms of the tradition. The pedagogical agenda of late Ming Buddhism involved an effort to return to the basics, to reach the populace with easily understood explanations of the heart of Buddhism. It was also an avowedly syncretic agenda, which obscured the doctrinal and sectarian (or, if you will, lineage) distinctions of the past. Neither the absence of doctrinal systematization nor the presence of syncretism is necessarily synonymous with decline or a lack of creativity, let alone with a loss of significance of Buddhism itself in Chinese culture. We should be able to search for the distinctions apparent in earlier groups, trends, and movements without immediately succumbing to an overly rigid definition of Buddhist "schools," but neither should we conclude that the absence of discretely defined schools indicates disintegration and decline.

## NOTES

This preliminary research report, which was written while the author was a postdoctoral fellow at the John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, Harvard University, is based on a presentation given at the American Academy of Religion annual meeting in Atlanta in November, 1986; a longer and more detailed study will be published at a later date. The author would like to thank Donald Lopez for the invitation that led to the AAR presentation, Jan Nattier for her extensive input concerning the content and wording of this paper, and David Eckel and the members of the Buddhist Studies Forum at Harvard for their very helpful comments and suggestions.

1. See notes 11 and 30 below.

2. See the *Po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching*,<sup>bn</sup> T8.848c, and Mochizuki Shinkō, *Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten*, (10 vols.; Tokyo: Sekai seiten kankō kyōkai, 1933–36), 5: 4265c–67b. Mochizuki, p. 4266a, says the translation was done in the fifth month of 649 at Mount Chung-nan's Ts'ui-wei kung.<sup>bo</sup>

3. The pilgrim and translator I-ching<sup>bp</sup> (often written I-ting; 635–713) is also supposed to have translated the text (see Mochizuki 5: 4266a–c), and Bodhiruci (or Dharmaruci) and Śikṣānanda each prepared translations of the text incorporating changes made on behalf of Empress Wu. These were done in 693 and sometime during the years 695–710, respectively. (This is according to Shiio Benkyō, *Bukkyō kyōten gaisetsu* [Introduction to the Buddhist scrip-

tures], [Tokyo: Kōshisha shobō, 1933], p. 147. Shiiō's reference to Bodhiruci [or Dharmaruci] may be an erroneous citation of a much later reference to a translation by Paramārtha or Bodhiruci; see note 30 below.) In 738 the Magadhan monk Fa-yüeh<sup>ba</sup> (\*Dharmacandra; 653–743), working in Ch'ang-an, produced the first translation of the long version of the *Heart Sūtra*; see T8.849a–b. (The restorations of this and other translators' names, which may not be reliable, are from Edward Conze, *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature* [The Hague: Mouton & Co.—S-Gravenhage, 1960], p. 29.) Other translations of the long version, which vary enough to suggest further development of the Sanskrit text itself, were done in 790 (by Po-jo<sup>br</sup> [Prajñā], who Conze reports was from Kafiristan and studied in Kashmir and at Nālandā, and Li-yen<sup>bs</sup>; see T8.849b–50a), 855 (by Fa-ch'eng,<sup>bt</sup> from the Tibetan; see T8.850b–51a), 861 (by Chih-hui Lun<sup>bu</sup> [\*Prajñācakra]; see T8.850a–b), and sometime during the Sung dynasty (by Shih-hu<sup>bv</sup> [\*Dānapala], who was from Oḍḍiyāna and began his translation work in China in 982; see T8.852b–c). The translations by Hsüan-tsang and Fa-ch'eng were in widespread use at Tun-huang, where Fa-ch'eng (Tib. Chos-grub) was a very prominent monk who translated various texts from Chinese to Tibetan and vice versa.

4. See the *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi*<sup>bw</sup> 4 (T55.31b), which lists the *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi shen-chou i chuan*<sup>bx</sup> ("Divine Incantation of the Great Perfection of Wisdom in one fascicle") and *Po-jo po-lo-mi shen-chou i-chuan*. The latter is glossed as being a variant of the first. Since the extant Sanskrit versions of the *Heart Sūtra* do not identify it as a *sūtra*, it is noteworthy that neither of these texts is labelled *ching*,<sup>by</sup> "sūtra."

