Textual Criticism and the Turbulent Life of the *Platform Sūtra*[*]

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The *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* is one of the most widely known and beloved texts produced by Chinese Buddhism. However, what makes the *Platform Sūtra* especially interesting is the fact that uniquely among Chinese Buddhist texts it is extant in a number of editions that differ significantly from one another, spanning the eighth to the thirteenth centuries. Thus the *Platform Sūtra* is not just one single, stable text, but rather an amorphous textual entity that has gone through a number of manifestations. In this essay, I revisit an earlier study and in the light of recent research and textual finds discuss the different editions of the *Platform Sūtra* and what can be learned about their relationships with one another. Emphasizing the important role of the methodology of textual criticism, I present data that suggests how the different versions are related to each other, and discuss how we can proceed with our study of the text.

Key words: *Platform Sūtra*, Huìnéng (638-713), Chán Buddhism, textual criticism

The *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* (Liùzǔ tánjīng 六祖壇經) is one of the most widely known and beloved texts produced by Chinese Buddhism. It is a scripture that has fascinated monastics, laypeople, and scholars alike for centuries, and today is available in translations into many European and Asian languages. It tells the dramatic story of how Huìnéng 慧[惠]能 (trad. 638-713) became the Sixth Patriarch of Chán 禪 Buddhism, and contains Huìnéng's sermonized teachings, his conferral of "formless precepts" (*wúxiàng jiè* 無相戒) on his audience, accounts of his encounters with disciples, and his protracted deathbed instructions. It is the only Buddhist text produced in China that is honored with the title of sūtra (*jīng* 經), otherwise reserved for the teachings of the Buddha.[1]

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[1] Other Buddhist texts produced in China were also called *jīng*, but these were claimed to be translations of the words of the Buddha from Sanskrit; such texts are often referred to as apocryphal sūtras.

Modern scholarship has shown conclusively that the *Platform Sūtra* cannot be accepted as an actual record of the life and teachings of Huìnéng, and that the text was produced well after the death of Huìnéng who probably had no real connection with it. Virtually nothing is known for certain about Huìnéng, and his prominence as the Sixth Patriarch of Chán seems to be entirely the result of the tireless efforts of the monk Shénhuì 神會 (684-758), who claimed to be Huìnéng's disciple (although the two likely never met) and who clearly hoped to gain recognition as the Seventh Patriarch (Jorgensen 2012). Shénhuì himself was quickly forgotten by history, but Huìnéng came to be universally accepted as the Sixth Patriarch and the ancestor to the entire subsequent Chán tradition. Thus, ever since the mid-ninth century, all members of the Chinese Chán school, together with those of the Korean Sŏn and Japanese Zen schools, trace their lineages directly back to Huìnéng.

A considerable body of scholarship on the *Platform Sūtra* has been produced by East Asian and Western scholars, most of whom have focused on the earliest version of the text, discovered in the early twentieth century in a hidden cave library at Dūnhuáng 敦煌 in western China (modern Gansu Province).[2] This research has yielded valuable insights on the eighth-century formation of Chán 禪 Buddhism, and new finds and methodologies promise to further expand our understanding of this period.[3]

But what makes the *Platform Sūtra* unique among Chinese Buddhist texts is the existence of a number of editions (spanning from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries) that differ conspicuously from one another. Thus the *Platform Sūtra* is not just one single, stable text, but rather an amorphous textual entity that has undergone several transformations and today is available to us in multiple distinct versions, the longest of which is almost double the length of the shortest. Notions about the persona of Huìnéng and his teachings evolved significantly over time, and the *Platform Sūtra* changed accordingly. Thus, the *Platform Sūtra* does not merely throw light on the early formation of Chán, but its textual history also serves as a kind of laboratory that allows us to observe crucial diachronic changes and developments in Chán over a period of at least five centuries.[4]

In order to meaningfully address the historical and doctrinal development of the *Platform Sūtra* text, we obviously need to know how the different extant versions are related to one another. Several scholars have taken up this issue in various ways, and I myself published a study on the "genealogy" of the *Platform Sūtra* (Schlütter 1989). Yet

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[2] On the discovery of the Dūnhuáng cave library see Schlütter (2012).

[3] For an overview of recent scholarship on the Dūnhuáng *Platform Sūtra* see the essays in Schlütter & Teiser (2012). See also Jorgensen (2002).

