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Recorded sayings of Layman P'ang, a 9th cent. Zen classic

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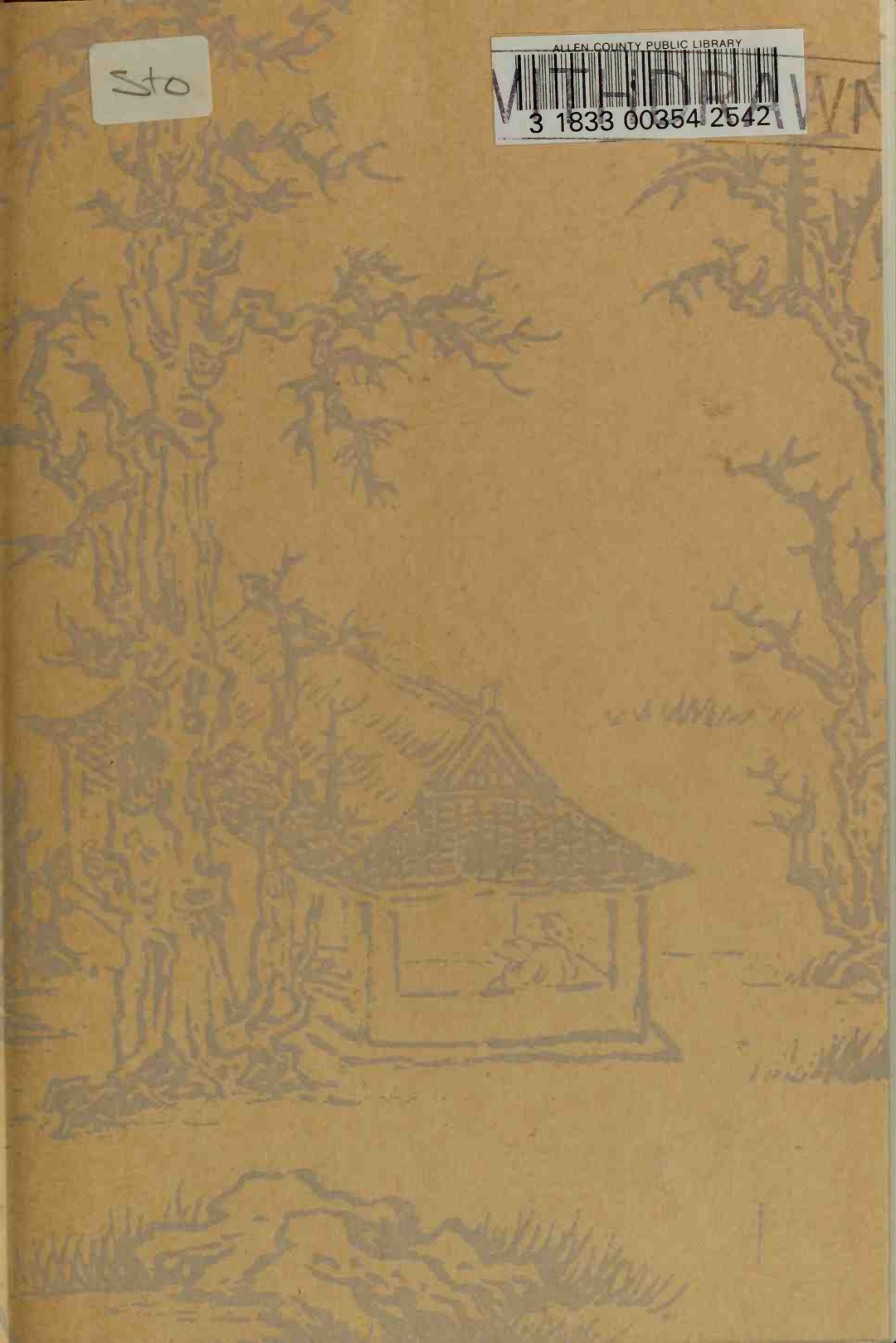

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The Recorded Sayings of
LAYMAN P'ANG

THE THREE P'ANGS
(see page 33)

The Recorded Sayings of

LAYMAN P'ANG

A Ninth-Century Zen Classic

translated from the Chinese by

RUTH FULLER SASAKI
YOSHITAKA IRIYA
DANA R. FRASER

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Dedicated
to the memory of
RUTH FULLER SASAKI
(1883–1967)

1928225

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INTRODUCTION

P'ANG YÜN WAS BORN in China about the year A.D. 740 and died in 808. Although he was a poor and simple man who led an ordinary life, he nevertheless attained the highest level of religious enlightenment as an ardent follower of Ch'an, that branch of Buddhism that is now known in the West by its Japanese name of Zen. With zest and contentment he, his wife, and their two children lived serene amidst the tumult of revolutions and changing times. His record has inspired countless others to find for themselves the boundless Way to which he pointed in his daily life and verse. He was widely admired by the Chinese people of his day not only for the originality and vigor with which he expressed his profound religious understanding, but also for the resolve he showed in getting free of all of his posessions by loading them into a boat and sinking them.

The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang (in Chinese, *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu*), here translated into English for the first time, is the record of his later years. Consisting of anecdotes about him together with his verses, it was compiled posthumously by his distinguished friend the Prefect Yü Ti. In later times these anecdotes fired the imaginations of Chinese and Japanese painters who composed masterpieces depicting scenes from his life. His daughter Ling-chao was also a favorite subject. Unfortunately, many of these early paintings have been lost. In the Yüan dynasty (1280–1368) an anonymous playwright composed a popular and fanciful drama based on his life. Famous Chinese Ch'an men appended commentaries and appreciative verses to later accounts of him. Even today, some Japanese Zen masters continue to quote him and use certain of the anecdotes as koans, or subjects for Zen meditation, for revealed in them is the timeless world of Zen,

the same now as it was then nearly twelve hundred years ago. The Chinese text is valuable in its own right as one of the earliest sources of the colloquial language, and also for our understanding of Far Eastern thought. Before describing the life of Layman P'ang, the text, and the history of this translation, a brief review of early Chinese Buddhism may be useful for an understanding of the mid-T'ang China in which he lived.

EARLY CHINESE BUDDHISM AND THE RISE OF CH'AN

BUDDHISM FIRST ENTERED China toward the end of the first century B.C. It was brought mainly from India and Central Asia by missionary monks who, in company with traders and merchants, braved the hazards of travel to come by sea from the south and by the overland trade routes from the west through Central Asia. They brought with them Buddhist texts in Indian and Central Asian languages. One of their first major concerns was to produce translations of these into Chinese. Since these foreign monks knew little or nothing of Chinese, and the Chinese were equally ignorant of the foreign languages, the early attempts at translation were far from satisfactory.

By the latter part of the Eastern Han dynasty (A.D. 25–220) Buddhism was slowly spreading through China, undergoing profound changes in form and content in the course of its adaptation. During these early years, Buddhism remained largely an alien cult, confined to settlements of foreigners. Buddhist monasteries were gradually established in scattered towns and cities along the trade routes, often with the assistance of merchants. The monasteries not only functioned as centers of religious activity, but also as hostels, warehouses, and banking centers for foreign traders. They were stoutly built and walled to resist the attacks to be expected in those turbulent times. In succeeding centuries, through the gradual expansion of their commercial activities and the acquisition of large holdings of land, Buddhist

monasteries were to become important factors in the Chinese economy.

With the end of the Han, there began a period of civil strife, internal division, and weakness that lasted for almost four centuries. Non-Chinese peoples of the northern and western frontiers invaded the land and set up independent kingdoms. The breakdown of the political and social structure of the empire brought untold hardship and misery to the lower classes. The aristocracy and the gentry, still entrenched in the Confucian tradition, continued to look with contempt upon the foreign religion promulgated by foreigners. But the Buddhist doctrine of salvation that promised a future life of happiness to the oppressed and lengthy retribution to the oppressor found ready acceptance among the hard-pressed common people. Furthermore, Buddhist monks readily incorporated native folk beliefs and superstitions into the religion, and awed the people with displays of supernatural powers and miracles.

The frequent shifts of power that occurred during the troubled years of the Three Kingdoms (221–64) and the Six Dynasties (265–580) weakened Confucianism and Taoism, but provided Buddhist missionaries with wider and more favorable opportunities for propagating their religion. The alien rulers of North China welcomed as advisers the educated men from India and Central Asia, who brought with them much useful secular knowledge in addition to a new religion. The prestige of their courts was enhanced by the increasing number of works that the more scholarly monks produced in the translation bureaus established under imperial patronage, as well as by the elaborate and colorful religious ceremonies performed in the splendid temples in the capital cities.

The long and highly developed cultural tradition of China had by now begun to act upon and mold Buddhism. At the same time, it drew inspiration from the hitherto little-known culture and art of India and Central Asia, especially from the new elements of philosophy, ritual, and iconography that were being introduced along with this foreign religion. As a result, the fine arts, particularly sculpture, were infused with new spirit and

vigor, which in time produced such works as the superb Buddhist-inspired images of the Yün-kang and Lung-men caves of northern China. Furthermore, by the arduous labors of foreign monks and their Chinese assistants the Indian Buddhist sutras, monastic rules, and philosophical treatises were gradually translated and retranslated, and native Buddhist scholars composed original works of exegesis. Thus an extensive body of Buddhist literature in Chinese was built up which, collected together, came to form the Chinese Tripiṭaka.

In order for the Chinese Buddhist monks to devote themselves to such extensive and time-consuming literary activities, and, in addition, to carry out the religious practices, meditation, and rituals prescribed in the scriptures and texts of the various schools, it became necessary for them to adopt a more sedentary way of life. They discarded the mendicancy and many of the austerities that had formerly characterized the Buddhist monk's life in India. Accorded the active support and patronage of the rulers, aristocracy, and wealthy merchants, the Buddhist clergy came in many ways to resemble a branch of the government, a clan-sponsored bureaucracy of the time. Only a minority of them opposed this tendency and continued to observe the Vinaya, or precepts for the monk's life. Most seem to have felt that their major task was to raise Buddhism to the status of a national religion devoted to the enhancement of the power and prestige of the state or the sovereign.

With such support, the various established schools of Buddhism achieved dazzling cultural heights in philosophy and the arts, particularly in painting and poetry, to say nothing of material prosperity, from the Six Dynasties through the Sui dynasty (581–617), and on to the height of the T'ang dynasty (618–907). The foundations of such a high level of culture and prosperity rested not upon popular support but upon the political and economic power of the ruling classes. They were soon to be seriously weakened when that power waned.

In 755, the general named An Lu-shan revolted, defying the authority of the T'ang court and plunging the empire into bloody strife and confusion. As a result, the T'ien-t'ai, Lü, Fa-hsiang, Hua-yen, and Chen-yen sects, which had produced the crowning

achievements of a rich and flourishing Chinese Buddhism, entered a period of rapid decline. Centered as they were in the two T'ang capital cities of Ch'ang-an and Lo-yang, they could not help sharing the fate of the old aristocracy that had maintained them and was virtually wiped out in the following years of civil war. From this time on their priests either struggled futilely to continue a semblance of their former activities in the capitals and the provinces or, as was the case with T'ien-t'ai, withdrew to the mountain retreats associated with their earliest founders. Within the century that followed, these capital-centered, state-supported sects withered and all but faded from the pages of Chinese history. The sects that survived this period were the leaders in a movement away from the capital cities into the countryside, from the aristocracy to the common people, and from a recondite foreign teaching to one that was distinctively humanitarian and easily understood, and that lent a profound meaning to ordinary, everyday life. Prominent among these sects were the Mi-chiao in the north and Ch'an in the south and east, particularly in the provinces of Chiang-hsi (the present Kiangsi) and Chiang-nan (the present Anhwei and Kiangsu).

Ch'an Buddhism may be said to have been founded by the Brahmin monk known as Bodhidharma. According to tradition he arrived in southern China by sea from India about 520. Though teachers of various types of Buddhist meditation had preceded him, none had been able to establish a school or a line of disciples. Bodhidharma did, and his successors continued the practice of seated, cross-legged meditation advocated by him and also further developed his teachings. As a reform movement, Ch'an aimed to break through the aristocratic and scholastic attitudes that characterized the established schools of Buddhism and return to the spirit of Śākyamuni's original teaching and practice by which every person could himself realize Buddhahood. It held that the scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism were but expositions in written words, and not the Buddha-mind itself. Thus, in place of the scriptural study that had occupied so much of the time of the older schools of Buddhism, Ch'an teachers gave their own discourses, and participated freely with others in lively dialogues using the everyday, colloquial language of the times. Ch'an

monks rejected the subsidized life of the city temples and either returned to the earlier Buddhist practice of leading wandering and mendicant lives or, gathering around a master, settled in some remote or scarcely accessible place where master and disciples democratically lived together, cultivating the land for their daily food.

By the middle T'ang, Ch'an had developed into three schools, the Niu-t'ou or "Ox-head," the Northern, and the Southern. The Southern school emphasized the practice of meditation leading to the instantaneous perception of reality. Its practice and teaching of meditation was called "Patriarchal" because it was held to be based on and to be a continuation of that of the Indian founder Śākyamuni down through Bodhidharma and the succeeding Chinese patriarchs of the school. The flourishing condition of the Southern school during this period was due in large measure to a number of monks each of whom was exceptionally capable, intelligent, and learned, and who attracted many followers.

The three distinctive teaching lines within the Southern school were the Ho-tse, the Ch'ing-yüan, and the Nan-yüeh. It was from the latter two lines that subsequently the "Five Houses" and "Seven Schools" developed through which the flower of Ch'an burst into full bloom, was transmitted to Korea, and became the Zen of Japan that in turn is becoming established today in the West. The direct Dharma heir of Ching-yüan was Ch'an Master Shih-t'ou Hsi-chen (700–90), under whom P'ang Yün as a lay disciple first attained enlightenment. The Dharma heir of Nah-yüeh was Ch'an Master Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–88), under whom P'ang was again enlightened, and whose Dharma heir he became. Shih-t'ou and Ma-tsu were perhaps the greatest Ch'an teachers of their day. Both men were well versed in such Mahāyāna scriptures as the Diamond Sutra, Lankāvatāra Sutra, Vimalakīrti Sutra, and Lotus Sutra, with their doctrine that "the evil passions as they are are Enlightenment; birth-and-death as it is is Nirvāna," and with the Nirvāna Sutra, with its doctrine that "sentient beings all have the Buddha-nature." They took these doctrines, however, and expressed them in everyday terms

that even unlearned country people could understand. The following statement by Kuei-feng Tsung-mi (780–841) clearly illustrates this. Tsung-mi was the fifth and last patriarch of the Hua-yen sect and also of the Ho-tse school of Ch'an. His succinct description of the Ch'an teaching of Ma-tsu and his disciples, which he terms the Hung-chou school, moreover reveals in a nutshell the significance of actions and dialogues recorded in the anecdotes of Layman P'ang. Tsung-mi said:

"The Hung-chou school asserts that our arousing the mind and moving thoughts, snapping the fingers, moving the eyes, etc., is wholly the activity of Buddha-nature itself, and not the movement of anything else. In a word, the entirety of our wanting something, getting angry at something, or arousing the passions —whether good or evil, pleasurable or painful—is all Buddha-nature. For example, just as from wheat flour are made noodles, crackers, and various other foods, so is every single one [of these products still] the same wheat flour.

"In short, [they affirm,] there is no need to arouse the mind to stop evil thoughts, nor arouse the mind to cultivate the Way. Since the Way as it is is mind, we cannot cultivate mind with mind; since evil is also mind, we cannot cut off mind with mind. Not trying to cut off evil or trying to cultivate good, just letting things follow their own courses and being ourselves is what they call liberation of mind. Nowhere is there either any Dharma-principle that we ought to embrace, nor any Buddha that we ought to strive to obtain. Just like the empty sky that does not increase or decrease—[so with our mind—] what need could there be to augment or amend it! And why? Because outside of our mind itself, there is absolutely not the least little thing of value to be obtained."[1]

1. Translated from Seizan Yanagida's essay in Iriya, "Denshin hōyō," p. 159. See also Waley, *Po Chü-I*, pp. 99–100, for a similar statement by Wei k'uan (755–817), a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu.

THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF P'ANG YÜN

THE PREFACE AND ANECDOTES OF *The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang* are the major source of the few biographical facts and dates that are known about the man. The anecdotes emphasize above all P'ang Yün's profound religious understanding. No reference is made in them to his relationship with his parents, or to the formative influences that led him early in life to become disillusioned with worldly values. Nor is there any reference to the actual wars, floods, famines, heavy taxes, and rapid inflation that occurred in China during his lifetime, bringing hardships upon nearly everyone. How these and other historical events may have affected him we simply do not know. The following summary combines what is known and can be inferred of P'ang Yün and his family with a consideration of his poetry, his biographer Yü Ti, and the account of him recorded in the *Chodang chip*, the earliest Ch'an history. From this emerges a suggestive picture of his character and religious standpoint.

