

Chapter 27

An Appeal for a Systematic Search in Japan for Long-Hidden T'ang Dynasty Source-Materials of the Early History of Zen Buddhism

*Dedicated to Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki in commemoration of
his ninetieth birthday.*

What shall I offer to my honored friend and comrade Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki on the happy occasion of his 90th birthday? My humble offering to him consists of an earnest appeal that he will devote his next decade to an active leadership in a grand search in Japan for the many valuable documents of the early history of Chinese Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism,—documents which were recorded to have been brought to Japan in the ninth century by such great Japanese pilgrims as Saicho (最澄) in 805, Engyo (圓行) in 839, Ennin (圓仁) and Eun (惠運) in 847, and Enchin (圓珍) in 858. Knowing the great reverence of the Japanese nation for those pilgrims and for the sacred scriptures they brought back from China, I am almost sure that these T'ang dynasty documents are still safely preserved in some of the great monasteries in the Nara-Kyoto area although fully a thousand years have passed since their arrival in Japan.

It is high time now for the Japanese historians to organize a thorough and systematic search for those clearly recorded but long hidden first-hand source-materials which will surely throw much light on the *true* history of the origin and early development of the Ch'an (Zen) movement in the eighth century. And it is my warmest and sincerest Birthday wish that Dr. Suzuki will lead this grand search (大索) as he has done in the past decades in the discovery of two discourses of Shen-hui and of the two early texts of the *T'an-ching of the Sixth Patriarch* (六祖壇經).

A careful examination of the catalogues of Buddhist texts and documents brought from the T'ang empire to Japan by those great pilgrims reveals that at least the following items were recorded to have come to Japan in the ninth century:—

1. *Shen-hui's Nan-tsung ting shih fei lun* 南宗定是非論 (in Engyo's list).

Chapter Note: Susumu Yamaguchi, ed., *Buddhism and Culture*. Kyoto: Nakano Press, 1960. pp. 15–23.

2. *Nan-tsung Ho-tsai ch'an-shih wen-ta cha-cheng-i* 南宗荷泽禅师问答杂征义 (in Ennin's list of 847, and in Enchin's lists of 854, 857 and 858, and also in Eichō's inventory list of 1094 永超, 东域传灯目录). I am grateful to Professor Iriya (入矢义高) whose researches on the Stein collection of Tunhuang manuscripts have enabled him to establish the fact that the full title of what Dr. Suzuki and I had edited and published as Shen-hui's Discourses (神会语录) was *Wen-ta cha-cheng-i* which may be translated as "Collected Dialogues of Various Occasions." In Ennin's and in Eichō's lists, as Professor Iriya has found in Stein MS 6557, the name of the compiler or editor is mentioned as Liu Ch'eng (刘澄).
3. *Ho-tsai ho-shang ch'an-yao* 荷泽和尚禅要 "The Essence of Ch'an, by the Monk of Ho-tsai (Shen-hui)" (in Enchin's 857 and 858 lists), which may turn out to be the same as Shen-hui's Sermon (*Nanyang Ho-shang T'an-yü*) which Dr. Suzuki first found in Peiping in 1934 and which I collated with Pelliot MS 2045 B and published in 1958.
4. The *T'an-ching of the Sixth Patriarch* which is variously listed as:
 - (a) 曹溪山第六祖惠能大师说见性顿教直了成佛决定无疑法宝记檀经 in Ennin's 847 list. This lengthy title may be rendered as follows: "The Dana (檀) Sutra of the Treasure of the Law, Preached by Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch, the Great Master of Ts'ao-hsi Hill, Teaching the Religion of Sudden Enlightenment through Seeing One's Own Nature, That Buddhahood Can Be Achieved by Direct Apprehension without the Slightest Doubt." This title seems to indicate that this text arriving so early in Japan may be even older and more primary than the Tunhuang manuscript copy which is included in the *Taisho Tripitaka* (no. 2007 in Vol. 48) and which Dr. Suzuki edited and published in 1934.
 - (b) 曹溪山第六祖能大师坛经 in Enchin's lists of 854, 857 and 858.
 - (c) 六祖坛经 edited by Hui-hsin (惠昕) in Eichō's inventory list of 1094. This text must be the same as the reprint of the 967 text of Hui-hsin which Dr. Suzuki edited in 1934 with his own and my comments.
5. The so-called "Song of Enlightenment" (*Cheng-tao ko* 证道歌) which is variously listed as:
 - (a) *Tsui-shang-ch'eng fu-hsing ko*, "The Song of Buddha-nature of the Supreme Vehicle," by the monk Chen-chiao. 最上乘佛性歌, 真觉述 (in Ennin's 838 and 847 lists).
 - (b) *Fu-hsing ko*, "Song of Buddha-nature," by Chen-chiao. 佛性歌, 真觉述 (in Ennin's 840 list).
 - (c) *Ts'ao-hsi-ch'an-shih cheng-tao ko*. 曹溪禅师证道歌, 真觉述 "The Song of Enlightenment of the Ch'an Master of Ts'ao-hsi" (that is, Hui-neng) cited by Chen-chiao. (In Ennin's 847 list).
 - (d) *Liu-tsu-ho-shang kuan-hsin chieh* 六祖和尚观心偈 "The Sixth Patriarch's Gathas of Inward Examination" (in Enchin's 854, 857 and 858 lists).