5. These are the *Li-tai san-pao chi*<sup>bz</sup> 4 and 5 (T49.55c and 58b) and *Ta-T'ang nei-tien lu*<sup>ca</sup> 2 (T55.229a). Here the title actually reads [*Mo-ho*] *po-jo po-lo-mi chou ching i chuan*<sup>ch</sup> ("Sūtra of the Incantation of the [Great] Perfection of Wisdom in one fascicle").

6. The title of the translation attributed to Kumārajīva is *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ta ming-chou ching*<sup>cc</sup> ("Great Wisdom Incantation of the Great Perfection of Wisdom"); see T8.847c. This title, which is slightly different from the found in earlier catalogues, occurs in the *K'ai-yüan shih-chiao lu*<sup>cd</sup> 4 (T55.512b) among Kumārajīva's works.

7. See the *Chung-ching mu-lu*<sup>ce</sup> 2 by Fa-ching<sup>cf</sup> (T55.123b). The titles used here are similar to those found in the *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi*, except for the addition of *ching*, "sūtra." There is some implicit support in Tz'u-en's commentary (mentioned in n. 18 below) for the interpretation that the *Heart Sūtra* was abstracted from the larger text.

8. As indicated in Shiiō, p. 146, see Kumārajīva's *Ta-p'in*, T8.223c, 283a–85c, and 286a–87a (the latter two are sections that identify the perfection of wisdom in general terms with mantra), and Hsüan-tsang's *Ta po-jo po-lo-mi-to ching*, T7.11c. There are slight differences between the texts of the Kumārajīva's *Ta-p'in*, T8.223c, 283a–85c, and 286a–87a (the latter two are sections that identify the perfection of wisdom in general terms with mantra), and Hsüan-tsang's *Ta po-jo po-lo-mi-to ching*, T7.11c. There are slight differences between the texts of the Kumārajīva and Hsüan-tsang versions, probably indicating differences in the original Sanskrit texts.

9. See *Jōron kenkyū* [Studies in the *Chao lun*], ed. Tsukamoto Zenryū (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1955), pp. 51–52, or T45.156c.

10. The only other occurrence of the *Heart Sūtra* mantra that I have come across is in a collection of *dhāraṇī* and similar material translated in 653, the *To-lo-ni chi ching*<sup>6</sup> 3, T18.807b.

11. A preface to the *Heart Sūtra*, which occurs at T8.851a–b and is based on the Tun-huang manuscript Stein 700, states that Hsüan-tsang received the text in Szechwan prior to departing for India. See the translation of this preface in Leon Hurvitz, "Hsüan-tsang (602–664) and the *Heart Sūtra*," *Prajñā-pāramitā and Related Systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze*, ed. Lewis Lancaster, Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, no. 1 (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1977), p. 109–10. The version of the *Heart Sūtra* contained in Stein 700 is extremely interesting, in that it is a transliteration of the Sanskrit text in Chinese characters with interlineal glosses correlating the words of the transliterated original with the Chinese of Hsüan-tsang's translation. The glosses and punctuation do not always divide the Sanskrit words correctly, but the underlying text seems to correspond to the modern version transcribed in Conze, *Buddhist Wisdom Books: The Diamond Sutra; The Heart Sutra* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958), pp. 77–107. Hurvitz, pp. 110–11, includes a rendering of the text into English with the glosses interpreted.

12. See *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, pp. 20–24. Based on the existence of the Kumārajīva translation, on p. 18 Conze identifies the *Heart Sūtra* as having been composed before the year 400.

13. This evidence, which has some bearing on the early transmission of Buddhism to Tibet, will be dealt with in an article to be published at a later date by myself and Jan Nattier.