The name P'ang Yün means "Lofty Interior," and his *tzu* style or nickname of Tao-hsuan means "Way Mystery." The date of his birth is not recorded. We may infer that it occurred around 740 from the following evidence. We are told (page 41) that at the beginning of the Yüan-ho era (806–20) he returned to Hsiang province and made a home near Hsiang-yang city, his birthplace. It was there that he met Yü Ti, who was Prefect of Hsiang province and who probably lived in its capital city of Hsiang-yang during the period of his administration from 798 to October, 808. Yü Ti was present at the time of P'ang's death, which occurred one week after a solar eclipse. The only solar eclipse between 806 and 808 occurred on July 27, 808. This means that P'ang died on August 3 of that year, a few months before Yü Ti moved away to Ch'ang-an to take up his new post of Cabinet Minister. Several anecdotes of the present text refer to P'ang as being old. Since a Chinese was considered to have reached old age when he was over fifty, P'ang may well have reached an age of sixty or seventy. In this roundabout manner we may place the date of his birth as *circa* 740.

All we are told of P'ang Yün's father is that he was a Confucian, and a minor official in Hsiang-yang until he was transferred south to be Prefect of the city of Heng-yang. Even this cannot be verified historically, for no record of his administration is extant. Of P'ang Yün's mother we know nothing at all. At any rate, P'ang Yün accompanied his father to Heng-yang, lived in the southern part of the city, and married. He had a son and a daughter. His daughter, Ling-chao (Spirit Shining), gained a deep understanding of Ch'an. She and her father seem to have had a particularly close and affectionate relationship.

Sometime after P'ang Yün moved to Heng-yang, he built a hermitage separate from his residence and there carried on his initial religious practices. These probably included the study of Buddhist sutras and the practice of seated meditation. When he was middle-aged he gave his house away to be used for a temple, and sank his possessions and money in a nearby river in order to be rid of them forever. He apparently regarded the acquisition of wealth as an impediment to the attainment of enlightenment, and did not give it away to others for fear it would be a hindrance to them also. It is easy to imagine the surprise and wonder of his neighbors at this drastic renunciation of property. Even today his name is widely known in connection with the incident. Unfortunately, we are not told what arrangements he subsequently made for his family—or what his wife thought about his decision. In any case, P'ang and his daughter are known to have earned what was probably a meager livelihood, at least after he threw away his possessions, by making and selling bamboo utensils, while the one view we have of P'ang's son hoeing in the fields suggests the possibility that he supported his mother by farming.

After disposing of his possessions, perhaps in 785, he traveled to the nearby mountain of Nan-yüeh to visit the great Ch'an Master Shih-t'ou, and was at once enlightened by him. He stayed with Shih-t'ou and his disciples until 786, when he journeyed east to Kiangsi province to visit Ma-tsu. On the way, he met the man who later became the Ch'an monk named Tan-hsia T'ien-jan. T'ien-jan (Spontaneous) was an apt name for this lively person, who was to become one of P'ang's closest friends and a poet of distinction. Under Ma-tsu, P'ang experienced great

enlightenment, remained afterwards for two years among the hundreds of disciples assembled there, and became a Dharma heir of that noted Master.

In subsequent years Layman P'ang seems to have divided his time between his family, presumably still in Heng-yang, and pilgrimages around central China, matching his own Ch'an understanding against all comers in the type of lively and good-humored exchanges recorded in the present text. It was during this period that he probably wrote many of the verses that have come down to us.

Layman P'ang was an amateur poet, unschooled in either the Chinese Classics or conventional rules for verse composition. His favorite themes were Buddhist teaching, practice, and enlightenment on the one hand, and warnings of pitfalls on the other. At his best, he combined these subjects with vivid autobiographical images to great effect, rhyming the end-word of every other line. The majority of his verses, however, are not of the same quality and tend to be didactic.

The T'ang has been called the golden age of Chinese poetry. Some of its greatest poets were Layman P'ang's contemporaries. But nowhere to be found in P'ang's verse are the themes of gentle nature and warm friendship sung in the poems of Wang Wei (701–61), or the exuberant travels, war themes, and frustrated ambitions in those of Tu Fu (712–59), or the wine-bibbing and Taoist alchemy in those of Li Po (701–62), or the political acumen and concern for humanity expressed in those of Po Chü-i (772–846). Of all the T'ang poets, P'ang's verse is most closely echoed by that of the semilegendary hermit Han-shan, who lived about a century later. Some of the three hundred poems attributed to Han-shan are remarkably like those of Layman P'ang. For example, compare the opening lines of Verse 9 (page 81) with this poem by Han-shan:[2]

> I have now a tunic
> Not of sheer or figured silk.
> You ask what is its color?
> Not crimson, nor purple either!

2. Translated from Iriya, *Kanzan*, pp. 134–35; cf. Watson, p. 118.

In summer it's my robe,
In winter it's my quilt.
Used in winter, then summer,
Thus it is year after year.

Han-shan seems also to have been a lay Buddhist who was greatly influenced by the Southern school of Ch'an. Unable to win recognition for his scholarship and poetry, he experienced poverty and hardship. He left his family to be a hermit in the misty solitudes of Cold Mountain in the T'ien-t'ai range of eastern China. Layman P'ang, on the other hand, did not desert his family, preferred living near cities, and enjoyed visiting friends and stopping over at monasteries.

Toward the end of his life, Layman P'ang wandered northward to Hsiang-yang, accompanied by his beloved daughter Ling-chao. According to the Preface (page 41), he lived there in a rock cave twenty *li*—about seven miles—south of Lung-men shan (Deer Gate Mountain), itself twelve miles southeast of Hsiang-yang city. Deer Gate Mountain was for long the home of the celebrated poet Meng Hao-jan (689–740), who in one of his poems mentions visiting there the hermitage of an earlier P'ang.[3] There is a legend of this hermit P'ang, who lived during the Later Han dynasty (25–220), that he went into the mountains to gather medicinal herbs and never came back. Whether this interesting man was a direct ancestor of Layman P'ang or not is unknown.

Layman P'ang's proximity to Hsiang-yang city gave Prefect Yü Ti the chance to visit him frequently. Until October, 808, Yü Ti was both Prefect of Hsiang-chou and Imperial Commissioner of Shan nan tung tao, an extensive region lying on both sides of the Han River, and including present Hupeh, eastern Szechuan, and southern Shensi. He seems to have admired the verses of P'ang, which he obtained early in his administration, and welcomed the chance to make the poet's acquaintance.

What kind of man was Yü Ti, that he sought out and befriended Layman P'ang? He was descended from a distinguished family of Central Asian descent. While a prefect he was outspoken and proud, a capable administrator, a successful and courageous

3. See Jenyns, p. 101.

military leader, and a strict authoritarian. On the other hand, he had an overbearing manner and ruled his territory like an absolute dictator. He ignored admonitions from Emperor Te-tsung against his misdeeds, and got away with everything because the emperor was pleased with his success. Yü Ti on his own authority even issued an order that all mendicant Buddhist monks found in his territory were to be arrested. Those caught he tried and executed. We do not know why or for how long he carried out this persecution. It only ended after Yü Ti encountered a Ch'an monk named Tsu-yü Ho-shang (731–813), who converted him. The dramatic story of their encounter as told in an early Ch'an history[4] goes generally as follows:

"Tsu-yü Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Great Teacher Ma-tsu, and once lived in Hsiang-yang. . . . There was a time when Prefect Yü Ti of Hsiang-yang issued orders that all mendicant monks in his territory should be apprehended and sent [to the prefectural government building in Hsiang-yang]. There was not a single monk who escaped with his life—all were killed. There were numberless instances of this.

"Having heard the news, the Master [Tsu-yü] wanted to visit the Prefect, so he searched among his assembly for companions. About ten men volunteered to accompany the Master. He started out at the head of ten followers. Upon reaching the border the ten others feared to go on. The Master alone crossed the border. The [Prefect's] soldiers found the Master coming, put cangues on him, and escorted him under guard to the capital city of Hsiang-yang. When he arrived in front of the government building, still with cangues on, he donned his monk's robe and entered the courtroom.

"The Prefect, seated grandly on a chair, put a hand on the hilt of his sword and asked: 'Bah! you teacher. Don't you know that the Prefect of Hsiang-yang has the freedom to put you to the sword?' The Master said: 'Do you know a King of Dharma doesn't fear birth-and-death?' The Prefect said: 'Ho-shang, have

4. The *Chodang chip* (*chüan* 14, pp. 53-54) as described on pp. 25-26.

you ears in your head?' The Master responded: My eyebrows and eyes are unhindered. When I, a poor monk, meet with the Prefect in an interview, what kind of hindrance could there be!'

"At this the Prefect threw away his sword, donned his official uniform, bowed low, and asked: 'I have heard there is a statement in the teaching that says that the black wind blows the ships, and wafts them to the land of the Rakshasas.[5] What does this mean?' 'Yü Ti!' the Master called. The Prefect's face changed color. The Master remarked: 'The land of the Rakshasas is not far!' The Prefect again asked: 'What about Buddha?' 'Yü Ti!' the Master called again. The Prefect answered: 'Yes?' The Master said: 'Don't seek anywhere else.' At these words the Prefect attained great enlightenment, bowed low, and became his disciple."[6]

After this experience, Yü Ti studied Ch'an under several masters. In his subsequent support of Buddhism, he was typical of many other officials of the time. It was he who was present at the time of Layman P'ang's death and who compiled *The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang* as a tribute to his memory.

Layman P'ang and Ling-chao had been living in Hsiang province for about two years when the Layman made ready to die. Since no specific illness is mentioned, we may assume that in his old age he simply knew that his time had come. But Ling-chao anticipated him and stole the show by preceding him in death. The Layman himself died a week later. After his remains had been cremated and the ashes scattered in accordance with his last wish, a messenger was sent to report the news to Mrs. P'ang, who presumably was still in Heng-yang with her son. The Preface recounts the bizarre way the son chose to die, and how Mrs. P'ang subsequently went into seclusion and disap-

5. A reference to the Kwan-yin Sutra. See Suzuki, *Manual*, p. 31.

6. The last part of this dialogue, from the Prefect's asking about Buddha to Tsu-yü's "Don't seek anywhere else," is Koan 45 in the eighteenth-century Japanese collection *Tetteki Tōsui* (Blowing the [Solid-]Iron Flute Upside-Down.) Compare our literal translation with that in Senzaki and McCandless, p. 73.

peared. One implication of all this is that each member of the family, having attained the Buddha-way, died when the time came just as each had lived, simply and contentedly, without leaving a trace behind.

The personality of P'ang Yün defies categorization. He was true to himself and lived without attachments. He seems to have had no ambition for the Chinese ideal of an administrative career, or for political agitation or social reform. Although raised in a Confucian family, he preferred to express himself using Buddhist terms. Although described as a Buddhist lay believer, he gave away his house, destroyed his possessions, and wandered about like a monk. Even so, he also declined to become a monk, did not give lectures on Buddhism, try to train disciples, or renounce the income and possibilities for travel that his occupation of making bambooware afforded. He seems to have recommended Buddhist sutras enthusiastically in his verses because he had realized their significance in his own life, and not from any sectarian bias. He had a particular preference for the Vimalakīrti Sutra, whose hero Vimalakīrti had such a profound understanding of Buddhist enlightenment that he could cheerfully pursue many activities forbidden to monks without this affecting him, and moreover best all the monks in debates on Buddhist teaching.

The accouterments of P'ang Yün may be thought of as indicating his character. In the frontispiece painting by the Chinese artist Yüeh-shan, he is shown wearing a white robe, a black gauze cap, and holding in his hand a bamboo walking staff. In common Chinese parlance, "white-robed" simply meant a commoner as distinct from a government official, or a layman as distinct from a black-robed monk. It was probably with this latter meaning that Shih-t'ou referred to P'ang as "wearing white" (see below, page 46). However, in Verse 4 (page 79), P'ang refers to himself as "white-robed." The Chinese character for white has the metaphorical connotations of simplicity, plainness, ordinariness, and purity. All these were descriptive of him. In Verse 9 (page 81), he says he is garbed in the seamless robe of Emptiness, crystalline and sparkling bright like the pure white floss unwound from the silkworm's cocoon. P'ang also knew that Vimalakīrti

and other Indian lay-Buddhists customarily wore white clothes.[7] The Chinese from his day to the present, however, have usually regarded white clothes as cheap and unbecoming. The bereaved wore white hemp garments to a funeral to indicate that excess of grief had robbed them of any concern for their appearance. Whether P'ang Yün actually wore a white robe or not we do not know. It is tempting to suppose that he did, for this would be yet another indication of his affinity with Vimalakīrti and the purity of his heart. The black gauze cap on his head was similar to an official's cap, as Tan-hsia remarks below (page 53). Although P'ang never held official office, he did speak and act with unquestioned authority, of which the cap may be regarded as a symbol. The walking staff is the universal companion of travelers and pilgrims. Buddhist monks carried a wooden staff with a set of interconnected metal rings hung from the top, which jangled as the staff struck the ground. From the time P'ang gave away his house and destroyed his possessions, he was continuously a pilgrim on the Way. His staff was a common piece of bamboo—inexpensive, sturdy, and lightweight—quite in keeping with his simple tastes.

What was P'ang Yün's relationship to the Confucian traditions of his ancestors? Although he must have been taught the precepts of Confucius as a child, these seem to have had little influence upon him in adult life. The compiler of *The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang* or its later editors hardly mention him at all in connection with Confucianism. There is an account, known only in a Korean edition dated 1245 and not mentioned by any Chinese editors, that gives more information in this regard. This is the *Chodang chip*, the earliest known history of Chinese Ch'an, compiled in 952 by Ch'an Master Ch'ing-hsiu and two assistants. It was lost in China and, until recently, known

7. Vimalakīrti is described as "white-robed" early in Chapter 2 of the Vimalakīrti Sutra. There the term means a Buddhist layman or householder. Indian Buddhist laymen and laywomen also wore white robes on fast days and on pilgrimages. For some references to white-robed lay Buddhists in the Pāli canon, see Dīgha Nikāya I: 211; III: 118, 124 ff; and the Majjhima Nikāya I:491; II:23.

only in Korea. Here is the *Chodang chip*'s account of Layman P'ang:

"Layman P'ang succeeded [to the Dharma of] Great Teacher Ma[-tsu]. The Layman himself was born in Heng-yang.

"He had occasion to ask Great Teacher Ma: 'Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?' Teacher Ma replied: 'Layman, wait till you've swallowed in one swig all the water of the West River, then I'll tell you.' At that the Layman attained great enlightenment; he went directly to the administrative office [of the temple], borrowed a writing brush and ink-stone, and composed a verse which says:

[People of] the ten directions are the same one assembly—
Each and every one learns *wu-wei*.
This is the very place to select Buddha;
Empty-minded having passed the exam, I return.

And then he stayed [at Ma-tsu's temple]. He received further instruction [there] for one or two years. In the end, without his changing his Confucian appearance, his mind sported outside of objects; his feelings were unrestrained, but his conduct fitted with the true purport; his way of life was turbid, but he was preeminent among men. Indeed he was a Mystery-learned Confucian, a householding bodhisattva.

"He first lived at East Cliff in Hsiang-yang, and later lived in a small hut [outside and] west of the city wall. He had an only daughter, who served him and fashioned bamboo utensils. He had her sell them in the city, by which to provide for their daily needs. He daily enjoyed the Way.

"His verses number nearly three hundred, and circulate widely in the world. All [these verses] by their words fit the Ultimate Principle, and by their phrases reveal the mysterious course of things; to accomplished Confucians they are jewels and gold, to Buddhists they are cherished treasure. Except for the few given here, all the rest are omitted."

[Here the account quotes eight verses, as described below.]

"When the time came to pass on, the Layman had his daughter prepare hot water, took a bath, donned his robe, sat properly

cross-legged upon his bed, and having spoken his parting words addressed her, saying: 'Watch when the sun reaches due south [at noon] and report it to me.' As he had said, she watched and reported, saying: 'The sun has just reached due south, but the sun's *yang* brilliance is eclipsed.' The Layman exclaimed: 'How can that be!' Then he arose and went to see it himself. Thereupon his daughter crawled upon the bed [, sat] properly, and passed away. Her father turned, and seeing this exclaimed: 'Exquisite! I spoke of it earlier, but I['ll now have to] do it later.' Accordingly the Layman let seven days elapse and died."

The eight verses of P'ang Yün praised in such glowing terms by the compiler of the *Chodang chip* have all been translated in the present book. They are the two verses on page 74 beginning "When the mind's as is" and "Easy, so easy," and the six selected verses numbered 2, 5, and 22–25.[8]

The *Chodang chip* account of Layman P'ang differs in several particulars from that of the present text. Its assertion that he was born in Heng-yang and first lived in Hsiang-yang is contrary to all later accounts, but there is no historical proof now that such might not have been the case. Of special interest are the compiler's references to the completeness of P'ang's attainment, whether considered as Confucian, Taoist, or Buddhist. Although he attained great enlightenment and received instruction under Ma-tsu, he did not on that account become a monk, i.e., "change his Confucian appearance." He is described as "a Mystery-learned Confucian," i.e., a scholar of refinement who is also an adept (Taoist) mystic, and as a "householding bodhisattva," i.e., a man who while he lives a commoner's life enlightens and saves others by leading them to Nirvana.

The first two lines of P'ang's enlightenment verse above reveal the universality of his standpoint. He sees everyone everywhere as learning *wu-wei*. *Wu-wei* in Buddhism means "the Unconditioned," and in Taoism "non-doing," the effortless, purposeless action that flows from accord with Tao. Both meanings are probably intended. The third line refers to Ma-tsu's

8. The *Chodang chip* version of Verse 5 omits lines 5 and 6.

Ch'an temple, where P'ang has realized his Buddhahood. But in the concluding line, far from describing himself as Buddhist, he simply states that by virtue of the empty mind with which he came there he has passed Ma-tsu's examination, and now returns home. Both this verse and the one on page 46 epitomize the pure spirit and free activity that were the greatness of the man.