[4] I am currently working on a book that seeks to elucidate the historical development of Chinese Chán through an examination of the different versions of the *Platform Sūtra*.

despite several important discoveries in recent years and a renewed scholarly interest in the *Platform Sūtra* and its development, no consensus about the relationship among extant versions has emerged (for an overview see Jorgensen 2002), and flawed assumptions and inadequate methodologies have hampered much of the scholarship in this area. Most importantly, the methodology of textual criticism continues to be largely ignored, although my earlier work demonstrated that textual criticism is a crucial tool to gaining insight into the relationship among extant versions of the *Platform Sūtra*.

In this essay, I readdress the issue of what we can (and cannot) know about the relationship among different editions of the *Platform Sūtra*. My purpose is simply to establish a *stemma* that orders extant versions of the *Platform Sūtra* chronologically, and thereby facilitates the diachronic study of ideological developments in the text. Although this essay does not explore the contents of the *Platform Sūtra*, I conclude that as Chán Buddhism developed, older versions of the *Platform Sūtra* came to be regarded as incomplete and corrupted. Because of the text's importance as conveying the recorded teachings of the Sixth Patriarch, this situation seemed intolerable and the *Platform Sūtra* therefore had to be updated several times.

1. The methodology of textual criticism

As already stated, the most important, yet unfortunately in Chinese studies often overlooked, tool for studying different versions of a text and determining how they are related is the methodology of textual criticism.[5] Textual criticism began as a "technique of restoring texts as nearly as possible to their original form" (Kenney 2009:676) and has been used extensively since the eighteenth century in textual traditions as diverse as New Testament studies, the works of Greek and Roman classical writers, Shakespearean plays, and so on. The basic premise of textual criticism is the principle that every time a text is copied by hand, re-carved, or re-set for printing, a textually unique version is created. That is, the person or persons involved in producing the edition invariably either intentionally or unintentionally introduce changes into the text. These changes range from a mistaken or omitted word, or a correction of what was judged to be a previous mistake, to extensive rephrasing or rewriting of the text. By conducting a word for word comparison of extant editions of the same text, the textual critic seeks to decide which of the variant readings are most likely to be original, and emends the text in order to restore it to the earliest and most authentic state possible. (Here, of course, it is crucial to have access to direct reproductions of the texts investigated). Various rules of textual criticism have developed over time, but they can only be considered guidelines and each

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[5]   However, see Roth (1992, 1993), as well as Boltz (1984), all of which advance the methodology of textual criticism as it is relevant to Classical Chinese texts.

case must be treated as unique. Much of the logic of textual criticism is based on common sense. For example, the principle of *lectio difficilior* tells us that a more difficult, obscure, or imprecise reading must usually be judged to belong to an older version of a text, since it makes sense for an editor to wish to clarify the text he is editing, rather than the other way around. Likewise, if a passage appears as a note in one edition of a work, but in another edition appears as regular text, the first is more likely to reflect an older version, since a note can easily become incorporated into the main text, whereas it is unlikely that regular text would be relegated to a note.

Textual criticism is not an exact science, and scholars in the field have often been critical of one another's work. Even the very notion of a search for an *urtext* has also come under criticism (see e.g. Hobbs 1979, and for early China, Kern 2002). However, it remains a vitally important tool for determining the best readings in texts with multiple witnesses, even if the search for an *urtext* remains elusive. It is unfortunate that this methodology is not used more widely in Chinese Buddhist studies, and too often scholars working with multiple editions of a text fail to employ the logic of textual criticism. For example, it is important to realize that useful critical editions of texts that exist in multiple versions cannot be created by choosing the readings from each of the versions that make most sense to the scholar preparing the edition. Such a procedure creates an entirely new text, different from all previous versions, and so actually obscures rather than illuminates the history of the text.

In any case, the methodology and logic of textual criticism need not be focused on the search for an *urtext*, and can perhaps be even more fruitfully employed to help us better understand the relationships among different extant editions of a text. This is exactly what I attempted to do in my earlier work on the extant versions of the *Platform Sūtra*, and what I wish to further develop and demonstrate in this essay. In textual criticism this is referred to as the construction of a *stemma codicum*, a kind of textual family tree, and is often seen as the first task in the reconstruction of an *urtext*.[6]

For our purposes, in the study of the *Platform Sūtra* it is useful to draw a distinction between editions that have introduced major, and likely intentional, changes in the text, as opposed to those that have made only apparently unintentional or minor intentional changes. I thus use the term "edition" to refer to any instance of recopying, re-carving, or reprinting the text, and employ the word "version" to refer to an edition, or a group of editions stemming from the same work, in which the editor (here in a sense becoming co-author) has made major additions or omissions, or rephrased entire sentences, thereby creating a text which differs from other versions in substantial ways.[7]

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[6] On the stemmatic method, see Maas (1958) and Dearing (1974).