14. See Fukui Fumimasa, "Chūgoku ni okeru Hannya shingyō kan no hensen" [Changes in the Understanding of the *Heart Sūtra* in China], *Tōhōgaku* 64 (July 1982): 43–56, especially pp. 43–45. Essentially the same material is said to be found in Fukui's "*Tashin kyō no seiritsu*" [The formation of the *To hsin ching*], *Tendai gakuho* 24 (November 1972). A more detailed statement of Fukui's argument, including a listing of the titles of Tun-huang versions of the *Heart Sūtra* and its commentaries, may be found in the same author's "Tonkō bon," pp. 1–8. I would like to thank Professor Yoshizu Yoshihide of Komazawa University for sending me copies of the articles by Fukui cited in this study, as well as for showing me Fukui's recent *Hannya shingyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1987) incorporating these same studies.

15. Fukui suggests that the abbreviation *Hsin ching* or "Heart Sūtra" was applied to the text by its scholastic commentators, that even here there is evidence that the character *to* has been omitted by later editors, and that the title *Po-jo hsin ching* is almost entirely unattested in sources prior to the Sung. See Fukui, "Hensen," pp. 46–47. Unfortunately, Fukui fails to notice the occurrence of the title *Po-jo hsin ching* in Hui-li's biography of Hsüan-tsang (T50.224b). Fukui asserts that the abbreviation *Hsin ching* came to be generally used only from the fourteenth century onward, when the text became much more popular as a subject of written commentaries. See Fukui, "Hensen," p. 46.

16. See Fukui, "Hensen," pp. 48–51. On p. 50, Fukui cites corroborating

opinions by M. Winternitz and P. L. Vaidya. In addition, he suggests that whereas Kumārajīva and other translators rendered the term *hṛdaya* in this sense with Chinese equivalents meaning "mantra," Hsüan-tsang used the character *hsin* for both *hṛdaya* and *citta*, thus causing the later confusion.

17. I believe that Fukui, "Hensen," p. 53, goes too far when he suggests that there were virtually no T'ang and Sung interpretations of the *Heart Sūtra* that emphasized the doctrine of emptiness over the efficacy of the mantra.

18. Tz'u-en's commentary is the *Po-jo hsin ching yu-tsan*<sup>ch</sup>; see T33.523b–42c. There is a preface to this by Miao Shen-jung<sup>ci</sup> (632–82), (*Po-jo hsin ching yu-tsan hsü*, Z2B, 23, 1, 90a–c), and a subcommentary by Shou-ch'ien<sup>ci</sup> of the Sung dynasty, (*Po-jo hsin ching yu-tsan k'ung-t'ung chi*,<sup>ck</sup> Z1, 41, 3, 258c–314d). Shou-ch'ien also composed a diagrammatic interpretation of the text (*Po-jo hsin ching yu-tsan t'ien-kai k'o*,<sup>cl</sup> Z1, 41, 3, 240a–58b). In addition, there are T'ang Yogācāra commentaries by the Korean authority Wōnch'ūk<sup>cm</sup> (613–96) (*Po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching tsan*,<sup>cn</sup> Z1, 41, 4, 308b–28c) and by Ching-mai<sup>co</sup> (*Po-jo hsin ching shu*,<sup>cp</sup> Z1, 41, 3, 213a–18b), both of which criticize the teaching of *prajñā* on the basis of the Yogācāra doctrine.

19. Fa-tsang's commentary, which was composed in 702, is the *Po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching lüeh-shu*,<sup>cq</sup> T33.552a–55b (including a short postface by Chang Yüeh<sup>cr</sup>). There are two Sung dynasty subcommentaries to this text: The earlier is by Chung-hsi<sup>cs</sup> (*Po-jo hsin ching lüeh-shu hsien-cheng chi*,<sup>ct</sup> Z1, 41, 4, 340a–56c); the later one was written by Shih-hui<sup>cu</sup> in 1165 (*Po-jo hsin ching lüeh-shu lien-chu chi*,<sup>cv</sup> T33.555b–68c). Shih-hui's subcommentary is a difficult and controversial text, which inspired the composition of a work by the late Ming and early Ch'ing dynasty figure Ch'ien Ch'ien-i<sup>cw</sup> (1582–1664). Written in 1655, Ch'ien's commentary was based on that of Fa-tsang but also referred to a work by Tu-shun<sup>cx</sup> (*Po-jo hsin ching lüeh-shu hsiao-ch'ao*,<sup>cyc</sup> Z1, 41, 4, 357a–90d). Ch'ien's work was preceded by three other Ming dynasty *Heart Sūtra* commentaries likewise heavily indebted to Fa-tsang: In 1587, Hsieh Kuan-k'uang<sup>cz</sup> compiled two works with homophonous titles, mostly following Fa-tsang and Wen-ts'ai<sup>da</sup> (*Po-jo hsin ching shih-i*,<sup>db</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 410d–12d and 413a–21c). The latter of these two is a detailed attempt to resolve doubts arising from the numerous divergent interpretations found in earlier commentaries. In 1617, Chu Wan-li<sup>dc</sup> compiled a commentary (*Po-jo hsin ching chu-chieh*,<sup>dd</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 435d–38c), drawing from Fa-tsang and others.