CHINESE ACCOUNTS OF LAYMAN P'ANG

THE *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu* contains the recorded sayings and verses of Layman P'ang Yün. Prefect Yü Ti probably made the compilation after the Layman's death on August 3, 808, but before he left Hsiang-yang in October of that same year. Six Sung-dynasty book catalogues list early editions of the text that are now lost. The oldest extant version is the Ming-dynasty woodblock edition dated 1637, in three *chüan* or sections. A single copy of this text is preserved in the Cabinet Library, Tokyo.

The first *chüan* of the Ming text contains an anonymous preface, a brief statement of P'ang's early years, and his sayings in the form of anecdotes interspersed with verses. The second *chüan* contains about sixty verses. The third *chüan* continues with about one hundred more of P'ang's verses, then a section of appreciatory verses by later Ch'an men together with two koans taken from the main text, and concludes with a short colophon. In all there are far fewer verses than the three hundred he is said to have written.

Some thirty Buddhist histories, Ch'an koan collections, and secular poetry anthologies dated before the Ming dynasty and about ten subsequent compilations of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644–1912) all contain excerpts from the *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu*. The anecdotes, verses, and biographical details of Layman P'ang found in the earlier compilations often differ in part from those of the Ming text.

In Japan, woodblock editions of the *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu* were published in 1652, about 1668, and about 1692. It was also included in the Kyoto edition of the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō* published between 1902 and 1905. Copies of the three early editions, though

rare, are still to be found in several university, temple, and private libraries in Japan. Except for the fact that they omit the Preface and contain two or three copyist's errors, all the Japanese editions are identical with the Chinese Ming edition of 1637. It is from a photographic copy of the Ming text in the Cabinet Library, Tokyo, emended on the basis of earlier accounts of Layman P'ang, that the present English translation has been made.

CONCERNING THE PRESENT TRANSLATION

After the Pacific War, the longtime American Buddhist and Zen student Mrs. Ruth Fuller Sasaki returned to live in Kyoto, Japan, in 1948 with the intention of continuing her zazen practice and traditional Rinzai Zen koan study, learning more Japanese and Chinese, and publishing accurate and scholarly English translations of important Zen texts. At her residence in Ryōsen-an, a Rinzai Zen temple at Daitoku-ji, she assembled a research library and began to seek the assistance of Japanese and American scholars. Professor Yoshitaka Iriya, a specialist in T'ang and Sung colloquial Chinese, agreed to assist her work and became director of Ryōsen-an's growing research staff.

To aid her study of the *yü-lu* (recorded sayings) type of Ch'an literature, Professor Iriya suggested that she read an article by the well-known Sinologist, the late Henri Maspero, entitled "Sur Quelques Textes Anciens de Chinois Parlé." This article, published in 1914, was a survey of the colloquial language during the Six Dynasties (222–589) and the T'ang (618–907). It contained numerous quotations from the *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu*. With her characteristic thoroughness, Mrs. Sasaki not only read the article but also translated it into English. She obtained the assistance of Mr. Burton Watson, then a Ford Foundation scholar in residence at Kyoto University, in rendering the French transliteration of the Chinese characters into the Wade-Giles system and supplying the characters lacking for many of the titles of works referred to by Maspero throughout the article. It then became apparent that many of Maspero's translations were open

to question. With Professor Iriya and Mr. Watson, she was able to correct and thereby greatly improve the original. Their joint translation, a 124-page typescript, was completed in August, 1954, and kept at Ryōsen-an as a private paper for consultation by interested scholars. It was not intended for publication.

In the course of her study of the Maspero article, Mrs. Sasaki first came to read the complete Ming text of the *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu.* It appealed to her greatly, and after the Maspero article had been revised, she and Professor Iriya enthusiastically set about translating it into English. What began as a simple translation of a short Ch'an text soon developed into a project of major proportions, requiring all of her considerable ability and energy. She undertook a character-by-character comparison of the anecdotes in the Ming text with those to be found in some twenty earlier sources, and began to assemble biographical accounts of the Ch'an monks mentioned therein. By late 1955 an English translation of the anecdotes and fifteen selected verses had been prepared, together with an emended version of the Ming text and romanized Chinese and Japanese transcriptions of its pronunciation. Then the work halted. Mrs. Sasaki and the scholars turned their attention entirely to revising the English translation of the *Lin-chi yü-lu* (The Recorded Sayings of Lin-chi) and the research that was later published in *Zen Dust.* Mrs. Sasaki's untimely death on October 24, 1967, was a great loss. The Lin-chi translation as well as that of the present text was still incomplete. Professor Iriya and the others resolved to continue, but without her guiding hand progress inevitably was slowed.

In the autumn of 1968, I joined the Ryōsen-an research staff at Professor Iriya's invitation to help complete the Lin-chi revision. Student-faculty confrontations at the universities over the next two years made severe inroads on all the professors' time, and it was not until April, 1970, that the final revision of the basic Lin-chi text and notes was at last finished. Following this, Professor Iriya and I drew on the experience of our previous collaboration to revise completely the initial translation of the present text, which he and Mrs. Sasaki had left off fifteen years before. In addition, we translated new source materials for an introduc-

tion and notes, and also ten more verses of Layman P'ang. This brought the total number of selected verses to twenty-five. Professor Iriya kindly made available to me extensive notes that he had gathered in preparation for the publication of his emended Ming text. Entitled the *Hō koji goroku* and containing the Chinese with Japanese readings, this will appear as Volume 7 of Chikuma Shobō's new twenty-volume series *Zen no goroku* (Zen Recorded Sayings).

In the present translation we have emended the Ming text only when two or more earlier sources contained identical and better versions of a given anecdote. Most of the emendations are minor and consist of substitutions of a single Chinese character or the addition of an extra sentence. Since Professor Iriya has listed all these emendations in the footnotes of his *Hō koji goroku*, I have not felt it necessary to detail them here. Mention should, however, be made of two complete anecdotes not found in the Ming text that have been included here. They are the Tan-hsia anecdote found on page 55, taken from the *Ch'an-tsung sung-ku lien-chu t'ung-chi* (*chüan* 14, pp. 85d–86a); and the anecdote entitled "Mrs. P'ang at the Temple" (page 73), taken from the *Chih-yüeh lu* (*chüan* 9, pp. 106–8).

Throughout the translation, our aim has been to express in English the literal meaning, style, and religious spirit of the original. When the Chinese is ambiguous, as in cases where the subject of a sentence is omitted and could equally well refer to two or more persons, the same ambiguity has purposely been kept in the English. When double meanings are possible, where English construction requires additional words not in the original, or where explanatory words are inserted in place of a note, these have all been supplied within brackets. In every case the sense of the original is conveyed if the bracketed words are omitted in the reading.

English meanings are as defined in *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*. In romanization of the Chinese a modification of the Wade-Giles system and in Japanese the modified Hepburn system has been used. Since the *P'ang chü-shih yü-lu* is a Chinese text, romanized Chinese pronunciations of proper names have been preferred, except when the Sanskrit equivalent

is likely to be better known to the Western reader. Terms with no exact English equivalent like *Ch'an*, *ch'in*, and *li* have been retained to indicate the Chinese flavor of the text. For the convenience of readers more familiar with the Japanese pronunciations, these will be found in the Index, together with the Chinese characters, in the case of more important Chinese names and terms.

All dates are Christian era; months and days have been converted from the Chinese lunar calendar into the Julian calendar. Anecdote titles throughout, together with the title "Selected Verses of Layman P'ang" and subsequent verse numbers, have all been supplied by the translators. Footnotes are limited to information likely to help the understanding of general readers or students of Zen, and are not intended to be scholarly. Wherever possible, references are given in the notes to existing English translations of related Zen literature and Buddhist sutras as a convenience for those who wish to do additional reading; these references are in abbreviated form, as full information may be found in the Selected Bibliography.

At present there is a great need for more and definitive English translations of complete Buddhist sutras and original Chinese Ch'an and Japanese Zen texts. The publication of *The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang* is a step in this direction. As it stands, it contains the work of several people. Particular mention is due Ruth Fuller Sasaki, whose breadth of vision, resourcefulness, and tireless efforts first brought the translation into being. Professor Iriya, now co-chairman of the Department of Chinese Literature at Kyoto University, has from beginning to end been the indispensable guide in interpreting the Chinese. Mr. Gary Snyder, American poet and former Zen student at Daitoku-ji, made preliminary translations of biographies from which some of the notes have benefited. Mr. Kazuhiro Furuta, a graduate student of Chinese Buddhism at Ōtani University, has been of great help in locating source materials, checking my translations, and in numberless other ways. The English used throughout the book is, of course, my responsibility; I hope that any errors in it will come to light and be corrected in future editions.

Special thanks are due Esei Fukutomi Oshō, now priest of

Ryōsen-an, for his permission to use its library; and to my teacher, Zen Master Kajitani Sōnin of Shōkoku-ji monastery, whose personal example of diligent study and living Zen spirit has encouraged me to persevere in bringing this work to completion.

A NOTE ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Several excellent portraits of Layman P'ang and his family that have been preserved in Japan are reproduced in this book. Though not painted from life, they at least show these famous persons as they are remembered by their countrymen, and perhaps some of them, based upon still earlier portraits, even preserve a tradition of the actual likenesses. In all probability there are other such portraits stored away in temples and in private collections that are unknown to us, but we were fortunate in finding these few. Since they are diverse in conception and technique, brief descriptions of them are included here:

THE THREE P'ANGS (frontispiece), attributed to the Chinese artist Yüeh-shan, who lived during the early Yüan era (1280–1368); ink and colors, about one yard wide; Shinju-an, Daitoku-ji, Kyoto. This family portrait shows, right to left, the Layman, his wife, and their daughter Ling-chao. Note that the latter carries a basket, which by artistic convention has become her trademark. I am indebted to Yamada Sobin Oshō, of the Rinzai Zen temple of Shinju-an, for allowing this photograph to be taken and reproduced here. (See also pages 24–25.)

MA-TSU ANSWERING LAYMAN P'ANG (facing p. 48), by an unknown Chinese artist of the thirteenth century; ink on silk, 105.6 × 34.8 cm.; Tennei-ji, Kyoto. On the left, the Layman is shown as an earnest seeker with his hands reverentially clasped. On the right is Ma-tsu, by contrast a study in self-confidence as he lounges comfortably, a smile playing about his lips, and points his finger as he effortlessly parries the other's question. An inscribed verse, by Yü-chi Chih-hui (ca. 1215–1300), a monk

of the Ching-tz'u-ssu, indicates that the question being answered here is that given in the first dialogue with Ma-tsu (see page 47). The verse, which is at the top and not shown in the present detail, is translated as follows by Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, in *Zen Paintings and Calligraphy*. This is a catalogue of an exhibition held in late 1970 at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where I first saw this painting:

> What kind of man is he who is tied to nothing at all?
> I am Ma, the winnow[-mouthed],
> And you are P'ang, the recluse.
> While you contemplate the question,
> The water of the Great River continues to flow East.

See the same catalogue, pages 44–45, for further commentary on this painting. Note that the word translated above as "recluse" is rendered more precisely in the present book as "layman." This photograph was obtained through the kindness of Mr. Nagatsugi Zaitsu, of the Cultural Properties Protection Committee, Tokyo, and is reproduced by permission of Eiichi Harayama, chief priest of Tennei-ji. The painting itself is preserved at the Kyoto National Museum, on loan from Tennei-ji.

LING-CHAO AND TAN-HSIA (facing p. 56), a woodblock frontispiece from the same source as the following. The Layman's daughter holds a broom as she talks with Tan-hsia, the Zen master who appears in the dialogues on pages 51-55. The inscription reads: "The girl Ling-chao enlightens Master Tan-hsia."

LAYMAN P'ANG AND HIS CHILDREN (facing p. 64), a woodblock frontispiece illustrating a popular Yüan-period drama based on the life of Layman P'ang, from a Yüan collection entitled *A Hundred Dramas of the Yüan;* carving based upon an anonymous Yüan ink drawing made in the style of K'ung-ying. Shown in the courtyard of their home are, right to left, the daughter, the Layman, and the son. The inscription at the upper right gives the title of the play, *P'ang chü-shi wu-fang lai-sheng chai.*

LAYMAN P'ANG AND HIS DAUGHTER (facing p. 72), ink and colors;

collection of Mr. Hakuō Kanō, of Kyoto, by whose kind permission it is here reproduced. This group portrait, probably a copy of a Chinese original, is attributed to the Japanese painter Shūgetsu (d. ca. 1510), who was a close disciple of and accompanied Sesshū on his journey to China. On stylistic grounds, however, it appears rather to be the work of a skilled Japanese artist of the Kanō school working in the latter half of the sixteenth century.

The composition is unusual. The large central figure of Layman P'ang and the reduced size of his daughter Ling-chao imply that he is a Buddha and she his attendant. There are numerous paintings of the Buddha with a shorter disciple on either side; their harmonious lines suggest a transcendental ideal. The present portrait in its clever use of asymmetry goes beyond this convention to present two poor, ordinary people with the suggestion that they too are Buddhas. Note that the Layman's right arm is bared to the shoulder in the manner of a Buddhist monk.

The daughter holds a staff, water bottle, and what may be a red meditation mat, thus suggesting they are on an outing, perhaps on the occasion of their journey north to Hsiang-yang in 806. The patched fan in P'ang's hand suggests a hot summer day, as also does his open robe. The tattered informality of this nondescript gray robe is in keeping with the poverty of P'ang's life. His body's angular proportions suggest the stiffening and awkwardness of advanced age. His face reveals the clear-eyed tranquility and utter naturalness of the true Zen man, of whom it has been said: "Above, there's not a tile to cover his head; below, not an inch of ground for him to stand on." 1928225

PORTRAIT OF LING-CHAO (facing p. 80), by the Japanese painter-priest Gakuō Zōkyū (fl. ca. early sixteenth century); ink and color on paper, 99.2 × 42.5 cm.; private Japanese collection. As in most pictures of Ling-chao, here too she is shown carrying a basket. Her white robe suggests that she is an ideal woman. Her mature spiritual power is suggested by the harmonious, stable lines of her robe and hands, and her piercing insight by sharply slanted eyes. Apparently missing from this artist's conception of Ling-chao are the gentleness, femininity, and humor that were also characteristic of her. The colophon verse at the top (not

shown in the present detail) was composed and inscribed by Ryōan Keigo (1425–1514), who, like the painter himself, was a Rinzai Zen priest from the same Kyoto temple of Tofuku-ji; it reads:

> On the bed of old [Mr.] P'ang,
> Sitting one vanishes, standing one dies.
> The basket's outflows exhausted,
> How swift the spear-point [flies]!

The first couplet seems to be a metaphorical reference to the selfless Zen state of mind. The second couplet alludes to Ling-chao's mind ("basket") as being free of the deluding passions ("outflows"), and her Zen activity ("spear-point") as being incredibly swift.

Gakuō was a noted disciple of the painter Shūbun. This portrait was published in 1922 in *Kokka*, the Japanese fine arts magazine (No. 391, page 186), together with a biography of the artist and inscriber. More recently it was published in *Zen Painting*, by Yasuichi Awakawa (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1970, page 80). The photograph reproduced in the present book was obtained through the kind assistance of Mr. Kim Schuefftan, of Kodansha International, Tokyo.

Miscellaneous Ornaments. The woodcuts used as chapter-head ornaments, tailpieces, and end-paper decorations are taken from a famous book published in China in the seventeenth century, the *Chieh tsu yuan hua chuan* or *Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*. Even without any direct connection with Layman P'ang, these charming drawings help convey the Chinese setting and mood of his book.

The binding design reproduces two pages of the woodblock-printed Ming text from which the present translation was made, as described at the top of page 29.

Dana R. Fraser

Shōkoku-ji, Kyoto

The Recorded Sayings of
LAYMAN P'ANG

compiled by
Imperial Commissioner Yü Ti

PREFACE[1]

THE LAYMAN, whose personal name was Yün and whose nickname was Tao-hsüan, was a native of Hsiang-yang.[2] His father held the office of Prefect of Heng-yang. The Layman lived in the southern part of the city. There he built a hermitage, carrying on his religious practices[3] to the west of the house, and after several

1. Here the original text has the following heading: "Preface to the Recorded Sayings and Poems of Layman P'ang." This undated, anonymous preface forms part of the 1637 Ming edition. It contains a general summary of P'ang's life and was compiled from information contained in the body of the text itself and in several other earlier accounts concerning P'ang Yün.

2. A prefectural capital on the Han River in present Hupeh, about 200 miles north of Tung-t'ing Lake. As indicated in the next sentence, however, P'ang lived here only a short time before accompanying his father to Heng-yang, a populous district capital on the Hsiang River some 140 miles south of Tung-t'ing Lake in present Hunan, where he grew up and married.