[7] See the similar discussion in Roth (1993), which applies a more fine-grained approach to cases for which a greater number of exemplars of a text is available.

In this connection it should be pointed out that only tentative ideas about the history of a text and its editions can be formed on the basis of the bibliographical data attached to a text, such as prefaces and postscripts, names of compilers, or lists of donors. Although such information occupies a crucial part of any textual investigation, it can easily lead us astray, since prefaces and postscripts can be attached to editions with which they did not originate, a later editor may have chosen to retain or restore the name of an earlier editor and leave himself anonymous, and outside references to a text with a specific title may in fact refer to a text completely different from the work that today bears this title. Also, the fact that one edition is older than another does not necessarily mean that the text it conveys is more "original." Thus any such information must be used with great care, and it is always necessary to conduct a word-for-word comparison of the texts under investigation, evaluating the evidence obtained independently of any bibliographical information.

2. The Dūnhuáng manuscripts of the *Platform Sūtra*

The version of the *Platform Sūtra* that was found at Dūnhuáng has received much more scholarly attention than any other version. This is unsurprising because it clearly represents the earliest version of the text available to us (although some scholars have disputed this, as discussed in the concluding section of this essay), and offers interesting clues to the formation of early Chán and the ideas initially ascribed to Huìnéng.[8]

Considerable discussion has been devoted to the question of about what a presumed original first version of the *Platform Sūtra* may have looked like and who wrote it, as well who produced the Dūnhuáng version we have today. I will address these issues in future research, but for the purpose of the present essay, it is sufficient to say that although the Dūnhuáng version is no doubt the earliest available version of the *Platform Sūtra*, several clues indicate that an earlier version (or earlier versions) of the text must have existed.

At present three complete manuscript copies of the Dūnhuáng *Platform Sūtra* are extant, all with the dramatic title inscription: "*The Sūtra of the Perfection of Wisdom of the Supreme Vehicle of the Sudden Teaching of the Southern Tradition: The Platform Sūtra Preached by the Great Master Huìnéng*, *the Sixth Patriarch*, *at the Dàfàn Monastery in Sháozhōu*, in one scroll, including the bestowal of the formless precepts; recorded and compiled by the Disciple Fǎhǎi, Spreader of the Dharma" (Nánzōng dùnjiào zuìshàng dàshèng móhēbōrěbōluómì jīng Liùzǔ Huìnéng dàshī yú Sháozhōu Dàfàn sì shīfǎ tánjīng yījuàn, jiān shòu wúxiàng jiè hóngfǎ dìzǐ Fǎhǎi jí jì 南宗頓教最

上大乘摩訶般若波羅蜜經六祖惠能大師於韶州大梵寺施法壇經一卷 兼受無相戒弘法弟子法海集記).[9]

For many years, the well-known manuscript Stein 5475 held in the British Library was the only known full manuscript copy of the *Platform Sūtra* from Dūnhuáng.[10] Then, in the early 1990s, a second manuscript, now known as the "Dūnhuáng Museum Text" (*Dūnbó běn* 敦博本), was discovered in the basement of the Dūnhuáng museum and was published.[11] The text had been described earlier by the scholar Xiàng Dá (1957:368-369), but its whereabouts had since been unknown. Most recently, in 2011, yet a third Dūnhuáng manuscript was found in the Lǔshùn Museum in Liáoníng Province in China (the *Lǔshùn běn* 旅順本), and was subsequently published.[12] This text was previously only known from a few photographs from the 1930s, and had been presumed lost. The Lǔshùn manuscript appears with another text in the same hand that is dated 959 (Guō & Wáng 2011:108).[13]

In addition to these three complete manuscript copies, two manuscript fragments of the *Platform Sūtra* found at Dūnhuáng are now held at the Běijīng library.[14] The first is just one page long, while the other fragment is much longer, and contains about a third of the text of the complete Dūnhuáng manuscripts.[15]

Preliminary examination of the editions and fragments of the *Platform Sūtra* found at Dūnhuáng indicates that all derive from the same text, and that likely none of them are directly based on another (Guō & Wáng 2011 compares the manuscripts, albeit with some mistakes). Since all are ultimately derived from the same text, they must be considered editions of the same version.