20. The earliest T'ien-t'ai commentary is attributed, probably apocryphally, to Ming-k'uang<sup>de</sup> of the T'ang; this is the *Po-jo hsin ching [lüeh] shu*, Z1, 41, 4, 328d–30c. The only Sung dynasty T'ien-t'ai commentaries are those by Chih-yüan<sup>df</sup> (976–1022), both of which were composed in 1017. These are the *Po-jo hsin ching shu* and *Po-jo hsin ching shu i-mou ch'ao*,<sup>dg</sup> Z1, 41, 4, 330d–34a and 334b–39d. The first of these refers to the T'ang dynasty commentary attributed to Hui-ching (discussed in section IIA below). The second text is a general explanation dealing with possible misunderstandings of the first. There are Ming dynasty T'ien-t'ai commentaries by Chih-hsü<sup>dh</sup> (1599–1655) (*Po-jo hsin ching shih yao*,<sup>di</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 470c–71d), Ta-wen<sup>dj</sup> (*Po-jo hsin ching cheng-yen*,<sup>dk</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 443b–46d), and Cheng-hsiang T'i-ju<sup>dl</sup> (*Po-jo hsin ching fa-yin*,<sup>dm</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 452d–56d). The last of these was done in 1635.



21. One of these is attributed to a monk identified only as Deva of Central India (*Po-jo hsin ching chu*, Z1, 41, 4, 315a–318a). This is an undated word-by-word explanation of the text, which although clearly transcribed by a native Chinese monk could well be based on the non-formulaic oral explanations of an Indian master. Another interesting text is the fragment preserved at Tun-huang, the *Po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching huan-yüan shu*,<sup>dn</sup> T85.167b–659a, based on Stein 3019. This commentary cites the *Laṅkāvatāra* and *Lotus Sūtras* and emphasizes the use of the text in chanting.

22. Even during the Ming dynasty, the Ch'an figures Tzu-po Chen-k'o<sup>do</sup> and Han-shan Te-ch'ing<sup>dp</sup> commented on the *Heart Sūtra*, but not the advocate of Pure Land devotionism Chu-hung.<sup>dq</sup> At least one such text was written in Japan by Genshin<sup>dr</sup>, who is renowned for his *Ōjōyōshū*.<sup>ds</sup> A list of other Japanese commentators on the *Heart Sūtra*, incidentally, reads like a veritable who's who of that country's Buddhist tradition. For example, Saichō,<sup>dt</sup> Kūkai,<sup>du</sup> and their successors wrote commentaries and subcommentaries on the text. (Kūkai's is interesting for its use of Kumārajīva's translation, although the text actually cited by Kūkai is identical to Hsüan-tsang's translation.) Within the Japanese Zen tradition, Ikkyū,<sup>dv</sup> Menzan,<sup>dw</sup> Bankei,<sup>dx</sup> Hakuin,<sup>dy</sup> and Muchaku Dōchū<sup>dz</sup> also wrote commentaries on the text.