3. What these practices were we are not told. They probably included some form of Buddhist meditation, for we know (see Verse 22, p. 86) he studied Buddhist sutras, some of which give detailed methods of meditation and instructions for practice.

years his entire household attained the [Buddha-]Way. This was what is now Wu-k'ung Hermitage. Later he gave his former dwelling near the hermitage to be made into a temple. This was what is now Neng-jen Temple.[4]

During the Chen-yüan era [785–804] of T'ang he loaded the treasure of his household—several tens of thousands of strings of *cash*[5]—onto a boat in Tung-t'ing Lake to the right of the river Shao, and sank it in the middle of the stream.[6] After that he lived like a single leaf.[7]

The Layman had a wife, a son, and a daughter. They sold bamboo utensils in order to obtain their morning and evening meals.

During the Chen-yüan era of T'ang, the Ch'an and Vinaya sects were in high favor, and the Patriarchal doctrine likewise flourished, diffusing its brilliance abroad, spreading rampant as a hop vine, and effecting its entrance everywhere. Then it was that the Layman initially visited Shih-t'ou, and in an instant his former state [of mind] melted away; later, he saw Ma-tsu and again sealed his Original Mind. [From that time on] his every act manifested his penetration of the Mystery, and there was nothing about him that did not accord with the Way. He had the

4. See p. 93, n. 1, for gazetteer entries concerning P'ang's dwelling.

5. A round copper Chinese coin with a square hole in the center, commonly strung together in groups of ten, a hundred, or a thousand to facilitate handling. In the early T'ang system of prices, one thousand cash were approximately equal in value to a Chinese bushel of rice, or one bolt of silk cloth forty Chinese feet long, or one small ounce of gold (about 13.92 grams). The actual buying power of a cash varied with the time and place, and was lower in P'ang's time due to inflation. See Reischauer, *Ennin's Travels*, pp. 81, 162, and *Ennin's Diary*, pp. 33, 44 (n. 191).

6. Other versions of the story have it that P'ang sank his fortune in the Hsiang River, and still others that he sank it in the ocean. There is no evidence that he was ever in fact a man of great wealth. His act of renunciation, however, caught the imagination of the Chinese and made his name proverbial. See p. 93, n. 2, for accounts suggesting his motive in sinking his fortune.

7. Like a leaf blown about by the wind, he had no fixed place of residence. Similarly, another account of him has: "After that he lived with only a traveling bag."

boundless eloquence of Mañjuśrī,[8] and [everything he said] was in conformity with the Mahāyāna treatises on reality.

After that he went about everywhere testing [men's] attainment of the Ultimate Principle.

At the beginning of the Yüan-ho era [806–20] he made his home in Hsiang-yang, living in a rock cave. (Today, the Layman's Cliff is to be seen twenty *li* to the south of Deer Gate.)[9] At that time the Prefect Mr. Yü Ti,[10] advancing his banners, investigated conditions by collecting the songs of the common people.[11] He obtained the Layman's works and greatly admired him. Thereupon he took advantage of a favorable opportunity and himself visited the Layman, treating him cordially like an old and dear friend. They not only pledged their devotion, but thereafter their mutual visits continued without lapse.

When the Layman was about to die he said to his daughter Ling-chao: "Illusory transformations lack reality. I comply with whatever comes. Go out and see how high the sun is and report to me when it is noon."

Ling-chao went to the door and quickly reported: "The sun has already reached the zenith, and there's an eclipse. Do come and see it."

"Is that so," remarked the Layman.

"Yes, indeed," replied Ling-chao.

The Layman rose from his seat and looked out of the window. Thereupon Ling-chao took her father's chair and, sitting cross-legged, in an instant passed away.

8. The bodhisattva representing intrinsic wisdom. He is often depicted riding a lion, holding the sword of wisdom in one hand and a sutra in the other.

9. This sentence is a parenthetical gloss by the author of the Preface. The *li* is a Chinese measure of distance, said to be a little over one-third of a mile, or about six hundred meters. See Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary*, p. 2, n. 4, and also *Ennin's Travels*, p. 141.

10. Yü Ti (d. 818) became a close friend of Layman P'ang and compiled the present text as a tribute to his memory. See p. 94, n. 3, for further biographical details. For a discussion of his character, see pp. 21–23.

11. This later became a proverbial expression for a prefect's taking office. The songs of the people reflected their circumstances, and thus served as a guide to the administration.

The Layman turned and smiling said: "My daughter has anticipated me." Whereupon he gathered firewood and concluded the matter.

When seven days had passed, Mr. Yü came to inquire how he was. The Layman, putting his hand on Mr. Yü's knee, gazed at him intently for a long time, and then said: "I beg you just to regard as empty all that is existent and to beware of taking as real all that is non-existent. Fare you well in the world. All is like shadows and echoes."

As his words ended, a strange fragrance filled the room and he sat upright as if meditating. Mr. Yü hastily called to him, but he had already gone on the long journey. The wind roared over the great marsh, yet serenely carried the sound of heavenly music; the moon passed beyond Mount Sumeru,[12] yet did not change its golden waves of color. The Layman's final request was that he be cremated and [the ashes] scattered over rivers and lakes. Thereupon the ceremonial affairs were carried out in detail, and he was cremated in the usual manner.

A messenger was then sent to report the news to his wife. When she heard it she said: "That stupid girl and ignorant old man have gone away without telling me. How unbearable!" Then she went and spoke to her son, whom she saw hoeing in the field, saying: "Mr. P'ang and Ling-chao are both gone." Laying down his hoe, the son exclaimed "Sa!" in reply. After a time, he also died standing up. His mother said: "Stupid boy, how awfully foolish you are!" He was also cremated. Everyone marveled at this [occurrence].[13]

Sometime afterwards Mrs. P'ang visited her friends throughout the countryside bidding them farewell, then went into seclusion. Later, all trace of her was entirely lost. No one knew where she had gone.

12. In Buddhist cosmology, the central mountain of this and every world. The meaning of the entire sentence is, of course, figurative.

13. The son's name was Keng-huo according to the account in the *Shih-shih t'ung-chien* (*chüan* 9, p. 473d). This comparatively late text is the only one which mentions him by name. This, in addition to the fact that he nowhere appears in the anecdotes of the present text, indicates that there was probably nothing noteworthy about him—except the manner of his death.

The Layman often used to say:

I've a boy who has no bride,
I've a girl who has no groom;
Forming a happy family circle,
We speak about the Birthless.[14]

Besides this [verse], his profound sayings and religious verses were circulated about, but many were scattered and lost. Now for the first time they have been gathered together from the memories of men and compiled into two *chüan*,[15] that they may forever be available to posterity and admonish future students.

[People of] the world said: "The Layman was indeed a Vimalakīrti!"[16] How true!

He whose name is "Nameless" has written this preface
The printing blocks are stored in the
Huang-po Tripitaka Pavilion

14. This verse, which is repeated from the main text (p. 47), is widely known. It suggests that each member of the family is enlightened and self-sufficient, yet dwells in harmony with the others. It shows how far P'ang had departed from the Confucian tradition of his ancestors, in which for children to remain unmarried was the worst possible disregard of filial piety.

15. The text in fact divided into three *chüan* or fascicles, at least in the Ming edition followed here (see p. 28).

16. A layman, said to have been a contemporary of Śākyamuni, who possessed all the virtues of an ideal Buddhist. He is the hero of the Vimalakīrti Sutra. For an illustration and succinct description of him, see Suzuki, *Manual*, p. 12.

THE ANECDOTES[1]

THE LAYMAN P'ANG YÜN of Hsiang-chou, whose nickname was Tao-hsüan, was a resident of Heng-yang prefecture in Heng-chou. His family had been Confucianists for generations. While yet a youth he became aware of the defiling passions and aspired to seek the absolute truth.

DIALOGUES WITH SHIH-T'OU

AT THE BEGINNING of the Chen-yüan era [785–804] of T'ang, the Layman visited Ch'an Master Shih-t'ou.[2] He asked the

1. Here the original text has the following heading: "The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang. Compiled by Imperial Commissioner Yü Ti. Reprinted by Upāsaka Shih-teng." Nothing is known of this Shih-teng. *Upāsaka* is a Sanskrit term for a male Buddhist lay practicer or believer. It is equivalent in meaning to *chü-shih*, translated throughout the present text as "layman."

2. Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien (700–90), a Ch'an master of great renown, was the Dharma heir of Ch'ing-yüan Hsing-ssu (*d.* 740). See p. 95, n. 4, for further biographical details.

Master: "Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?"

Shih-t'ou covered the Layman's mouth with his hand. In a flash he realized!

◆

ONE DAY SHIH-T'OU said to the Layman: "Since seeing me, what have your daily activities been?"

"When you ask me about my daily activities, I can't open my mouth," the Layman replied.

"Just because I know you are thus I now ask you," said Shih-t'ou.

Whereupon the Layman offered this verse:

> My daily activities are not unusual,
> I'm just naturally in harmony with them.
> Grasping nothing, discarding nothing,
> In every place there's no hindrance, no conflict.
> Who assigns the ranks of vermilion and purple?—[3]
> The hills' and mountains' last speck of dust
> is extinguished.[4]
> [My] supernatural power and marvelous activity—
> Drawing water and carrying firewood.

Shih-t'ou gave his assent. Then he asked: "Will you put on black robes or will you continue wearing white?"[5]

"I want to do what I like," replied the Layman. So he did not shave his head or dye his clothing.

3. The color of clothing worn by high government officials.

4. In other texts this line is also written: "The green mountains' ast speck of dust is extinguished." The two lines that conclude this verse are often quoted and widely known.

5. "White-clothed" is a conventional term indicating a commoner White is here used in contrast to the black robes of a Ch'an Buddhist monk. See Introduction, pp. 24–25; see also Leggett, pp. 18, 57.

DIALOGUES WITH MA-TSU

LATER THE LAYMAN went to Chiang-shi to visit Ch'an Master Ma-tsu.[6] He asked Ma-tsu: "Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?"

"Wait till you've swallowed in one swig all the water of the West River, then I'll tell you," replied Ma-tsu.

At these words the Layman suddenly understood the Mysterious Principle. He offered the verse containing the phrase, "empty-minded having passed the exam."[7]

He remained with Ma-tsu two years, practicing and receiving instruction. He wrote a verse which says:

I've a boy who has no bride,
I've a girl who has no groom;
Forming a happy family circle,
We speak about the Birthless.

◆

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN addressed Ma-tsu, saying: "A man of unobscured original nature asks you please to look upward."

Ma-tsu looked straight down.

The Layman said: "You alone play marvelously on the stringless *ch'in*."[8]

Ma-tsu looked straight up.

The Layman bowed low. Ma-tsu returned to his quarters.

"Just now bungled it trying to be smart," then said the Layman.

◆

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN questioned Ma-tsu, saying: "What about

6. Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–88), one of the greatest Ch'an masters of all time, the Dharma heir of Nan-yüeh Huai-jang. See p. 95, n. 5, for further biographical details.

7. For the full verse, its context, and implications, see pp. 26, 27–28.

8. The Chinese lute.

water, which is without sinews and bones, yet can support a boat of ten thousand *hu*?"[9]

"Here there's no water and no boat. What sinews and bones are you talking about?" replied Ma-tsu.

DIALOGUES WITH YÜEH-SHAN

THE LAYMAN WENT to see Ch'an Master Yüeh-shan.[10] Yüeh-shan asked him: "Can you put this matter in the One Vehicle?"[11]

"I do nothing each day but seek my fare," said the Layman. "How should I know if it can be put in the One Vehicle?"

"Am I right in saying you didn't see Shih-t'ou?" asked Yüeh-shan.

"Picking one up and letting one go is not the mark of a skillful fellow," returned the Layman.

"As head of the temple," said Yüeh-shan, "I have many matters to attend to."

"Take care of yourself," said the Layman and started out.

"Picking one up and letting one go is the very mark of a skillful fellow," said Yüeh-shan.

"That great question on the One Vehicle has gotten lost," said the Layman.

"Yes, yes," agreed Yüeh-shan.

◆

WHEN THE LAYMAN took leave of Yüeh-shan, the Master had ten Ch'an students accompany him as far as the gate. There the Layman, pointing to the snow in the sky, said: "Lovely snow! Flake after flake does not fall another place."

9. The Chinese bushel, equivalent in T'ang times to about one and two-thirds bushels in U.S. dry measure, or 59.44 liters. See Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary*, p. 50, n. 217.

10. Yüeh-shan Wei-yen (745–828) studied under Shih-t'ou, whose Dharma heir he became, and probably also under Ma-tsu. See p. 96, n. 6, for further biographical details.

11. Skt. *Ekayāna*: the single vehicle or final teaching, embracing both the Mahāyāna and Theravāda, which leads all beings to Buddhahood, as emphasized in the Lotus Sutra. Cf. Miura and Sasaki, p. 389.

MA-TSU ANSWERING LAYMAN P'ANG

(see page 33)

"Where do they fall?" asked the Ch'an student Ch'uan.

The Layman gave him a slap.

"Don't be so crude," said Ch'uan.

"How can you call yourself a Ch'an student!" cried the Layman. "Old Yama[12] won't let go of you."

"How about you?" returned Ch'uan.

The Layman gave him another slap and said: "Your eyes see like a blind man's; your mouth speaks like a mute's."[13]

DIALOGUES WITH CH'I-FENG

THE LAYMAN WENT to see Ch'i-feng.[14] He had barely entered the temple compound when Ch'i-feng said: "What is it that this commoner keeps incessantly coming to monasteries to get?"

Looking about him on both sides, the Layman said: "Who's talking like that? Who's talking like that?"

Ch'i-feng shouted.

"Here I am!" cried the Layman.

"Spoken straightforwardly, wasn't it?" asked Ch'i-feng.

"What's behind, eh?" asked the Layman.

Turning his head, Ch'i-feng exclaimed: "Look, look!"

"The thief in the grass met complete defeat," said the Layman. "The thief in the grass met complete defeat."

Ch'i-feng said nothing.

◆

ONE DAY AS CH'I-FENG and the Layman were walking side by side, the Layman went a step ahead, and then said: "I am better than you by one step."

"There's no back and no front," said Ch'i-feng, "yet the old

12. Skt. *Yama*: the lord of hell and impartial judge of the dead.

13. This entire anecdote comprises the Koan in Case 42 of the *Pi-yen lu.*

14. Ch'i-feng Ho-shang, a monk in the second generation of the line of Nan-yüeh Huai-jang, and a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow. *Ho-shang* is a title of respect for a monk who is a teacher.

gent wants to get ahead."

"The suffering of sufferings[15] never produces such a remark," said the Layman.

"Sir, I'm afraid you won't agree," said Ch'i-feng.

"If I don't agree, what'll you be able to do?" retorted the Layman.

"If I had a stick in my hand, I'd beat you without mercy," replied Ch'i-feng.

At that the Layman gave him a punch, and then said: "Not too good."

Ch'i-feng started to pick up a stick, but the Layman seized it. "Today this thief is completely defeated!" he cried.

"Am I clumsy, or are you skillful?" said Ch'i-feng laughing.

"We're quits, we're quits!" cried the Layman clapping his hands.

◆

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN asked Ch'i-feng: "How many *li* is it from here to the top of your peak?"

"Where have you come from?" asked Ch'i-feng.

"It's so dreadfully steep that it can't be asked about," said the Layman.

"How much [steepness] is that?" asked Ch'i-feng.

"One, two, three," said the Layman.

"Four, five, six," said Ch'i-feng.

"Why not say seven?" asked the Layman.

"As soon as I said seven there would be eight," replied Ch'i-feng.

"You can stop there," said the Layman.

"You may go on," said Ch'i-feng.

The Layman shouted and went out.

Then Ch'i-feng shouted.

◆

15. The expression "suffering of sufferings" (or, more freely, "extremity of suffering") became part of the following maxim in the Yüan dynasty: "Unless you experience the suffering of sufferings, it's difficult to become a man above men."

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN said to Ch'i-feng: "One mustn't speak [of it] directly."

"Show me Mr. P'ang's then 'master,' "[16] said Ch'i-feng.

"What's the use of being so dispirited?" asked the Layman.

"[I had] a great question, but it missed you," said Ch'i-feng.

"Just as I thought, just as I thought," returned the Layman.

DIALOGUES WITH TAN-HSIA

ONE DAY CH'AN MASTER Tan-hsia T'ien-jan[17] came to visit the Layman. As soon as he reached the gate he saw [the Layman's] daughter Ling-chao carrying a basket of greens.

"Is the Layman here?" asked Tan-hsia.

Ling-chao put down the basket of greens, politely folded her arms [one on top of the other] and stood still.

"Is the Layman here?" asked Tan-hsia again.

Ling-chao picked up the basket and walked away. Tan-hsia then departed.

When the Layman returned a little later, Ling-chao told him of the conversation.

"Is Tan-hsia here?" asked the Layman.

"He's gone," replied Ling-chao.

"Red earth painted with milk,"[18] remarked the Layman.

◆

LATER, WHEN TAN-HSIA came to see the Layman, though the Layman saw him coming, he neither rose nor spoke to him. Tan-hsia raised his whisk; the Layman raised his mallet.[19]

16. *Chu-jen-weng*, literally "master," is here used in the sense of True Self or Buddha-nature. Freely translated, this sentence would read: "Show me your True Self when you do not speak of it directly."

17. Tan-hsia T'ien-jan (738–823), one of Layman P'ang's best friends, was a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou. See 96, n. 7, for further biographical details.