- (e) *Tao-hsing ko* 道性歌 “The Song of the Nature of Tao” (in Eun’s second list).
 - (f) *Chien-tao-hsing ko* 见道性歌 “The Song of Seeing the Nature of the Tao” (in Enchin’s 854 list).
6. *Ts’ao-hsi Pao-lin-chuan in ten chüan* 曹溪宝林传十卷 which is a crude “history” of the Ch’an (Zen) Transmission from the Buddha down through 28 Indian Patriarchs to the six Chinese Patriarchs, but which was undoubtedly the prototype and the raw material of the first sections of the more famous *Ch’uan-teng-lu*, “Records of the Transmission of the Lamp” of 1004 by Tao-yuan. Because the *Pao-lin-chuan* had been superseded by the *Ch’uan-teng-lu*, the former work was long considered “lost” until 1934 when one *chüan* (6th) was discovered in Japan and six *chüan* (1st to 5th, and 8th) were found in a monastery at Chao-ch’eng (赵城), Shansi. The *Pao-lin-chuan*, complete in ten *chüan*, is listed in Ennin’s 838, 840 and 847 catalogues, and also in Eichō’s 1094 inventory list. Both catalogues mention the name of the author or compiler as Ling-ch’e (灵澈, a great monk-poet of the T’ang period), and not Chih-chu (智炬) as it appeared in the volume found in Japan.
 7. *Ch’an-men ch’i tsu hsing-chuang pei-ming* 禅门七祖行状碑铭 “The Lives and the Texts of Biographical Monuments of the Seven Patriarchs of the Ch’an (Zen) School,” containing altogether 15 documents (including the text of the biographical monument of Shen-hsiu 神秀 written by the statesmen Chang Yüeh 张说, 大通禅师碑铭). The 15 items are twice listed in Enchin’s 857 and 858 catalogues. These biographical notices formed the primary materials of those chapters in the *Pao-lin-chuan* dealing with the lives of Bodhidharma and the Chinese Patriarchs. A re-discovery in Japan of the lost texts of the biographical monuments of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Patriarchs, therefore, would be tantamount to the recovery of the two last books of the *Pao-lin-chuan*, and might reveal some of the ways and means employed by Shen-hui (who died in 762) and his junior contemporaries in their active and often unscrupulous fabrication of the “history” of the Ch’an (Zen) movement.

I have only listed those T’ang documents which my own meagre historical knowledge led me to recognize as important source-materials for the early history of the Ch’an movement. It is quite possible and probable that a patient and thorough search of the great monasteries will yield results far exceeding the wildest expectations of any one of us.

But these few items should be enough to inspire Dr. Suzuki and his younger friends to start the Grand Search.