23. The anonymous text is represented in an untitled manuscript (both the beginning and end are missing) preserved at the Ryūkoku University Library. Introduced by Ogawa Kan'ichi, this short fragment of 172 lines includes part of the preface and a substantial portion of the text. See Ogawa's "*Hannya haramitta shingyō kaidai*" [Explanation of the *Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*], *Seiki bunka kenkyū*, vol. 1, *Tonkō Bukkyō shiryō* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1958), pp. 79–87. Sample plates of the manuscript are given on p. 80, while the text is printed on pp. 81–84; also see the English summary on pp. 10–13 (from the back). The second of the three commentaries is attributed to a monk named Hui-ching,<sup>ca</sup> usually identified as the Hui-ching of Chi-kuo ssu<sup>ch</sup> (578–645). See the *Po-jo hsin ching shu*, Z1, 41, 3, 206a–12d. (Fukui, "Tonkō bon," p. 8, indicates that Stein 554, on which the *Zoku zōkyō* edition is based, is actually entitled *To hsin ching* rather than *Hsin ching*.) Shiio, p. 154n, claims that Hui-ching was asked to lecture on the *Heart Sūtra* in 624 and suggests that the commentary may have been based on an earlier draft of the Hsüan-tsang translation. However, Hui-ching's very long biography in the *HSKC*, T50.441d–46b, does not mention any such event in 624 (nor does it make any reference at all to the *Heart Sūtra*), and I do not know the source of Shiio's information. Since this would have been before Hsüan-tsang had even received the text or returned from India, the date given may be a misprint. The title of the third version is *Po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching shu*; see Yanagida Seizan, "'Shishū Sen zenji sen, *Hannya shingyō so' kō*," ed. Yanagida Seizan and Ume-hara Takeshi, *Yamada Mumon rōshi koki kinen shu: Hana samazama* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1972), pp. 145–77. On pp. 152–56 Yanagida indicates that there are five manuscripts of this commentary: Pelliot 2178 and 4940, Peking *Wei*–52 and *ch'üeh*–9, and Stein 839.

24. According to Fukui, "Tonkō bon," p. 7, this was the original title of Ching-chüeh's work. Hsiang Ta's<sup>cc</sup> transcription altered this to *Chu po-jo to*

*hsin ching*, and Yanagida amended this to *Chu po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching*. As Fukui implies in his n. 6 (p. 24), Yanagida was presumably following the lead set by Chikusa Masaaki.

25. This is an extremely important early Ch'an text. See the annotated Japanese and French translations by Yanagida, *Shoki no zenshi, 1—Ryōga shiji ki—Den'hōbōki*, Zen no goroku, no. 2 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1971), pp. 47–326, and Bernard Faure, *La Volonté d'Orthodoxie: Généalogie et doctrine du bouddhisme Ch'an et l'école du Nord—d'après l'une de ses chroniques*, le Leng-chia shih-tzu chi (*début du 8<sup>e</sup> s.*) (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Paris, 1984), pp. 470–792. An unsatisfactory English translation occurs in *Zen Dawn: Early Zen Texts from Tun Huang*, trans. J. C. Cleary (Boston and London: Shambala, 1986), pp. 17–78. See my review of Cleary's book in *Philosophy East and West* 19, no. 2 (Autumn 1986): 138–46. The work is also discussed in my *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1986), pp. 88–91.

26. The *Po-jo hsin ching san chu*<sup>cd</sup> (or *Hannya shingyō sanchū*) (Z1, 41, 4, 390a–96a) was reprinted in 1791; it is uncertain where and when the prior edition was done. See Ui Hakuju, "Nan'yō Echū no shingyō chūsho" [Nan-yang Hui-chung's *Commentary on the Heart Sūtra*], ed. Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, *Zen no ronkō—Suzuki Daisetsu hakase kiju kinen ronbunshū*—(Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1949), pp. 69–81.