18. This expression denotes an action that is needless, useless, or defiling. Another example is found in the *Wu-men-kuan*, in Wu-men's Postscript following Case 48. See Blyth, Vol. 4, p. 312.

19. The *fu-tzu* or whisk consisted of long white yak- or horse-hairs

"Just this, or is there something else?" asked Tan-hsia.

"Seeing you this time is not the same as seeing you before," observed the Layman.

"Go on and belittle my reputation as you please," said Tan-hsia.

"A while ago you took a hit [from my daughter]," returned the Layman.

"If that's so," said Tan-hsia, "then you've made [my] T'ien-jan's mouth dumb."

"You're dumb because of your intrinsic nature," said the Layman, "and now you afflict me with dumbness."

Tan-hsia threw down his whisk and departed.

"Jan Ācārya, Jan Ācārya!"[20] called the Layman.

But Tan-hsia did not look back.

"He's come down not only with dumbness but with deafness as well," remarked the Layman.

◆

ONE DAY TAN-HSIA again went to visit the Layman. As he reached the gate they met. Tan-hsia asked: "Is the Layman here?"

"A starving man doesn't choose his food," returned the Layman.

"Is old P'ang here?" asked Tan-hsia.

"Heavens, heavens!" sighed the Layman and entered the house.

"Heavens, heavens!" sighed Tan-hsia; then [he turned and] went back.

◆

ONE DAY TAN-HSIA asked the Layman: "How does today's meeting compare with yesterday's?"

bound atop a wooden handle, and was used originally by Indian Buddhist monks to brush away insects without injuring them. Later the whisk was carried as a symbol of authority by Ch'an teachers. The *ch'ui-tzu* was an eight-sided wooden mallet. One of its uses was as a gavel in Ch'an ceremonies to call the assembly of monks to order.

20. Skt. *ācārya*: spiritual teacher, master, or preceptor. "Jan" is an abbreviation of Tan-hsia's other name, T'ien-jan.

"Showing me yesterday's affair just as it is, demonstrate your Ch'an eye," returned the Layman.

"As for the Ch'an eye," replied Tan-hsia, "can it put you into itself, Mr. P'ang?"

"I'm in your eye," said the Layman.

"My eye is narrow," said Tan-hsia. "Where can you find a place in it to put your body?"

"Why should this eye be narrow! Why should this body be put!" rejoined the Layman.

Tan-hsia desisted.

"If you will speak one word more," said the Layman, "this conversation can be rounded off."

Again Tan-hsia did not reply.

"As to this one word, above all others, no man can say it," remarked the Layman.

◆

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN came and stood before Tan-hsia with hands folded [on his chest]. After a little he went out. Tan-hsia paid no attention.

The Layman came back and sat down. Whereupon Tan-hsia went and stood before him with hands folded. After a little he returned to his quarters.

"I come in, you go out," said the Layman. "We aren't getting anywhere."

"This old gent comes in and goes out, comes in and goes out—when will it end!" returned Tan-hsia.

"You haven't the slightest compassion," said the Layman.

"I have led this fellow into such a state!" exclaimed Tan-hsia.

"What have you led?" asked the Layman.

At that Tan-hsia lifted the cap from the Layman's head and said: "You're just like an old monk."

The Layman took the cap and, putting it on Tan-hsia's head, said: "You're just like a young commoner."

"Yes sir, yes, yes," assented Tan-hsia.

"You still have the old-time spirit," said the Layman.

Tan-hsia threw down the cap. "It's very much like an official's cap," he said.

"Yes sir, yes, yes," assented the Layman.

"How could I forget the old-time spirit!" said Tan-hsia

The Layman snapped his fingers three times. "Moving heaven, moving earth," he said.

◆

ONE DAY WHEN TAN-HSIA saw the Layman coming he assumed a running attitude.

"That's the pouncing attitude," said the Layman. "Now what's the roaring attitude?"

Tan-hsia sat down.

In front of him the Layman drew the figure seven using his staff. Below it Tan-hsia drew the figure one.

"Because of the seven, the one is seen; having seen the one, the seven is forgotten," said the Layman.

Tan-hsia stood up.

"Sit a little longer," said the Layman. "There's still a second phrase coming."

"May I please put a capping-phrase to this?" asked Tan-hsia.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!' mourned the Layman and departed.

◆

WHEN THE LAYMAN was walking with Tan-hsia one day he saw a deep pool of clear water. Pointing to it with his hand, he said: "Being as it is we can't differentiate it."

"Of course we can't," replied Tan-hsia.

The Layman scooped up and threw two handfuls of water on Tan-hsia.

"Don't do that, don't do that!" cried Tan-hsia.

"I have to, I have to!" exclaimed the Layman.

Whereupon Tan-hsia scooped up and threw three handfuls of water on the Layman, saying: "What can you do now?"

"Nothing else," replied the Layman.

"One seldom wins by a fluke,"[21] said Tan-hsia.

21. This is derived from the old Chinese proverb: "To win by a fluke is to fall into a fluke" (and thus to lose by a fluke). Additional examples of this proverb will be found in Hsüeh-tou's Verse, Case 66 of the *Pi-yen lu*, and in dramas of the Yüan dynasty.

"Who lost by a fluke?" returned the Layman.

◆

ONE DAY TAN-HSIA dangled a rosary in his hand. The Layman came up to him and, snatching it away, said: "We two are empty-handed. It's all over, now."

"Jealous old man, you can't tell good from bad," said Tan-hsia.

"I don't really get the point of your remark," said the Layman. "I won't be like this again."

"Moo, moo!" bellowed Tan-hsia.

"How fearsome you are, my teacher!" exclaimed the Layman.

"I still lack a stick," said Tan-hsia.

"I'm old. I can't bear the stick," said the Layman.

"You callous fellow! It's no use to hit you," returned Tan-hsia.

"Still, you haven't a device to guide me," said the Layman.

Tan-hsia gave up concerning the rosary and started out.

"You thief!" cried the Layman. "You'll never come to get it back."

Tan-hsia turned his head and laughed heartily, "Ha, ha!"

"You're defeated, thief!" cried the Layman.

Tan-hsia came up to the Layman and grabbing him said: "You mustn't be so reserved!"

The Layman gave him a slap.

DIALOGUES WITH PO-LING

ONE DAY WHEN PO-LING HO-SHANG[22] and the Layman met on the road, Po-ling asked the Layman: "Have you ever shown anyone

22. Po-ling Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow. This first anecdote appears as Koan 4 in the *Tetteki Tōsui*, a Japanese collection of old koans favored in Sōtō Zen. Cf. the free interpretation in Senzaki and McCandless, p. 23.

the word by which you were helped at Nan-yüeh[23] in former days?"

"Yes, I have shown it," replied the Layman.

"To whom?" asked Po-ling.

"To Mr. P'ang," said the Layman pointing to himself.

"Certainly you are beyond the praise of even Mañjuśrī and Subhūti,"[24] said Po-ling.

"Who is he who knows the word by which you were helped?" asked the Layman.

Po-ling put on his bamboo hat and walked off.

"A good road to you!" called the Layman.

Po-ling did not turn his head.

◆

ONE DAY PO-LING said to the Layman: " 'Whether you can speak or whether you can't, you cannot escape.' Now tell me, what is it you can't escape?"

The Layman winked.

"Outstanding!" exclaimed Po-ling.

"You mistakenly approve me," said the Layman.

"Who doesn't, who doesn't?" returned Po-ling.

"Take care of yourself," said the Layman and went off.

◆

PO-LING WAS SITTING one day in his quarters. As the Layman entered, Po-ling grabbed him and said: "Men of today speak, men of the past spoke: what do you speak?"

The Layman gave Po-ling a slap.

"You can't speak!" cried Po-ling.

"Speak and there will be a fault," replied the Layman.

"Pay me back for the slap," demanded Po-ling.

"Try giving me a slap," said the Layman, approaching.

"Take care of yourself," said Po-ling.

◆

23. A reference to P'ang's realization under Shih-t'ou, who lived on the Nan-yüeh (South Peak) in Hunan.

24. Subhūti: one of the ten chief disciples of the Buddha, said to have been the best exponent of Śūnya, or Emptiness. For Mañjuśrī, see p. 41, fn. 8.

LING-CHAO AND TAN-HSIA

(see page 34)

"As far as this eye is concerned, can it escape men's slander?" the Layman asked Po-ling one day.

"How can it escape?" replied Po-ling.

"I know well, I know well," said the Layman.

"The stick doesn't hit a man who has nothing [further] to do," said Po-ling.

"Hit me, hit me!" cried the Layman, turning his body.

As Po-ling picked up his stick and raised it, the Layman grabbed him, saying: "Let's see you try to escape!"

Po-ling made no reply.

DIALOGUES WITH TA-T'UNG P'U-CHI

The Layman had an interview one day with Ch'an Master Ta-t'ung P'u-chi.[25] Holding up the bamboo basket in his hand, the Layman cried: "Master Ta-t'ung, Master Ta-t'ung!"

P'u-chi made no response.

"When Shih-t'ou's doctrine reached you, ice melted and tiles broke," said the Layman.

"That's obvious without your mentioning it," replied P'u-chi.

Throwing down the basket, the Layman said: "Who'd have thought it isn't worth a single cash!"

"Though it isn't worth a single cash, how can one get along without it?" responded P'u-chi.

The Layman did a dance and left.[26]

"Layman!" called P'u-chi, holding up the basket.

The Layman turned his head. P'u-chi did a dance and left.

"Returning home, returning home!" cried the Layman, clapping his hands.

◆

One day P'u-chi said to the Layman: "As for words, few men from the past to the present have been able to escape [their limitations]. As for you, can you escape them?"

25. Ta-t'ung P'u-chi, of Li-chou, was a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou. Little is known of him. A few additional anecdotes concerning P'u-chi are recorded in the *Wu-teng yen-t'ung* (*chüan* 5, p. 126a–b).

26. This was probably a kind of brief, impromptu dance for joy.

"Yes sir," assented the Layman.

P'u-chi repeated the same question a second time.

"Where have you come from?" inquired the Layman.

P'u-chi again repeated the same question.

"Where have you come from?" asked the Layman.

"Not only present-day men, but the men of old also had this phrase," said P'u-chi.

The Layman did a dance and went out.

"That lunatic of himself makes mistakes," remarked P'u-chi. "Who's to examine him!"

◆

ONE DAY P'U-CHI visited the Layman.

"I recall that when I was in my mother's womb I had a certain word," said the Layman. "I'll show it to you, but you mustn't hold it as a principle."

"You're still separated from life," said P'u-chi.

"I just said you mustn't hold it as a principle," rejoined the Layman.

"How can I not be awed by a word that astounds people?" said P'u-chi.

"Understanding such as yours is enough to astonish people," replied the Layman.

"The very statement 'don't hold it as a principle' has become a principle," said P'u-chi.

"You're separated not only by one or two lives," said the Layman.

"It's all right for you to reprove a rice-gruel[-eating] monk [like me]," returned P'u-chi.

The Layman snapped his fingers three times.

◆

THE LAYMAN WENT to visit P'u-chi one day. When he saw the Layman coming, P'u-chi shut the gate and said: "Wise old gentleman, don't interview me."

"Whose fault is it that you sit alone and talk to yourself?" asked the Layman.

Thereupon P'u-chi opened the gate. Just as he stepped out

he was seized by the Layman, who said: "Are you wise, or am I wise?"

"Leaving aside being wise," returned P'u-chi, "how much difference is there between opening the gate and shutting the gate and revealing and concealing?"

"That very question exasperates me to death," said the Layman.

P'u-chi was silent.

"Bungled it trying to be smart," said the Layman.

DIALOGUE WITH CH'ANG-TZU

THE LAYMAN WENT to visit Ch'an Master Ch'ang-tzu.[27] The Master was about to give a discourse at the time and the entire company of monks was assembled.

Stepping forward the Layman said: "Each one of you would do well to examine himself."

Ch'ang-tzu then addressed the assembly. Meanwhile the Layman stood to the right of the Master's chair.[28]

"Without offending your 'master,' Master," said a monk, "will you please say something?"

"Do you know Mr. P'ang?" asked Ch'ang-tzu.

"No, I don't know him," replied the monk.

"What a pity, what a pity!" cried the Layman seizing the monk firmly.

The monk had no reply. The Layman pushed him away.

A little later Ch'ang-tzu addressed the Layman, saying: "Did that monk get a taste of the stick just now?"

"Better wait until he's willing," replied the Layman.

27. Ch'ang-tzu K'uang, of T'an-chou, was a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou. Several other anecdotes of him are recorded in the *Wu-teng hui-yuan* (*chüan 5*, pp. 17a–18b.), the best known of which is the one of his meeting with Shih-t'ou, upon his return from paying homage to the Sixth Patriarch's tomb in Ts'ao-hsi. See Blyth, Vol. 2, p. 27.

28. This was the position usually occupied by a Ch'an Master's personal attendant.

"You only see the sharpness of the gimlet point," said Ch'ang-tzu. "You don't see the squareness of the chisel blade."

"Such talk is all right for me," replied the Layman, "but if an outsider heard it, it wouldn't do."

"What wouldn't do?" asked Ch'ang-tzu.

"Brother, you only see the squareness of the chisel blade and don't see the sharpness of the gimlet point," replied the Layman.

DIALOGUES WITH SUNG-SHAN

As THE LAYMAN and Sung-shan Ho-shang[29] were drinking tea together, the Layman held up the stand of his teacup and said: "Everyone without exception is endowed with it: why can no one speak?"

"Just because everyone without exception is endowed with it, no one can speak," returned Sung-shan.

"How is it, my elder brother, that you can speak?" asked the Layman.

"I can't help but speak," replied Sung-shan.

"Obviously, obviously," returned the Layman.

Sung-shan then drank some tea.

"Elder brother, you're drinking tea. Why don't you bow to the guest?"

"To whom?" queried Sung-shan.

"To me, P'ang," replied the Layman.

"Why must I bow again?" said Sung-shan.

Later when Tan-hsia heard of this he remarked: "Had it been anyone but Sung-shan, he'd have been completely taken in by that old gent."

The Layman heard of this, and at once had a man take a message to Tan-hsia saying: "Why not catch on before I held up the stand of my teacup!"

◆

ONE DAY AS THE LAYMAN and Sung-shan were looking at a

29. Sung-shan Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow.

ploughing ox, the Layman pointed to the ox and said: "He is always content, but he doesn't yet know of *it*."

"Except for you, Mr. P'ang, who else could know his state!" said Sung-shan.

"Tell me what it is that he still doesn't know of," said the Layman.

"I haven't seen Shih-t'ou, so it's all right I can't tell you," replied Sung-shan.

"Had you seen him, what then?" asked the Layman.

Sung-shan clapped his hands three times.

◆

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN went to visit Sung-shan. Seeing the Master holding a staff, he said: "What's that in your hand?"

"I am aged. Without this I can't take a single step," replied Sung-shan.

"Be that as it may, you still retain your vigor," observed the Layman.

At that Sung-shan hit him.

"Let go the staff in your hand and let me ask you a question," said the Layman.

Sung-shan threw down the staff.

"This old fellow's earlier words don't agree with what he says later," said the Layman.

Sung-shan gave a shout.

"Within [the cry] 'Heavens!' there still is bitterness," remarked the Layman.

◆

AS THE LAYMAN and Sung-shan were walking together one day they saw a group of monks picking greens.

"The yellow leaves are discarded, the green leaves are kept," said Sung-shan.

"How about not falling into green or yellow?" asked the Layman.

"Better you tell me," said Sung-shan.

"For the two of us to be host and guest is most difficult," returned the Layman.

"Yet having come here, you strain to make yourself ruler!" said Sung-shan

"Who doesn't!" retorted the Layman.

"True, true," agreed Sung-shan.

"To speak about 'not falling into green or yellow' is especially difficult," said the Layman.

"But you just did so," returned Sung-shan laughing.

"Take care of yourselves," called the Layman to the group of monks.

"The monks forgive you for your falling into activity," said Sung-shan.

At that the Layman went off.

◆

As SUNG-SHAN and the Layman were talking together one day, Sung-shan suddenly lifted up a ruler from the table, saying: "Do you see this?"

"I see it," replied the Layman.

"See what?" asked Sung-shan

"Sung-shan, Sung-shan!" exclaimed the Layman.

"You mustn't say it," said Sung-shan.

"Why shouldn't I say it?" returned the Layman.

Sung-shan then threw down the ruler.

"To start and not finish infuriates me,"[30] said the Layman.

"Not so," said Sung-shan. "Today it's you who couldn't say it."

"What couldn't I say?" asked the Layman.

"To start and not finish," replied Sung-shan.

"In strength there can be weakness; in weakness there can't be strength," said the Layman.

Sung-shan hugged the Layman. "Old boy, you didn't touch on it at all," he said.

30. Lit., "to have a head and no tail infuriates me."

DIALOGUES WITH PEN-HSI

"WHAT WAS THE MEANING of Tan-hsia's hitting his attendant?" the Layman asked Pen-hsi Ho-shang.[31]

"The family elder sees people's merits and defects,"[32] replied Pen-hsi.

"Because you and I are fellow disciples, I venture to ask," said the Layman.

"If so, tell me from the beginning and I'll consult with you," replied Pen-hsi.

"The family elder shouldn't speak with you about people's rights and wrongs," said the Layman.

"I take your age into consideration," said Pen-hsi.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," apologized the Layman.