For over 30 years, Dr. Suzuki and I have been working in the same field of discovering and editing original materials related to the early history of Zen Buddhism. I published in 1930 four texts of Shen-hui which I had found in 1926 in the Pelliot and Stein collections of Tunhuang manuscripts. In 1932, Mr. Mitsuo Ishii published his Tunhuang copy of Shen-hui’s “Discourses” with Dr. Suzuki’s explanations in which he referred to my edition of Shen-hui. In 1934, Dr. Suzuki collated the Ishii text with my text of Shen-hui’s “Discourses” (神会语录) and published it in a new edition under the title: *Ho-tsai Shen-hui Ch’an-shih yü-lu* (荷泽神会禅师语录).

In 1936, Dr. Suzuki published his *Shao-shih i-shu* (少室逸书) consisting of several Zen documents he had found in 1934 among the Tunhuang manuscripts at the National Library of Peiping. These included a lengthy document with an incomplete title, which Dr. Suzuki correctly guessed as preaching ideas resembling those of Shen-hui or of the school of Hui-neng. In 1957, I took the photostat copies which Dr. Suzuki and his student Mr. Richard De Martino had made of two newly discovered Shen-hui documents in the Pelliot collection, and I edited and published them in 1958 under the title: "Two Newly Edited Texts of the Ch'an Master Shen-hui from the Pelliot Collection of Tunhuang Manuscripts" (Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, "Academia Sinica," Vol. XXIX, p. 827–882). One of the two texts is a better copy of what Dr. Suzuki had suspected to be of Shen-hui's teaching: it bears the complete title of 南阳和上顿教解脱禅门直了性坛语, "The Sermon of the Monk of Nanyang on the Doctrine of Sudden Enlightenment, of the Ch'an of Emancipation and Direct Apprehension of One's Own Nature," which established it as undoubtedly a work of Shen-hui who lived and taught in Nanyang more than 10 years and was known as "the Monk of Nanyang."

In all these, Dr. Suzuki and I have been working on the manuscript copies that have come out of a cave-library of Tunhuang. What a great pleasure it would be if we could collate these with the T'ang manuscripts of Shen-hui which had been brought to Japan by Engyo, Ennin and Enchin in the ninth century and which were apparently still extant in 1094!

The Tunhuang copy of the "T'an-ching of the Sixth Patriarch" was first photographed in London by Professor Yabuki (矢吹庆辉) in 1926. In 1927, Dr. Yabuki sent me a complete miniature copy of it. It was published by Yabuki in his *Ming-sha yü-yün* (鸣沙余韵), and is now included in the *Taisho Tripitaka*. But it was Dr. Suzuki who first gave it to the world in a collated, punctuated and paragraphed edition in 1934.

In 1933 there appeared the photographic reproduction of a Japanese reprint—the Koshoji (兴圣寺) copy—of the 1153 Chinese edition of the *T'an-ching* which was based on a manuscript copy punctuated and read in 1031 "for the sixteenth time" by the scholar-statesman Chao Chiung (晁迥). That Chao Chiung copy had a colophon by the monk Hui-hsin (惠昕) who in 967 had edited an earlier manuscript and rearranged it into "two *chüan*" and 11 sections. Dr. Suzuki edited this text and published a punctuated and paragraphed edition in 1934. This text seems to be the same as the Hui-hsin text in "two *chüan*" recorded by Eichō (永超) in his inventory catalogue of 1094.

In 1935, Dr. Suzuki found in the Daijōji of Kaga (加贺大乘寺) a manuscript copy of the *T'an-ching* in the handwriting of the monk-pilgrim Dōgen (道元) who was in China from 1223 to 1227. This copy was based on a Chinese printed edition of 1116. It is also in two *chüan* and 11 sections. It was Dr. Suzuki who again edited this Tao-yüan text and published it in a punctuated and paragraphed edition with a very useful index.

The original 1116 text of the Dōgen manuscript is apparently also based on the Hui-hsin text of 967, but it already shows the influence of such works as the *Pao-lin-chuan* or the *Transmission of the Lamp*. For instance, the names of the

Indian Patriarchs after Bhikshu Simha (师子比丘) and before Bodhidharma in the Dōgen text are different from those in the Tunhuang copy and the Hui-hsin text, but are the same as those in chapter 2 of the *Transmission of the Lamp*.