27. See the *Po-jo hsin ching sung*,<sup>ce</sup> T48.365a–66c. This is a short work, with a total of 272 characters in both title and text, with 37 verses in 8-line stanzas of 5 characters per line. These verses are contained in a Sung dynasty compilation of works attributed to Bodhidharma, the *Shao-shih liu men*<sup>cf</sup> ("Six Texts from Bodhidharma's Peak"). Since the verses use the famous line "fundamentally there is not a single thing" from the *Platform Sūtra*, we may date them to sometime after about 800. (See T48.365c and p. 366a.) A closer examination of these verses and a comparison with other classical Ch'an verse compositions, i.e., transmission verses, and the commentary on the *Diamond Sūtra* attributed to Hui-neng will no doubt yield a more exact dating and a better understanding of the text in general. The use of Yogācāra terminology in these verses may turn out to be an important indication of their origins.

28. The title is *Po-jo hsin ching chu-chieh*,<sup>cg</sup> Z1, 42, 1, 34d–35d.

29. See Ui Hakuju, "Jiju zenji Eshin no Hannya shingyō chū" [Ch'an Master Tz'u-shou Huai-shen's *Commentary on the Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*], *Bukkyō to bunka—Suzuki Daisetsu hakase shōju kinen ronbunshū* (Tokyo: Suzuki Daisetsu hakase shōju kinenkai kan, 1960), pp. 1–6. Ui is supposed to have written an article on Fu-jung Tao-k'ai's commentary, but I have been unable to locate it. See the discussion on Sung dynasty Ch'an and textual exegesis at the end of section IID.

30. This commentary, which is known by the title *Rankei Dōryū chū shin'yō*<sup>ch</sup> ("Lan-ch'i Tao-lung's *Commentary on the Essentials of Mind*"), occurs in his collected works, the *Daihaku shūi roku*<sup>ci</sup> in one fascicle, following a transliteration of the Sanskrit text. See the *Dai Nippon Bukkyō zensho*, 95: 101–16, or *Po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching chu*, Z1, 41, 5, 397a–99b. Comments by the editor of Tao-lung's collected works, the layman Mushō,<sup>cj</sup> reveal a spirit of intense

competition with the Shingon school. In the process, it is asserted that the version of the *Heart Sūtra* obtained by Hsüan-tsang in China prior to his journey to India was the Sanskrit version and not Kumārajīva's Chinese translation. In fact, Tao-lung's editor denies that Kumārajīva ever translated the text, suggesting instead that the pre-Hsüan-tsang translations were by Chih-Ch'ien and either Paramārtha or Bodhiruci. In addition, he points out that since the text had been in circulation in Chinese translation for at least two hundred years, Hsüan-tsang would not have had to receive this from a spirit monk. See the *Daikaku shūi roku*, p. 3a-b (103a-b). The motivation for these and other comments must be related to the fact that Kūkai's famous commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* used the Kumārajīva translation. In addition, Tao-lung's birth in Szechwan would have made him more likely to accept the account placing Hsüan-tsang's initial acquisition of the *Heart Sūtra* there. This last point is not lost upon Tao-lung's editor; see pp. 4b-5a (104b-5a).

31. Ogawa, pp. 83b, 84a, and 84b. The first verse has one character too many; the initial character *hao*,<sup>ck</sup> "well," should probably be deleted.

32. Ui, "Nan'yō Echū," p. 78.

33. Ui, "Nan'yō Echū," p. 81.

34. Ui, "Nan'yō Echū," p. 76.

35. These two quotations also occur on p. 76.

36. Dialogues between Ta-tien and Shih-t'ou and some sayings of Ta-tien's are recorded in the *Ching-te ch'üan-teng lu*,<sup>cl</sup> T51.312c-13a, but the only biographical information is that his residence was at Mount Ling in Ch'ao-chou<sup>cm</sup> (Ch'ao-an hsien, Kwangtung). For the contact between him and Han Yü, see Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 93-95.

37. See n. 46 below.

38. This line also occurs in the verses attributed to Bodhidharma.

39. One of the four *kalpas* or eons, this is the period between the total destruction of the world system and the beginning of its regeneration. It is twenty small eons in duration.

40. The *locus classicus* of the famous line "serene but constantly illuminating," etc., is the *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*<sup>cn</sup> 2, T24.1018b. See Yanagida, *Shoki no Zenshi I*, p. 319. The earliest unascribed Ch'an-related occurrence I have found is in the *Wu fang-pien*<sup>co</sup> (see McRae, *Northern School*, p. 178). A similar line, "functioning but permanently empty, empty but permanently functioning," occurs in Shen-hui's<sup>cp</sup> *Hsien-tsung chi*<sup>cq</sup> in the *Ching-te ch'üan-teng lu*, T51.459a.