◆

ONE DAY PEN-HSI saw the Layman coming. He gazed at him for quite a while. The Layman then drew a circle with his staff. Pen-hsi came forward and stepped into it.

"Thus, or not thus?" asked the Layman.

Pen-hsi then drew a circle in front of the Layman. The Layman likewise stepped into it.

"Thus, or not thus?" asked Pen-hsi.

The Layman threw down his staff and stood still.

"You came with a staff, but you go without a staff," remarked Pen-hsi.

"Luckily it's made perfect," said the Layman. "Don't trouble to watch it."

Pen-hsi clapped his hands, exclaiming: "Wonderful! There's not a thing to be attained!"

31. Pen-hsi Ho-shang was a fellow disciple of Layman P'ang under Ma-tsu, whose Dharma heir he became. Little else is recorded of him beyond the anecdotes that follow.

32. An old Chinese proverb says: "Unless stupid and deaf, one cannot be the family elder." That is, in order to promote harmony the head of a large extended family household should not notice or speak of the shortcomings of the family members. The implication of Pen-hsi's remark is that P'ang is not qualified for the position of family elder.

The Layman picked up his staff and, tapping the ground step by step, went off.

"Watch the road, watch the road!" called Pen-hsi.

◆

PEN-HSI ASKED the Layman: "What was the first word Bodhidharma[33] spoke when he came from the West?"

"Who remembers!" said the Layman.

"You have a poor memory," said Pen-hsi.

"We mustn't speak hit-or-miss about affairs of olden days," said the Layman.

"How about affairs right now?" asked Pen-hsi.

"There's not a word to say," replied the Layman.

"To say that in front of a wise man would be still more brilliant," responded Pen-hsi.

"But you have a great eye," disagreed the Layman.

"Only when it's thus can one speak without a hint,"[34] said Pen-hsi.

"Not a single thing can be put into the eye," said the Layman.

"The sun is just at the zenith: to raise the eyes is difficult," said Pen-hsi.

"The dried skull is bored through,"[35] returned the Layman.

Snapping his fingers, Pen-hsi said: "Who could discern it!"

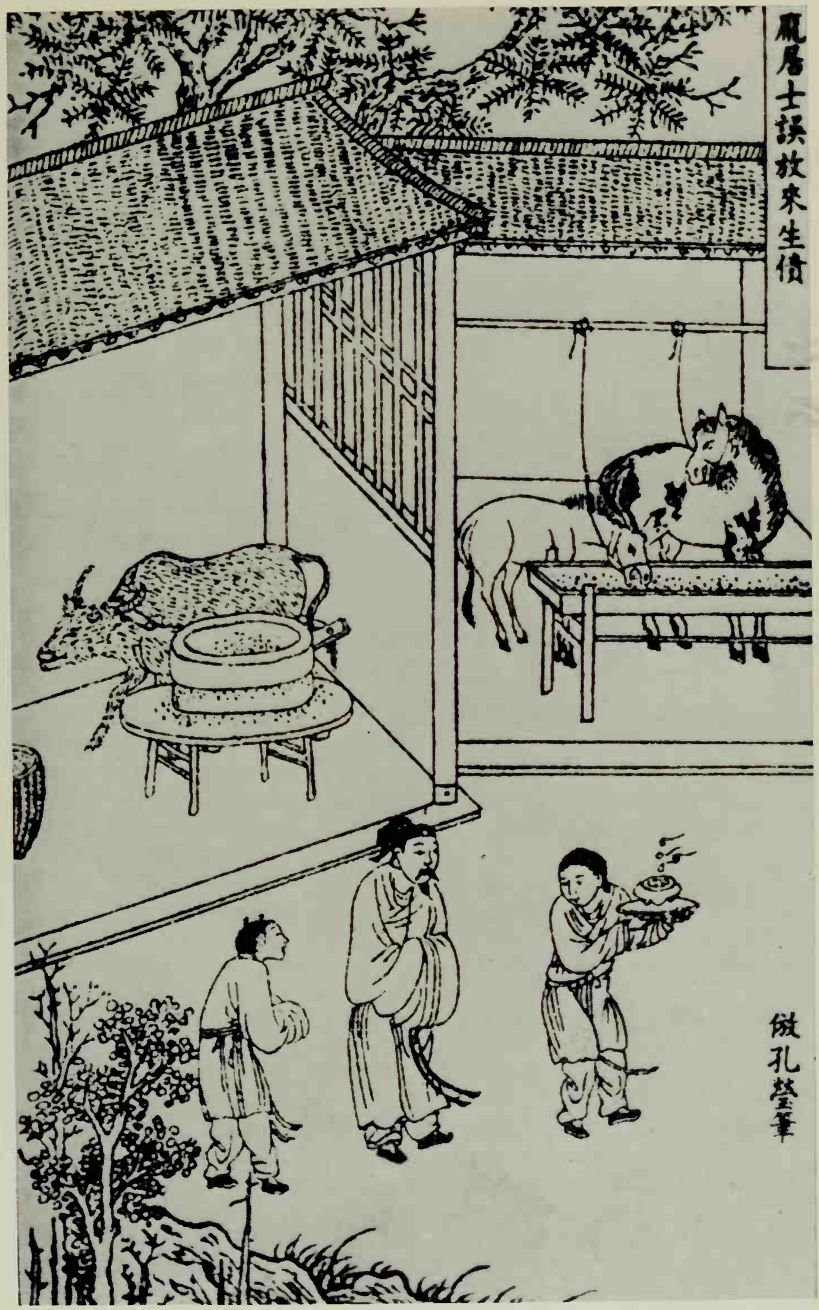
"What an outstanding fellow you are!" exclaimed the Layman.

Pen-hsi returned to his quarters.

33. The Buddhist monk from South India who came to China in 520 and is regarded as the First Patriarch of Ch'an. See Suzuki, *Essays, First Series*, pp. 169–91. See also Miura and Sasaki, pp. 38–40, 147, 236, 237. For Bodhidharma's place in the formation of the patriarchal Ch'an legend, see Yampolsky, pp. 7–10.

34. Lit., "speak without the pupil of the eye."

35. This indicates a condition in which the Ch'an eye is completely eliminated.



LAYMAN P'ANG AND HIS CHILDREN

(see page 34)

DIALOGUE WITH TA-MEI

THE LAYMAN VISITED Ch'an Master Ta-mei.[36] Hardly had they met when he said: "I've long wanted to meet you, Ta-mei. I wonder whether the plum is ripe or not."[37]

"Ripe!" exclaimed Ta-mei. "What part do you want to bite?"

"Dried-fruit confection,"[38] returned the Layman.

"Then give me back the pits," said Ta-mei, stretching out his hand.

The Layman went off.

DIALOGUES WITH TA-YÜ

THE LAYMAN CAME to Ch'an Master Ta-yü's place. Ta-yü[39] made an offering of food and presented it to the Layman. The Layman was about to accept it when Ta-yü withdrew [the food in] his hands, saying: "Long ago Vimalakīrti criticized the acceptance of alms when the mind is stirred.[40] Do you acquiesce in this action [of mine]?"

36. Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang (752–839) was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. See p. 97, n. 8, for further biographical details.

37. A play on words; Ta-mei's name means "Great Plum." Some twelve years had passed since Ta-mei had gone to live on the mountain of that name. See p. 97, n. 9, for the background of and motive for Layman P'ang's visit.

38. *Po-tsa-sui*, lit., "hundred miscellaneous pieces." We do not know what kind of food this was in those days. It might have been a confection of dried fruits with the pits and skins intact. A Chinese friend says that today the term means a thick soup of mutton and various vegetables that is favored by the common people.

39. Ta-yü (746–825) was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. See p. 97, n. 10, for further biographical details.

40. A reference to Chapter 3 of the Vimalakīrti Sutra, where Subbūti tells what happened when he once went to Vimalakīrti's house to beg for food. Vimalakīrti filled his begging-bowl full of food, but then said that Subhūti could have it only if he regarded all food and all things in the same manner. Vimalakīrti then launched into a disconcerting lecture which left Subhūti dumbfounded and wanting only to leave. Finally, Vimalakīrti told Subhūti to take the food and not be upset, because all words are illusory.

"On that occasion wasn't Subhūti an adept?" asked the Layman.

"I'm not concerned with his affair," replied Ta-yü.

"When the food reached [Subhūti's] mouth it was taken away by Vimalakīrti," said the Layman.

Thereupon Ta-yü set down the food.

"There was no need for a single word," remarked the Layman.

◆

THE LAYMAN ALSO ASKED Ta-yü: "Did Great Master Ma[-tsu] bestow on you his sincere doing for others?"

"I've not yet seen him. How should I know of his sincerity!" returned Ta-yü.

"Just such a standpoint as yours can't be sought anywhere," said the Layman.

"You mustn't keep on speaking singlemindedly," said Ta-yü.

"If I keep on speaking singlemindedly, you'll lose the principle. If I double or treble my speaking, can you open your mouth?" asked the Layman.

"This very not being able to open the mouth can be said to be true," returned Ta-yü.

The Layman clapped his hands and departed.

DIALOGUES WITH TSE-CH'UAN

WHEN THE LAYMAN met Tse-ch'uan Ho-shang,[41] Tse-ch'uan said: "Do you still remember the doctrine of when you saw Shih-t'ou?"

"What! you mean to bring that up to me now?" rejoined the Layman.

"I'm well aware that long-continued Ch'an study tends to make one slack," said Tse-ch'uan.

"You're even more decrepit than I," retorted the Layman.

"We two are contemporaries; there's little difference between us," said Tse-ch'uan.

41. Tse-ch'uan Ho-shang, a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow.

"I'm even healthier than you," said the Layman.

"It's not that you're healthier, but that I lack your cap," observed Tse-ch'uan.

The Layman took off his cap. "Now I'm just like you," he said.

Tse-ch'uan just laughed heartily.

◆

ONE DAY AS TSE-CH'UAN was picking tea, the Layman said: "The Dharmadhātu[42] doesn't contain a person. Do you see me?"

"Anyone but I would reply to your remark," returned Tse-ch'uan.

"Where there's a question there's an answer—that's just a commonplace," said the Layman.

Tse-ch'uan went on picking tea and paid no attention.

"Don't take offense at my casually asking a question just now," said the Layman.

Tse-ch'uan still paid no attention.

The Layman shouted, and then said: "You bad-mannered old man! Just wait till I bring this to the attention of clear-eyed men one by one!"

Tse-ch'uan discarded his tea basket and returned to his quarters.

◆

As TSE-CH'UAN was sitting in his quarters one day, the Layman saw him and said: "You only know how to sit erect in your quarters; you're not aware when a monk comes for an interview."

Tse-ch'uan dropped one leg down.

The Layman went out two or three steps, and then turned back.

Tse-ch'uan drew his leg back up.

"You're a man of complete flexibility!" the Layman exclaimed.

"But I'm the host," returned Tse-ch'uan.

"You only know there's a host, you don't know there's a guest," retorted the Layman.

42. The unifying underlying spiritual reality regarded as the ground or cause of all things; the absolute from which all proceeds.

Tse-ch'uan called his attendant and had him make tea.

The Layman did a dance and went out.

DIALOGUE WITH LO-P'U

THE LAYMAN WENT to Ch'an Master Lo-p'u.[43] When he had risen from saluting [Lo-p'u], he said: "In mid-summer it's killing heat, in early winter freezing cold."

"Don't be mistaken," rejoined Lo-p'u.

"I'm old," said the Layman.

"Why not say 'cold' when it's cold, and 'hot' when it's hot," said Lo-p'u.

"What's the good of catching deafness?" asked the Layman.

"I'll forgive you twenty blows," said Lo-p'u.

"You've made my mouth dumb; I've made your eyes blind," returned the Layman.[44]

DIALOGUES WITH SHIN-LIN

WHEN SHIH-LIN HO-SHANG[45] saw the Layman coming he raised up his whisk and said: "Without falling into Tan-hsia's [manner of] activity, try saying something."

The Layman snatched away the whisk and held up his own fist.

"That is precisely Tan-hsia's activity," said Shih-lin.

"Try not falling into it for me," returned the Layman.

43. Nothing is known of him. Whoever he was, he lived earlier than the Lo-p'u Yüan-an (834–98) who served as an attendant of Lin-chi I-hsüan (d. 866) and became the Dharma heir of Chia-shan Shan-hui (805–81).

44. By speaking of old age, deafness, dumbness, and blindness, P'ang reveals a state beyond intellect and the senses. Cf. Case 88 of the *Pi-yen lu* in Suzuki, *Manual*, pp. 120–27.

45. Shin-lin Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him beyond the anecdotes that follow.

"Tan-hsia caught dumbness; Mr. P'ang caught deafness," rejoined Shih-lin.

"Exactly!" said the Layman.

Shih-lin said nothing.

"What I said was said casually," remarked the Layman.

◆

ONE DAY SHIH-LIN said to the Layman: "I have a question I'd like to ask. Don't spare your words."

"Please go on," said the Layman.

"How you do spare words!" exclaimed Shih-lin.

"Unwittingly by this discussion we've fallen into a snare [of words]," said the Layman.

Shih-lin covered his ears.

"You adept, you adept!" cried the Layman.

◆

SHIH-LIN WAS HIMSELF serving tea to the Layman one day. The Layman was about to accept the tea when Shih-lin drew back and said: "How now?"

"I've a mouth but can't speak," replied the Layman.

"That's how you should be," said Shih-lin.

"How absurd!" exclaimed the Layman and, swinging his sleeves [as he turned], started out.

"Now I see through you, elder P'ang," said Shih-lin.

The Layman turned back.

"How absurd!" exclaimed Shih-lin.

The Layman said nothing.

"You should be capable of being wordless, too," remarked Shih-lin.

DIALOGUE WITH YANG-SHAN

When the Layman visited Ch'an Master Yang-shan,[46] he said: "I have long wanted to meet you, Yang-shan. Now that I have arrived here, why are you facing downwards?"[47]

Yang-shan raised up his whisk.

"Exactly!" exclaimed the Layman.

"Is this [whisk] pointing upwards or downwards?" asked Yang-shan.

The Layman struck an open-air post. "Though there's no one else [here] but us, I want to have this post testify," he said.

Throwing away his whisk, Yang-shan said: "Wherever you go, you may show this [testimony] as you please."

DIALOGUE WITH THE HERMIT KU-YIN

The Layman visited the hermit Ku-yin.[48] "Who are you?" asked Ku-yin.

The Layman raised his staff.

"Isn't that the highest activity?" asked Ku-yin

The Layman threw down his staff. Ku-yin said nothing.

"You only know the highest activity; you're unaware of the highest matter," said the Layman.

"What is the highest matter?" asked Ku-yin.

46. Yang-shan Hui-chi (807–83) was a Dharma heir of Kuei-shan Ling-yu (771–853) and co-founder with him of the Kuei-yang school of Ch'an. Several biographies of Yang-shan contain this anecdote with Layman P'ang. But if August 3, 808, is taken as the date of P'ang's death, Yang-shan would have been only an infant at the time of their supposed meeting instead of the mature Ch'an teacher he is here. See p. 98, n. 11 for further biographical details.

47. A play on words; Yang-shan's name means "Looking-Upward Mountain."

48. *Tao-che*, here translated as "hermit," can mean a Taoist as well as a Ch'an man. In the third line of the verse concluding this anecdote, P'ang refers to him as "Ch'an elder," so it would seem he had done some Ch'an practice. Nothing else is recorded of him.

The Layman picked up his staff.

"Don't be so crude," said Ku-yin.

"What a pity you strain to make yourself ruler," returned the Layman.

"A man of uniform activity has no need to pick up a mallet or raise a whisk; nor does he use wordy replies," said Ku-yin. "If you were to meet him, what should you do?"

"Where would I meet him?" inquired the Layman.

Ku-yin grabbed hold of him.

"Is that what you'd do?" said the Layman, and spat right into his face.

Ku-yin said nothing.

The Layman offered this verse:

You lowered your hook into flaming water where
there's no fish,
And nowhere to look for one either—I'm laughing
at your chagrin.
Ku-yin, the Ch'an elder Tzu, how pitiable you are;
You've been spat on, and now are ashamed to look
at me.

LAYMAN P'ANG READS A SUTRA

THE LAYMAN WAS once lying on his couch reading a sutra. A monk saw him and said: "Layman! You must maintain dignity when reading a sutra."

The Layman raised up one leg.

The monk had nothing to say.

THE LAYMAN MEETS A MENDICANT

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN was in the market place of Hung-chou selling baskets. Seeing a monk begging alms, he took out a cash and said: "Can you tell me how to appreciate alms? If you can, then I'll give you this."

The monk had nothing to say.

"You ask me," said the Layman, "and I'll tell you."

"What is it to appreciate alms?" asked the monk.

"Man seldom hears it," said the Layman. "Do you understand?" he added.

"I don't understand," said the monk.

"Who is the one who doesn't understand?" asked the Layman.

THE LAYMAN MEETS A HERDBOY

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN saw a herdboy. "Where does the road go?" he asked.

"I don't even know the road," replied the herdboy.

"You cattle-watcher!" exclaimed the Layman.

"You beast!" retorted the herdboy.

"What's the time today?" asked the Layman.

"Time for planting rice," replied the herdboy.

The Layman laughed heartily.