In all these three oldest texts of the *T'an-ching*, Tunhuang manuscript, the names of Hsing-ssu and Huai-jang (行思, 怀让), the two disciples of Hui-neng, from whom all the great schools of Zen are supposed to have descended, were never mentioned among the ten disciples of the Sixth Patriarch.

But, in all these three versions, there was a death-bed prophecy by Hui-neng to the effect that, some 20 years after his death, when false doctrines would cast doubt upon his teaching, there would rise up one man who would, at the risk of his own life, fight to determine the truth and falsehood of the religion of the Buddha and to establish the true teaching. That was an unmistakable reference to Shen-hui's courageous challenge to the powerful "National Teachers" of the Lanka School and his 30-year struggle for the establishment of the "Southern School," beginning in the 20th year of Kai-yüan (开元, 732), which was the 20th year after the death of Hui-neng (713). That prophecy seems to indicate that the original text of the *T'an-ching* was probably composed by Shen-hui's followers or associates. It is interesting to note that that prophecy has been omitted in all such later versions as that of 1291 by Tsung-pao (宗宝) which is included in the *Taisho Tripitaka* (no. 2008).

What was "the original text" of the *T'an-ching* like? That is a question which no one can now answer with any degree of satisfaction. My own guess would be that the original core of the *T'an-ching* probably consisted of two principal parts: part one was a fictionized autobiography of Hui-neng (somewhat like sections 2–11 of Dr. Suzuki's edition of the Tunhuang copy); and part two was made up of a number of topical sermons and dialogues attributed to Hui-neng but mostly lifted from Shen-hui's discourses (somewhat like sections 12–31 and 34–37 which often bear striking resemblance to parts of the three major works of Shen-hui edited and published by Dr. Suzuki and myself).

Let me point out one peculiar feature in the Tunhuang manuscript which has often been overlooked by the casual reader. I refer to the fact that in this oldest extant version, the famous gatha of Hui-neng about "*bodhi* and the mirror" was *in two versed forms*. In the Hsi Hsia (西夏) translation (1071) of the *T'an-ching*, this gatha was also in two versed forms (Journal of the National Peiping Library, Vol. IV, No. 3, p. 228–229). A careful examination of these two verses will reveal that our unknown author of this fictionized autobiography of Hui-neng was evidently experimenting with his verse-writing and was not sure which verse was better. So both versions were tentatively kept. (Posterity has preferred his first version with slight revisions, and rejected the second.) To me this amateurish experimentation with verse-making is a clear evidence that that part of the fictionized autobiography was undoubtedly the true original form of the *T'an-ching*. [For a diametrically opposite opinion, see Professor Ui (宇井伯寿) on the *T'an-ching*, in his "Study of the *T'an-ching*," p. 1–172 of Vol. II of His "Essays on History of the Zen School."]

At any rate, it would be a most wonderful event in Buddhist historiography if our Japanese friends could someday recover one or all of the earliest texts of the *T'an-ching* that had been brought to Japan by Ennin in 847 and by Enchin in 858! We shall then be in a better position to see what its original form was like.

I need not say much about the *Cheng-tao-ko* (证道歌) which was usually attributed to Hui-neng's disciple Hsüan-chiao (玄觉), called "Yung-chia ta-shih" (永嘉大师, Yoka Daishi in Japanese), who is supposed to have died in 712 or 713. Thirty years ago, on the basis of a Tunhuang manuscript copy in the Pelliot collection, I pointed out that its author was mentioned therein as Chao-chiao ta-shih (招觉大师). I also pointed out that a monk who died in 713 could not have sung about "the 28 Patriarchs" and "the Six Patriarchs" as the author did in the 37th verse of the "Song of Enlightenment." The myth of the 28 Patriarchs had not been invented until many decades later!

It is interesting to note that, in the catalogues of the Japanese pilgrims of the ninth century, this Song was apparently attributed, not to Hsüan-chiao, but to a Chen-chiao, and sometimes even to Hui-neng himself.