41. Z1, 42, 1, 34b-c.

42. This process is described in Tao-lung's commentary as "reverting" to the source of the senses, rather than following the myriad details that they illuminate; see his gloss on "form does not differ from emptiness" quoted in the next section. This also parallels the long-standing wisdom within the Buddhist meditation tradition that any sensory capacity could serve as the proper subject of contemplation.

43. P. 35a.

44. See p. 34c; the original line, which is worded somewhat differently,

is from the *Lao-tzu* 64.

45. See the commentary, p. 34b, and Hartman, pp. 190–93, who traces the line through K'ung Ying-ta<sup>tr</sup> (574–648) to Tsung-mi. Hartman, p. 193, suggests that Tsung-mi's "insistence on reserving this phrase for the highest expression of the Buddhist faith may testify to the strength of its Buddhist connotation during this period."

46. P. 34b. Where I have "many types" of expedient means, the text has "many active"; I am emending to *tung*<sup>cs</sup> to *to chung*.<sup>ct</sup> The translation "things will force themselves together" is tentative; the text contains a character I am assuming is a variant of *tsa*,<sup>cu</sup> "to pressure." Also, the extent of the quotation from Chia-shan is unclear, and its attribution to him may be an editorial error. Chia-shan Shan-hui<sup>cv</sup> (805–81), who figures prominently in the *Tsu-l'ang chi*<sup>cw</sup> and *Ching-te Ch'üan-leng lu*, was a fourth-generation successor of Shih-t'ou's through Yao-shan Wei-yen<sup>cx</sup> (744–827). It may be that his name was inadvertently added to the *Heart Sūtra* commentary sometime after its compilation, since the saying attributed to him here is identified with Ma-tsu and his successors Kuei-shan Ling-yu<sup>cy</sup> (771–853) and Yang-shan Hui-chi<sup>cz</sup> (807–83). If this were the case, there is no reason to assume the commentary was altered in any significant way after Ta-tien's death.

47. Pp. 6b–7a (106b–7a). The last phrase might also be read "from the [opening] politenesses!]"

48. See Fukui Fumimasa, "Min Taiso no Hannya shingyō rikai" [Ming T'ai-tsu's understanding of the *Heart Sūtra*], *Makio Ryōkai hakase shōju kinen ronshū: Chūgoku no shūkyō—shisō to kagaku* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1984), pp. 399–408. Fukui cites a number of sources, including Kuo Ming [Guo Ming], *Ming-Ch'ing Fo-chiao* [Buddhism during the Ming and Ch'ing] (Fukien, China: Fu-chien jen-min ch'u-pan she, 1982).

49. Fukui, "Min Taiso," p. 399, points out that there were about ten *Heart Sūtra* commentaries written during the T'ang, less than ten during the Sung, and over thirty during the Ming. About a dozen of the Ming commentaries display overt Ch'an influence. I know of only one commentary written during the Yüan; unfortunately, it is no longer extant.

50. Li Chih's commentary is titled *Po-jo hsin ching chien-shih*<sup>fa</sup> or *Po-jo hsin ching t'i-kang*,<sup>fb</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 424b–25a. Less than 800 characters long, this text lacks any distinctive content. Lin Chao-en actually wrote two works on the *Heart Sūtra*: the *Po-jo hsin ching shih-lüeh*,<sup>fc</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 425b–29c, and the *Hsin ching kai-lun*,<sup>fd</sup> Z1, 41, 5, 429d–35a. The former is a general commentary and the latter a line-by-line exegesis. On Li Chih, see Hok-lam Chan, *Li Chih 1527–1602 in Contemporary Chinese Historiography: New Light on His Life and Works* (White Plains, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1980), especially pp. 89–90. Also see Judith A. Berling, *The Syncretic Religion of Lin Chao-en* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), not only for its excellent treatment of Lin but also with regard to Li Chih (see pp. 52–54).