THE LAYMAN AND THE LECTURE-MASTER

THE LAYMAN WAS VISITING a lecture-mart,[49] listening to a discourse on the Diamond Sutra. When the "no self, no person" line was reached,[50] he asked: "Lecture-master, since there is no self and no person, who is he who's lecturing, who is he who's listening?"

49. *Chiang-ssu*, a place where Buddhist monks other than those of the Ch'an and Vinaya sects discoursed on the meaning of the sutras to the general public. Such professional lecturers supported themselves by contributions received from the audience.

50. The line in question is probably that in section 23 of Kumārajīva's Chinese translation of the *Vajracchedikā-prajñā-paramitā-sūtra*, commonly called the Diamond Sutra: "Furthermore, Subhūti, this Dharma, being universally the same, has no high or low—this is called Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. Because of [having] no self, no person, no sentient being, and no life when cultivating all good practices, Supreme Perfect Enlightenment is attained."

LAYMAN P'ANG AND HIS DAUGHTER

(see page 34)

The lecture-master had no reply.

"Though I'm just a commoner," said the Layman, "I know a little about faith."

"What is your idea?" inquired the lecture-master.

The Layman replied with a verse:

> There's no self and no person,
> How then kinfolk and stranger!
> I beg you, cease going from lecture to lecture;
> It's better to seek truth directly.
> The nature of Diamond Wisdom
> Excludes even a speck of dust.
> From "Thus have I heard" to "This I believe,"[51]
> All's but an array of unreal names.

When the lecture-master heard this verse, he sighed with admiration.

Wherever the Layman dwelt there was much coming and going of venerable priests, and many exchanges of questions. According to the capacity of each the Layman responded as an echo to a sound. He was not a man to be categorized by any rule or measure.

MRS. P'ANG AT THE TEMPLE

ONE DAY MRS. P'ANG went into the Deer Gate Temple to make an offering of food. The temple priest asked her the purpose [of the offering] in order to transfer the merit.[52] Mrs. P'ang took her comb and stuck it in the back of her hair. "Transference of merit is completed," she said, and walked out.

51. Set phrases that mark respectively the beginning and end of Buddhist sutras.

52. It was customary for a temple priest to write on a slip of paper the donor's name, the gift and its purpose, and the date. This would then be displayed in public so that the donor's merit would become known to others, i.e., "transferred."

THE LAYMAN AND HIS DAUGHTER

THE LAYMAN WAS SITTING in his thatched cottage one day. "Difficult, difficult, difficult," he suddenly exclaimed, "[like trying] to scatter ten measures of sesame seed all over a tree!"

"Easy, easy, easy," returned Mrs. P'ang, "just like touching your feet to the ground when you get out of bed."

"Neither difficult nor easy," said Ling-chao. "On the hundred grass-tips, the Patriarchs' meaning."

◆

DURING THE YÜAN-HO ERA [806–20] the Layman traveled northward to Hsiang-han, stopping here and there. His daughter Ling-chao sold bamboo baskets for their morning and evening meals. The Layman had these [three] verses, which say:

When the mind's as is, circumstances also are as is;
There's no real and also no unreal.
Giving no heed to existence,
And holding not to non-existence—
You're neither saint nor sage, just
An ordinary man who has settled his affairs.

Easy, so easy!
These very five skandhas make true wisdom.[53]
The ten directions of the universe are the same One Vehicle.
How can the formless Dharmakāya be two!
If you cast off the passions to enter Bodhi,[54]
Where will any Buddha-lands be?

53. Five skandhas or aggregates of a sentient being: 1. *rūpa*, form, matter; 2. *vedanā*, reception, feeling; 3. *saṁjña*, conception; 4 *saṁskāra*, volition, predispositions; 5. *vijñāna*, discriminating consciousness. The term "true wisdom" means seeing things as they really are.

54. The passions (Skt. *kleśa*) are greed, anger, and folly. "Bodhi" (Skt. *bodhi*) means enlightenment; the illuminated or enlightened mind. That the very passions are enlightenment is a T'ien-t'ai teaching which is said to be the highest expression of Mahāyāna thought.

To preserve your life you must destroy it;
Having completely destroyed it you dwell at ease.
When you attain the inmost meaning of this,
An iron boat floats upon water.

◆

As THE LAYMAN was sitting one day he questioned Ling-chao, saying: "A man of old said: 'Bright, bright, the hundred grass-tips; bright, bright, the Patriarchs' meaning.' How do you understand this?"

"What a thing for you to say in your ripe old age," admonished Ling-chao.

"Well, what would you say?" asked the Layman.

"Bright, bright, the hundred grass-tips; bright, bright, the Patriarchs' meaning," replied Ling-chao.

The Layman laughed.

◆

THE LAYMAN WAS ONCE selling bamboo baskets. Coming down off a bridge he stumbled and fell. When Ling-chao saw this she ran to her father's side and threw herself down.

"What are you doing!" cried the Layman.

"I saw Papa fall to the ground, so I'm helping," replied Ling-chao.

"Luckily no one was looking," remarked the Layman.

LAYMAN P'ANG'S DEATH

THE LAYMAN WAS about to die. He spoke to Ling-chao, saying: "See how high the sun is and report to me when it's noon."

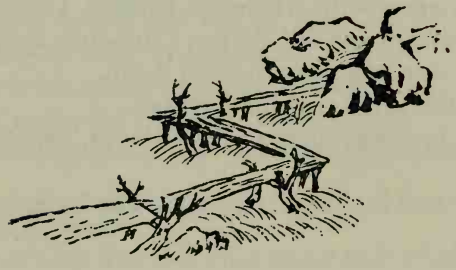
Ling-chao quickly reported: "The sun has already reached the zenith, and there's an eclipse." While the Layman went to the door to look out, Ling-chao seated herself in her father's chair and, putting her palms together reverently, passed away.

The Layman smiled and said: "My daughter has anticipated me."

He postponed [his going] for seven days.

The Prefect Yü Ti came to inquire about his illness. The Layman said to him: "I beg you just to regard as empty all that is existent and to beware of taking as real all that is non-existent. Fare you well in the world. All is like shadows and echoes." His words ended. He pillowed his head on Mr. Yü's knee and died.

His final request was that he be cremated and [the ashes] scattered over rivers and lakes. Monks and laity mourned him and said that the Ch'an adherent Layman P'ang was indeed a Vimalakīrti. He left three hundred poems to the world.



SELECTED VERSES[1]

1

Of a hut in the fields the elder,
I'm the poorest man on earth!
Inside the house there's not one thing;
When I open my mouth it says "empty, empty."
In the past I had bad friends—
I saved them all, made them priests;
Sitting together in harmony,
I always have them hear of the Mahāyāna.
At mealtimes carrying bowls for them,
I serve them one and all.

1. The twenty-five selections that follow are representative of the style, content, and variety of P'ang's best. Their sources are as follows: Verses 1–3, from *chüan* 2 and Verses 4–21 from *chüan* 3 of *The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang;* Verses 22–25 are from the section on Layman P'ang in the *Chodang chip* (*chüan* 15, pp. 105–6).

2

People have a one-scroll sutra
Without form and without name.
No man is able to unroll and read it,
And none of us can hear it.
When you are able to unroll and read it,
You enter the principle and accord with the Birthless.
Not to speak of becoming a bodhisattva,
You don't even need to become Buddha.

3

I've long dwelled in the mountains,
Having left the castle town.
My thatch house had three rooms—
Each room was twelve feet long.
In one room lived Skandhas Five,
In another lived Dusts Six-Four [Elements];[2]
I myself lived in the innermost room,
At ease all day with nothing to do.
Last night on the moonless twenty-fifth,[3]
At dusk those two got drunk drinking liquor
And started to get out of hand.
They quibbled words in various ways
Till I couldn't take any more—
So I set my house on fire.
Skandhas Five turned to ashes and embers;
Of Dusts Six, not two or one was left.
Everything I had was completely lost—
Only the bare ground remained.

2. The five skandhas and six senses are personified in these two lines. The six senses are sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and perception. The "four" inserted after Dusts Six may simply have been added to fill out the number of characters in the line, or it may refer to the four elements, which are earth, water, fire, and air.

3. The twenty-fifth day of the lunar calendar.

Now I am stark naked,
Without clothes to cover my body.
I'm no longer troubled by thieves—
Loafing, I sleep at ease. . . .[4]

4

White-robed, I don't adhere to appearances;
The true principle arises from Emptiness.
Because my mind's without obstruction
Wisdom goes forth to all directions.
I only consider the lion's roar—
I don't let wild jackals yap!
Bodhi is said to be most marvelous,
But I scold it for being a false name.

5

Some people despise old P'ang,
But old P'ang does not despise them.
Opening my gate, I await good friends,
But good friends do not stop by.
As is my mind's endowed with the threefold learning—[5]
Consciousness-dusts do not mix with it;[6]
This one pill cures the ten thousand ills—
I've no need for the many prescriptions.

6

Traveling the path is easy,
Traveling the path is easy!
Within, without, and in between I depend upon innate Wisdom:
Innate Wisdom being non-sentient, the dharmas are not born;

4. I have omitted the two lines that follow and conclude this verse. Their meaning is not clear, and the verse seems better without them.

5. Threefold learning: observing precepts (morality), meditation, and wisdom.

Birthless, I enter the true Principle.
Not form, not mind, a single radiance streams forth;
In the mind-ground appears the Udumbara tree[7] of Emptiness.

7

It is called Wisdom,
And Wisdom is the honored.
Mind and Wisdom interfusing, you penetrate the Origin,
And the ten thousand things likewise return into the Gate of Non-duality.
Existence is not existence—the Principle is always present;
Nothingness is not nothingness—Nothingness is the root of existence.
All Buddhas of the future also will be thus;
Those of today are the same as the ancient World-honored Ones.
Throughout the three realms[8] there is no other Way;
What Buddha imparted to Buddha is being transmitted today.

8

Without no other, within no self.
Not wielding spear and shield, I accord with Buddha-wisdom.
Well-versed in the Buddha-way, I go the non-Way.[9]
Without abandoning my ordinary man's affairs,
The conditioned[10] and name-and-form all are flowers in the sky.
Nameless and formless, I leave birth-and-death.

6. Consciousness-dusts: the cognitions of the six senses.
7. Udumbara tree: a legendary tree said to flower once every three thousand years.
8. The three realms of desire, form, and formlessness.
9. A reference to Chapter 8 of the Vimalakīrti Sutra, where Vimalakīrti says to Mañjuśrī: "When a bodhisattva goes the non-Way, this is called being well-versed in the Buddha-way."
10. Skt. *saṁskṛta*: that which is formed through causes and always produces effects; also, whatever is produced, continues, changes, and is destroyed.

PORTRAIT OF LING-CHAO

(see page 35)

9

I have a great robe
Not of this world's silk.
It can't be dyed by any color,
Being crystalline, like white floss.
No scissors were used to cut it,
No thread was used to stitch it.
I keep it always close about me,
But there's no man who of himself has seen it.
It shelters a Trichilial Cosmos[11] from heat and cold,
Covering over sentient and non-sentient alike.
Should you be able to obtain this great robe,
Having donned it, you straightaway enter the palace
of the King of Emptiness.

10

Thinking, thinking, with bowed head thinking,
thinking and unconsciously sighing,
Both his eyebrows turn toward that Surpassing Land;
He sits among the ten thousand things,
Knowing nothing at all.
If his six consciousnesses resemble his eyebrows,[12]
He will attain the miraculous.
If his six consciousnesses despise his eyebrows,
He can be said to be a brainless fool.
If he discards his eyebrows,
He'll be scorned by men of the world.
Even though he be a crafty six-consciousness fellow,
In the end he'll become just a beggar.

11. A thousand to the third power, i.e., a billion worlds, which are said to constitute the domain of a Buddha.

12. The word "eyebrows" from here on apparently means one's original nature.

11

Going out of the room,
Coming into the room,
Coming and going, coming and going—therefore your weeping!
Coming and going was due only to greed, anger, and folly.
Now that you've realized, you should be content.
Being content, you should penetrate the Source,
And discard your former false teachers.
Those false teachers—
Make them your handmen!
Dharma-almsgiving has no before or after;[13]
Together you preserve the Birthless Land.

12

Without any cause you lose your mind,
And run out the front gate seeking [it].
Although you try to question old friends,
All's quiet, without any trace [of them].
But returning to the hall, when you carefully consider it,
Transforming sentient beings, [in] accord with tranquility,
You cannot go outside and seek friends;
Of yourself, amidst your family, you enter Nirvāna.

13

A resolute man
In the past,
But not today,[14]
I destroyed my treasures utterly,

13. A reference to Chapter 4 of the Vimalakīrti Sutra, where Vimalakīrti says to Rāhula: "The assembly for Dharma-almsgiving has no before or after: to reverently serve all sentient beings at once and for always—that is called 'the assembly for Dharma-almsgiving.' "

14. As the concluding lines of this verse indicate, he no longer has any need to be resolute.

And ransomed back my bunch of slaves—
Six in number, male and female,
Each one having six mouths.
The double six—the thirty-six—[15]
Always follow me fore and after.
I do not bind them, and
They do not venture to dash away.

14

If it's said that Bodhi is difficult,
Bodhi is also not difficult.
Wanting little and knowing content, the least is ample.
Forever free from wealth and lust, the spirit of itself is at ease.
I clearly perceive the Three Roads' pain,[16]
And am not concerned with worldly fame.

15

Difficult, so difficult!
Trying intentionally to get free of desire, you covet Nirvāna.
You just seek the Pure Land everywhere else.
If it's a question of true practice, you're not concerned with it.
Uselessly striving, your coming and going is painful,
Until at last you empty forms and return [home].

Easy, so easy![17]
These very five skandhas make true Wisdom.
The ten directions of the universe are the same One Vehicle.
How can the formless Dharmakāya be two!

15. The meaning of this line both here and in Verse 16 below is not clear. The "double six" may mean the six sense-organs and the six senses. The "thirty-six" may refer to a group of thirty-six physical and mental components that are said to constitute a person.

16. The three mires, or roads, that lead respectively to the hell of fire; the hell of blood, where beasts devour each other; and the asipattra hell of swords, where the leaves and grasses are sharp-edged swords.

17. This part of the verse also appears above, p. 74.

If you cast off the passions to enter Bodhi,
Where will any Buddha-lands be?

16

Precisely in the middle is Mind, the King.
As is the six roots are bright.
The six dusts are empty,
The six consciousnesses pure,
And the double six—the thirty-six—
Alike return to the Great Perfect Mirror.[18]

17

Ānanda took the pattra leaves[19]
Kept these many thousand kalpas
Within the Seven-treasure Storehouse and handed
them down to Kāśyapa,[20]
Who arranged them into Twelve Divisions
And divided them into the Three Vehicle Dharma.

18

Not old and not new,
It transforms through causal conditions into
ten thousand million bodies.
When you have the absolute Unity,
A hundred million is like a wad of dust.

18. One of the Four Wisdoms. See Miura and Sasaki, pp. 313–14.
19. The palmyra, or fan-palm, whose leaves were used for writing.
20. Mahā-kāśyapa and Ānanda were among the Buddha's ten chief disciples. Ānanda was reputed to be the best among them at hearing and remembering the Buddha's discourses. He is here represented as transmitting the Buddhist Tripiṭaka to Kāśyapa, who was in charge of the collection and codification of the scriptures at the First Buddhist Council after the Buddha's death.

19

From the Storehouse appeared a pearl,
Gloriously brilliant and radiantly gleaming.
Who in the past fled and became a beggar—
Today returns home, a rich man's son.[21]

20

Mind depends upon true Wisdom,
The Principle pursues activity of mind;
With Principle and Wisdom unhindered
The mind is birthless.
Deluded, there is self;
Enlightened, there is no-sentience.
With great Wisdom penetrated,
All the dharmas do not arise,
The five skandhas are masterless,
The six lands are in repose,
The seven deaths are not encountered,
The eight mirrors are completely bright,
And excellent transformations fittingly occur
In accord with the Buddha's words.

21

The past is already past—
Don't try to regain it.
The present does not stay—
Don't try to touch it from moment to moment.
The future is not come—
Don't think about it beforehand.

21. The last two lines refer to the well-known parable in Chapter 4 of the Lotus Sutra about the rich man's son who forgetfully wanders away into poverty and only after many hardships returns home and receives his inheritance. See the translation by Kern, pp. 99–106. Cf. Leggett, p. 83.

With the three times non-existent,
Mind is the same as Buddha-mind.
To silently function relying on Emptiness—
This is profundity of action.
Not the least dharma exists—
Whatsoever comes to eye leave it be.
There are no commandments to be kept,
There is no filth to be cleansed.
With empty mind really penetrated,
The dharmas have no life.[22]
When you can be like this
You've completed the ultimate attainment.

22

Reading the sutras, you must understand their meaning;
Understanding their meaning, you can practice.
When you depend upon the meaning of the teachings
You enter the Palace of Nirvāna.
When you don't understand their meaning,
With your myriad views you're worse than blind:
Congenial writings largely occupying your [mind-]ground,
The mind-ox won't consent to cultivate it;
Fields all over are covered with grass—
Where then can the rice-plants grow?