Lastly, I wish to say a few words on the importance of a possible recovery in Japan of the ten-*chüan* sets of *Pao-lin-chuan* and the 15 biographical documents on Bodhidharma and the Chinese Patriarchs. A study of the two detailed lists of the 15 biographical documents on the seven patriarchs in Enchin's catalogues have convinced me that practically all those so-called "biographies" were incorporated into Books 8, 9, and 10 of the *Pao-lin-chuan*. A few of the texts of "biographical monuments," such as those about Bodhidharma by the Emperor Wu (502–549) of the Liang dynasty and his Heir Apparent, were clumsy and worthless forgeries. But a number of other biographical texts are of great historical interest and significance.

Let me cite a most interesting example. Book 8 of the recovered text of the *Pao-lin-chuan* contains a biographical monument to the Third Patriarch, Seng Ts'an (僧璨), written by the wartime statesman Fang Kuan (房琯) who died in 763. In this text I find these sentences:

From Mahakasyapa to our Master (Ts'an), there were seven Patriarchs in the West, and three in China. He has been called the Third Patriarch to this day. (自迦叶至大师, 西国有七, 中土三矣。至今号为三祖焉。)

And this in rhymed verse:

From Mahakasyapa to our Master, there were ten saintly ones. (迦叶至我[师]兮, 圣者十人。)

These sentences cannot be understood without reference to Shen-hui's bold but unhistorical assertion that there were only eight Indian Patriarchs from Mahakasyapa to Bodhidharma inclusive. (See my "Surviving Works of the Monk Shen-hui" 神会和尚遗集, pp. 178–179; and my "Two Newly Edited Texts of the Ch'an Master Shen-hui," p. 849.) Shen-hui came to know the future Prime Minister in the years 745–746, and the monument to the Third Patriarch was erected in 746. There was no doubt that Fang Kuan wrote the text of the monument at the request of the fighting monk Shen-hui and therefore it incorporated Shen-hui's unhistorical theory of

“Seven Patriarchs in the West,” not counting Bodhidharma who came to China,—a theory which is unintelligible to the Chinese and Japanese readers who have for nearly a thousand years accepted the equally unhistorical tradition of “Twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs.”

I cite this instance to show how rich a store of historical materials a complete set of the *Pao-lin-chuan* may reveal to us historians. I am fairly certain that Books 9 and 10 of the *Pao-lin-chuan* will contain the biographical documents of Tao-hsin (道信) and Hung-jen (弘忍), which were produced in the eighth century by, or at the request of, both the Northern and the Southern Schools. And I am more interested in the recovery of the biographical materials about Hui-neng, which should include some form of the prototype of the *T'an-ching*, or of the so-called “Another Life-story of the Master of Ts'ao-hsi” (曹溪大师别传), of which a copy was brought to Japan by Saichō (最澄) in 804.

There were two texts of the biographical monuments to Hui-neng. The one written about 753 or 754 by the great poet Wang Wei (王维) is preserved to this day intact. But there was an earlier monument to Hui-neng actually erected by Shen-hui in several centers of his own activity before his exile in 753. The text of this earlier monument was written by Sung Ting (宋鼎), Deputy Minister of War. Stone rubbings of this Sung Ting text were recorded by Ouyang Hsiu (欧阳修, 1007–1072) and Chao Ming-ch'eng (赵明诚, 1081–1129) in their records of bronze and stone inscriptions. But both the stone and the rubbings have long been lost in China. It is my devout wish that this biographical text written by Sung Ting,—surely at the request of Shen-hui and surely containing information supplied by him,—may yet be found in Japan either as a part of the *Pao-lin-chuan*, or as a separate item included in the 15 biographical documents twice enumerated in Enchin's catalogues.

It is in the interest of history and in the interest of truth that I make this most earnest appeal to Dr. Suzuki to lead this great search for the historical treasures so long hidden in the great monasteries of Japan. May he live long to witness and share the rapture and rejoicing in the success of the search!