51. Robert M. Gimello, "Apophatic and kataphatic discourse in Mahāyāna: A Chinese view," *Philosophy East and West* 26, no. 2 (April 1976): 117–36.

52. I am referring here to work in progress by Michael Fuller at Harvard,

which draws in turn on the writings of Stephen Owen.

53. I am currently finishing a study of Hu Shih's researches on Shen-hui, which did as much to inform the modern stereotype of the role of Ch'an in the decline of Chinese Buddhism as to establish the field of Ch'an studies.

54. I do not intend this as a blanket criticism of Japanese scholars, nor would I suggest any hesitation to use the fruits of their efforts. On the contrary, given the relative dearth of serious modern Chinese scholarship on East Asian Buddhism it is scholarship led by the Japanese and by those who have studied at the feet of Japanese teachers that is taking us beyond the most problematic views of Chinese Buddhist history.

### *Character Glossary*

a	玄奘	ac	惠能
b	道安	ad	大顛寶通
c	智謙	ae	芙蓉道楷
d	大品	af	慈受懷深
e	摩訶般若波羅蜜經	ag	蘭溪道隆
f	大般若經	ah	看心
g	僧肇	ai	無所
h	福井文雅	aj	色
i	多心經	ak	心
j	般若心經	al	空
k	多心般若經	am	無生
l	觀音多心經	an	無心
m	波羅蜜多經	ao	觀心釋
n	蜜多心經	ap	起
o	心經	aq	石頭希遷
p	心咒	ar	馬祖道一
q	慈恩	as	轉心
r	大乘基	at	見聞覺知
s	藕基	au	里
t	注藏	av	易經
u	觀心	aw	梁肅
v	看心	ax	窮理盡性
w	智洗	ay	南泉普願
x	弘忍	az	宗密
y	淨覺	ba	原人論
z	注多心般若經	bb	夾山
aa	楞伽師資記	bc	見性
ab	南陽慧忠	bd	裴巖錄

be	舍利子	cs	仲希
bf	用	ct	略疏釋正記
bg	禮	cu	師甯
bh	太祖	cv	略疏連珠記
bi	李魯	cw	錢謙益
bj	林兆恩	cx	杜順
bk	郝紹	cy	略疏小鈔
bl	李注堯	cz	謝觀光
bm	王陽明	da	文才
bn	般若波羅蜜多心經	db	釋疑 / 釋義
bo	翠微宮	dc	諸萬里
bp	義淨	dd	諸解
bq	法月	de	明曠
br	般若	df	智圓
bs	利言	dg	疏詰謀鈔
bt	法成	dh	智旭
bu	智慧輪	di	釋要
bv	施護	dj	太文
bw	出三藏記集	dk	正眼
bx	神咒一卷	dl	正相體如
by	經	dm	發隱
bz	歷代三寶記	dn	還源述
ca	大唐內典錄	do	紫柏真可
cb	咒經一卷	dp	憨山德清
cc	大明咒經	dq	株宏
cd	開元釋教錄	dr	源信
ce	眾經目錄	ds	住生要集
cf	法經	dt	嚴滑
cg	多羅尼集經	du	空海
ch	南贊	dv	一休
ci	苗神容	dw	面山
cj	守千	dx	盤珪
ck	控峒記	dy	白隱
cl	季改科	dz	無著道忠
cm	圓測	ea	慧淨
cn	贊	eb	記國寺
co	靖邁	ec	向大
cp	疏	ed	三注
cq	略疏	ee	鍾
cr	張說	ef	少室六門

eg	許解
eh	蘭溪道隆注心要
ei	大覺拾遺錄
ej	無生
ek	好
el	景德傳燈錄
em	湖州
en	苾蒭環珞本業經
eo	五方便
ep	神寶
eq	臨宗記
er	孔叢達
es	多動
et	多種
eu	榜
ev	夾山普賢
ew	祖堂集
ex	華山惟備
ey	嵩山靈祐
ez	仰山慧寂
fa	義釋
fb	提綱
fc	釋略
fd	綱論