23

No-greed surpasses charity,
No-folly surpasses seated meditation,
No-anger surpasses morality,

22. A quotation from Chapter 3 of the Vimalakīrti Sutra, where Vimalakīrti says to Mahāmaudgalyāyana: "In Dharma-teaching you should teach the dharmas as is. The dharmas have no sentient being, because they are free from the defilement of sentient being. The dharmas have no self, because they are free from the defilement of self. *The dharmas have no life*, because they are free from birth-and-death. The dharmas have no person, because the periods of before and after are cut off."

No-thought surpasses seeking relationships.[23]
I manifest all an ordinary man's affairs,
And at night I sleep at ease.
In winter I turn to the fireplace—
The fire that's basically smokeless.
I neither fear the demoness Blackness[24]
Nor seek her sister Charity.
Trust in fate produces expedients;
All [ride] together in the Prajña-boat.[25]
If you can understand like this,
Your merit is truly boundless.

24

Not wanting to discard greed and anger,
In vain you trouble to read Buddha's teachings.
You see the prescription, but don't take the medicine—
How then can you do away with your illness!
Grasp emptiness, and emptiness is form;
Grasp form, and form is impermanent.
Emptiness and form are not mine—
Sitting erect, I see my native home.

25

When the mind's as is,
The spirit of itself is empty.
Without applying medicine,
Ills remove themselves.
With ills removed,
You naturally see the lotus-flower *mani*-jewel.[26]
Don't trouble over affairs,
Don't bustle around!

23. Seeking relationships: seeking good teachers or circumstances.
24. A legendary woman mentioned in the Nirvāna Sutra who brings calamities to men. Her elder sister, named Charity, is benevolent.
25. Skt. *prajña*: transcendent wisdom, here likened to a ferryboat.
26. Skt. *cintāmani*: a fabulous gem, or pearl, that grants every wish.

The wise man, perceiving wealth and lust,
Knows them to be empty illusion;
Food and clothes sustain body and life—
I advise you to learn being as is.
When it's time, I move my hermitage and go,
And there's nothing to be left behind.

WORDS OF PRAISE FROM LATER GENERATIONS AND TWO KOANS[1]

VERSE BY PRIME MINISTER CHANG T'IEN-CHÜEH (1043–1121)

I prefer to die of hunger and cold by the roadside,
I don't need the pity of the God of the Soil.
He sank a boat-load of treasure in the waters of the Hsiang;
Why should I envy [anyone's having] more than one string
of a hundred cash?

1. This section of six verses and two koans is found at the end of *chüan* 3 of *The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang*. It is typical of the type of verse appreciation which Ch'an men of later times appended to the biographical records of their most distinguished predecessors. The first koan is taken from the anecdote on p. 47; the second koan, except for a few minor changes, is the same as the anecdote on p. 70. A *kōan* (Ch. *kung-an*) is a subject that consists of words or an activity demonstrating the Zen principle. As such, the anecdotes of Layman P'ang would furnish numerous additional koans. For a discussion of the koan and its use in China and Japan up to the present day, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 3–76.

VERSE BY CH'AN MASTER FO-JIH TA-HUI OF CHING-SHAN (1098–1163)[2]

The Birthless is basically wordless;
To speak is to fall into words.
Kindred gather in a happy family circle;
A tiger watches the water-mill turn.

KOAN: SWALLOW THE RIVER

Listen!

"Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?" the Layman asked Great Master Ma-tsu.

"Wait till you've swallowed in one swig all the water of the West River, then I'll tell you," replied the Master.

VERSE BY TUNG-LIN KUEI-LAO

The great sea's waves are shallow,
The small man's heart is deep.
When the sea dries up, the bottom becomes visible, but
When a man dies, who can fathom his heart?[3]

VERSE BY CH'AN MASTER YÜN-MEN KAO-KUNG

To swallow in one swig all the water of West River!
One, two, three, four, seven, five, six!
Tut, tut, tut;[4]
Tra, tra, la!

2. For a detailed biography of this great Ch'an Master, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 163–65.

3. These last two lines are taken from a poem by Tu Hsün-ho of the Late T'ang dynasty.

4. Tut: a sound expressing disapproval. The following line expresses a carefree singsong voice.

VERSE BY PO-YÜN TUAN HO-SHANG (1025-72)

To swallow in one swig all the water of West River!
In ten thousand pasts and a thousand presents there's
not a single drop.
One must relate to the Principle, not one's kin.
Too bad Ma-tsu's mouth was so tight!

KOAN: FACING DOWNWARDS

Listen!

The Layman said to Yang-shan: "I have long wanted to meet you, Yang-shan. Now that I have arrived here why are you facing downwards?"

Yang-shan raised up his whisk.

"Exactly!" exclaimed the Layman.

"Is this [whisk] pointing upwards or downwards?" asked Yang-shan.

Striking an open-air post once, the Layman said: "Though there's no one else but us who sees, the post will testify for me."

Yang-shan threw away his whisk, saying: "You may show this wherever you please."

VERSE BY PO-YÜN TUAN HO-SHANG

A couple of eight cash makes sixteen;
Counting them one by one, they still won't suffice.
But taking and throwing them hit-or-miss in the courtyard,
All the ground will be dotted with the green of spring mosses.

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

The following are longer notes of a background nature, generally biographical, to supplement shorter footnotes in the main text.

1. [*Ref., p. 40, fn. 4*] The following entries in two gazetteers of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644–1912) indicate the interest in Layman P'ang still remaining at a later date:

"The Mr. P'ang Temple 龐公寺, south of the capital city [of Ch'ing-ch'üan district 清泉縣], was the house of Layman P'ang Yün. It was originally called Wu-sheng-an 無生菴 (Hermitage of Birthlessness)."—*Heng-chou fu-chih, chüan* 28, p. 7a; 1763

"Neng-jen Temple 能仁寺 is south of the capital city [of Heng-yang district 衡陽縣]. At the beginning of the Chen-yüan era [785–804] of the reign of the emperor Te-tsung 德宗 of T'ang, P'ang Yün of Heng-yang gave his dwelling for a temple. Later it was called Wu-sheng-an. Its present name is the P'ang-kung-ssu 龐公祠 (Mr. Pang Shrine). Inside is the dressing-stand of P'ang's daughter Ling-chao. A pomegranate tree flowers in winter. This shrine still works miracles."—*Heng-yang hsien-chih, chüan* 9, p. 20b; 1872

2. [*Ref., p. 40, fn. 6*] Two accounts that suggest P'ang's motive in sinking his fortune: "Someone asked the Layman: 'Why didn't you give it away or build a temple with it?' The Layman replied: 'Since the beginningless past due to my being led by cause and effect [of gaining wealth], I was unable to attain emanicipation. My life from now on will be tranquil as is.' "—*Shih-shih t'ung-chien, chüan* 9, p. 473d

"[People of] the world, upbraiding avaricious men, invariably said: 'You really are a Layman P'ang!' This was because of a

legend to the effect that the riches of the Layman's house being myriad, he worried himself about them [like a miser. Later on he had a change of heart, however,] and so he thought to himself: 'If I give my treasures away to others, I fear they will become just like me. It is better to put them in the country of nothingness.' Therefore he threw them into the great ocean, and with his household cultivated the Way, to which they all attained."—*Cho-keng lu, chüan* 19, p. 3a–b

3. [*Ref., p. 41, fn. 10*] Yü Ti (*d.* 818) had a distinguished military career. He served ably as governor of Hu-chou 湖州 from 791 to March, 793. Transferred to be governor of Su-chou 蘇州, Yü Ti won a reputation for his administrative abilities, but his rule was arbitrary and his misdeeds were numerous. Only through the favor of Emperor Te-tsung (r. 780–804) did he escape impeachment. From October, 798, he served ten years as Prefect (governor) of Hsiang-chou 襄州, entrusted with the duties of Commissioner-General (military governor) of the East of Shan-nan district (Shan-nan-tung-tao chieh-tu-shih 山南東道節度使). For a description of his rule during this period, his persecution of Buddhist monks, and his conversion by one of them, see pp. 22–23. In 799, when the governor Wu Shao-ch'eng 吳少誠 of the neighboring province of Ts'ai-chou 蔡州 revolted, Yü Ti attacked him and captured two of his territories; although Wu was not finally defeated until 809, Yü Ti by this partial victory performed a valuable service for the emperor.

Thereafter, Yü Ti's insolence increased. He also levied special taxes on the people to pay for the expensive presents he sent Emperor Hsien-tsung (r. 806–20) in hopes of promotion to court rank. Late in 807, Yü Ti visited Ch'ang-an, and in May, 808, his son Yü Chi-yu was married to Princess Yung-ch'ang, who was the eldest of the emperor's eighteen daughters. In October, 808, he received the coveted promotion to cabinet minister and went to live in Ch'ang-an. This and various other honorary titles awarded him pleased Yü Ti, but gave him little real power. From this time on, he seems to have mellowed somewhat. After 813 he fell from favor and was demoted to be tutor of one of the imperial princes. Yü Ti retired in the spring of 818

and died later in that year. (For further details of Yü Ti see Feifel, pp. 58–60, 195–200.)

4. [*Ref., p. 45, fn. 2*] Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien (700–90) gained his great renown as a Ch'an master in the region south of Tung-t'ing Lake that is present Hunan. As a child, he is said to have been exceptionally intelligent. He visited the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng (638–713) when twelve or thirteen years old. In 742 he went to live on the Nan-yüeh (South Peak), very near Heng-yang, where Layman P'ang presumably was living. P'ang visited Shih-t'ou in 785 and Ma-tsu in 786 according to the *Fo-tsu kang-mu* (*chüan* 32, pp. 253c, 254a).

For additional details of Shih-t'ou's life and teaching, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 185, 300–2. For some anecdotes of him, see Blyth, Vol. 2, pp. 20–21; and pp. 146–51 for a translation of his famous poem "Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i." See also Suzuki, *Manual*, pp. 104–7.

5. [*Ref., p. 47, fn. 6*] Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–88) was a native of Han-chou 漢州 in present Szechwan. His family name, Ma, means "horse." He was of imposing appearance, described as a tall, powerful man "having the gait of an ox and the glance of a tiger." At an early age he became a monk under T'ang Ho-shang of Tz'u-chou 資州唐和尚, and took the precepts of full ordination under Commandment Master Yüan of Yü-chou 渝州圓律師. Later, he stayed at Ch'uan-fa Temple 傳法院 on Heng Mountain 衡山 in Hunan, and diligently practiced seated meditation. There he met Nan-yüeh Huai-jang 南嶽懷讓 (677–744), studied under him for ten years, and became his only Dharma heir. Thereafter he spent a considerable period wandering about and staying at various temples.

During the Ta-li era (766–79) he went to live at the K'ai-yüan Temple 開元寺 in Hung-chou in present Kiangsi. While there his fame as a Ch'an master grew rapidly, and soon hundreds of students gathered to study under him. He is said to have had as many as 139 Dharma heirs, more than any other Ch'an or Zen teacher in history, among whom were Layman P'ang and several of the Ch'an monks mentioned in the present text.

For a chart showing Ma-tsu's most important Dharma heirs, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 490–91. For further anecdotes concerning Ma-tsu, see *ibid.*, pp. 269–70; Blyth, Vol. 3, pp. 20–29; Vol. 4, pp. 214–16, 228–30; Dumoulin and Sasaki, pp. 9–11; and the numerous anecdotes of him scattered throughout the works of D. T. Suzuki.

6. [*Ref., p. 48, fn. 10*] Yüeh-shan Wei-yen (745–828) became a Ch'an monk at seventeen, and until he was twenty-nine seems to have studied the Vinaya and various sutras. In 773 he visited Shih-t'ou at Nan-yüeh, and is said to have later studied under Ma-tsu for a number of years in Kiangsi. He returned to Shih-t'ou and became his Dharma heir. Sometime before Shih-t'ou's death in 790, Wei-yen left the Nan-yüeh and went to live at Yüeh-shan in Li-chou, west of Tung-t'ing Lake in Hunan. It was probably there that P'ang visited him. For additional details of him, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 303–5. For some interesting anecdotes of Yüeh-shan, see Blyth, Vol. 2, pp. 79–81, 184. An illustration of him will be found in Suzuki, *Essays, Second Series*, p. 257. See also Senzaki and McCandless, pp. 29–30.

7. [*Ref., p. 51, fn. 17*] Tan-hsia T'ien-jan (738–823), whose birthplace and family name are unknown, was originally a Confucian. While on his way to take the qualifying examination for officials at Ch'ang-an, he was accompanied by Layman P'ang, who was perhaps responsible for his deciding not to become an official but instead to go with P'ang to Chiang-hsi to meet Ma-tsu. Ma-tsu accepted P'ang as his disciple but sent Tan-hsia to Shih-t'ou. After working for three years as a manual laborer under Shih-t'ou, Tan-hsia had his head shaved by the Master and took the precepts of a Ch'an monk. On this occasion Shih-t'ou gave him the religious name T'ien-jan. He became a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou, and then continued his travels and Ch'an study. It was during this time that he once burned a wooden Buddha-image on a bitterly cold day to warm himself. In the year 820 he settled on Mount Tan-hsia in Honan.

Further biographical details will be found in the *Chodang chip* (*chüan* 4, pp. 157–67), the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* (*chüan* 14,

T 51, pp. 310b–11a), etc. A translation of the story of Tan-hsia's burning up the wooden image will be found in Suzuki, *Essays, First Series*, pp. 330–31, which incident is illustrated in *Second Series*, p. 273. See also Blyth, Vol. 2, pp. 22–25, and Shaw, Case 76, pp. 233–34.

8. [*Ref., p. 65, fn. 36*] Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang was a native of Hsiang-yang, in present Hupeh. His family name was Cheng 鄭. In his youth he followed the master of Yü-ch'üan Temple 玉泉寺. Later, Ta-mei visited Ma-tsu, was enlightened by him, and went to live on Mount Ta-mei in present Chekiang. The occasion of his enlightenment constitutes the Koan in Case 30 of the *Wu-men-kuan*. See Blyth, Vol. 4, pp. 214–15, and also Vol. 2, pp. 40–42.

9. [*Ref., p. 65, fn. 37*] The background and motive for Layman P'ang's visit to Ta-mei is given in the *Wu-teng hui-yüan* (*chüan* 3, p. 49b–d) as follows:

"Ma-tsu heard that he was living there and sent a monk to go ask him: 'Ho-shang, when you saw Master Ma-tsu what did you attain that you came to dwell on this mountain?' [The monk went and did so.]

"Ta-mei replied: 'Ma-tsu said to me, "This mind is Buddha." I then came to dwell here.' 'Nowadays Ma-tsu's teaching is different,' said the monk. 'In what way?' asked Ta-mei. '[He says,] "Not mind, not Buddha," ' replied the monk. 'That old fellow is just deluding and troubling people endlessly. I'll allow his "not mind, not Buddha," but as for me, this mind is Buddha,' said Ta-mei.

"The monk went back and told Ma-tsu of this. Ma-tsu remarked: 'The plum is ripe.' Layman P'ang heard of this and, wanting to test if he really was, went to visit him. . . ."

10. [*Ref., p. 65, fn. 39*] Ta-yü (746–825) is recorded in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng-lu* (*chüan* 7, p. 253c) as follows:

"Ta-yü was from Chin-ling 金陵, present Nanking, and his family name was Fan 范. At the age of twelve he became the disciple of Ch'an Master Chung 忠, the sixth patriarch of Niu-

t'ou Mountain 牛頭山, and shaved his head. When he was twenty-three he received full ordination at An-kuo Temple 安國寺 in the capital city of Ch'ang-an.

"Later he met Ta-chi 大寂 [the posthumous title of Ma-tsu], and received the secret transmission of the Patriarch's meaning.

"In the thirteenth year of the Yüan-ho era of T'ang [819] he settled on Mt. Fu-yung 芙蓉山, at I-hsing 義興, in P'i-ling 毘陵."

11. [*Ref., p. 70, fn. 46*] Yang-shan Hui-chi (807–83) was a native of Huai-hua 懷化 in Shao-chou 韶州 in present Kwangtung, and his family name was She 葉. He began his Ch'an study at the age of nine. When he was fifteen, he sought permission from his parents to become a monk, but they would not consent. At seventeen, he cut off the third and little fingers of one hand to show his determination, and subsequently shaved his head and became a monk. He first studied and was enlightened under Tan-yüan Ying-chen (n.d.), who lived at Chi-chou 吉州 in present Kiangsi. Tan-yüan is said to have transmitted to Hui-chi the teachings regarding the use of the ninety-six (or -seven) circles (*yüan-hsiang* 圓相). (Cf. Dumoulin, *The Development of Chinese Zen*, pp. 19–20.)

After he had left Tan-yüan, Hui-chi traveled for a time, then came to Kuei-shan Ling-yu, who was then living in T'an-chou in Hunan. He remained with that Master for fifteen years, receiving the transmission of Dharma from him. Eventually he went to live at Yang-shan in Yüan-chou 袁州 in Kiangsi. There he instructed many disciples in Kuei-shan's style of Ch'an and in Tan-yüan's teachings regarding the "circles," thus laying the foundations for the Kuei-yang school.

Further anecdotes of Yang-shan are translated in Blyth, Vol. 3, pp. 98–113, and in Miura and Sasaki, p. 275. A number of conversations between Yang-shan and Kuei-shan are found in the *Lin-chi lu* (Recorded Sayings of Lin-chi). See also Senzaki and McCandless, pp. 39, 53–55, 127–28, and 133.

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