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[9] But see Anderl (2013) for a dramatically different interpretation of the title. I find Anderl's analysis interesting, although at this point am unpersuaded by it.

[10] A black-and-white reprint of the Stein 5475 manuscript is found in Yanagida (1976:1-47). High-resolution color scans of the manuscript have recently been made available by the International Dūnhuáng Project, at http://idp.bl.uk (search "S.5475"). An accessible edited version together with a translation appears in Yampolsky (1967/2011).

[11] Dūnhuáng museum call number 077-4. It has been published several times, first in Yáng (1993). A fine photographic reproduction appears in Huáng (2006), which collates it with Stein 5475.

[12] See the beautiful color reproduction of the manuscript in Guō & Wáng (2011).

[13] The dating is ambiguous, as the date given is Xiǎndé 顯德 5, *jǐwèi* 己未 year, but Xiǎndé 5 is 958, while *jǐwèi* 己未 is 959. The zodiac name probably signifies the correct year.

[14] See the description in Huáng (2007).

[15] For the first, Huáng (2007) gives the call number as 北京圖書館有字 79 號殘片; it is reproduced in Lǐ & Fāng (1999:232). For the second, Huáng (2007) gives the call number as 北京圖書館岡字 48 號. For more discussion, see Tanaka (1991). This fragment corresponds to Stein 5475; CBETA, T. 48, no. 2007, pp. 338, c25 - 341, c2.

Most modern editions of the Dūnhuáng *Platform Sūtra* were prepared before the newer discoveries were made, and they thus rely exclusively on the Stein manuscript. However, since this manuscript has many obvious errors and lacunae it has usually been amended using a version of the *Platform Sūtra* found in Japan, known as the Kōshōji 興聖寺 edition (see e.g. Yampolsky 1967/2012). This turns out to be unfortunate, since (as discussed below) the Kōshōji text represents a much-edited later version, and does little to illuminate the original content of the Dūnhuáng *Platform Sūtra.* The new texts and fragments now available should permit the production of a critical edition that would bring us very close to their common source, but thus far, no editor has rigorously applied the principles of textual criticism in a comparison of the manuscripts to produce such a work.[16]

3. The Huìxīn versions

Scholars first learned of an edition of the *Platform Sūtra* prepared in 967 by the monk Huìxīn 惠昕 from a preface attached to the so-called Kōshōji edition of the *Platform Sūtra*, found in 1930s at a temple in Kyoto.[17] Although the Kōshōji text is a printed edition, Huìxīn's attached preface, as well as another added preface, are hand-written, and by mistake the two separate pieces have been merged into one. They were apparently copied from an unidentified source in 1599 by the Japanese monk Ryōnen 了然 (1559-1619) (Matsumoto 1944:101, Yampolsky 1967/2012:99).

Huìxīn's short preface in the Kōshōji edition is entitled "*Liùzǔ tánjīng* xù" 六祖壇經序 [Preface to the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*], and in it he writes that the old text of the *Platform Sūtra* was vexatious (*gǔběn wénfán* 古本文繁, which I take to mean corrupt and difficult to read) and students who first picked it up with delight soon came to dislike it. Huìxīn then simply states that he divided the text into two fascicles and eleven chapters. The preface bears a cyclical date that Hu Shih identified as the year 967.[18] It was written in a temple in Yōngzhōu 邕州 (present day Nánníng in Guǎngxī Province), which was a culturally marginal area in the tenth century.

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[16] In addition to the Chinese manuscripts, several small fragments from a Tangut (Xīxià 西夏) translation of the *Platform Sūtra* exist. These fragments appear to have been based on a version of the *Platform Sūtra* very similar, but perhaps not identical, to the Dūnhuáng version. A translation of the fragments appears in Shǐ (1993:90-100). It is not possible to reconstruct the exact Chinese text from the Xīxià translations, and I do not include the Xīxià fragments in my current investigation.

[17] A photographic reproduction of the Kōshōji edition is found in Yanagida (1976:49-66). An edited and annotated version appears in Nakagawa (1976).

[18] Hu (1975:78). See also Yampolsky (1967:100, n. 28). Nothing further is known about Huìxīn.

The second preface attached to the Kōshōji edition dates to the Sòng 宋 dynasty (960-1279); it was written by the scholar Cháo Zǐjiàn 晁子健 (d.u.) and is dated 1153.[19] Here Cháo relates how while traveling in Sìchuān, he found a copy of the *Platform Sūtra* written in the hand of his ancestor Wén Yuán 文元. At the end of the copy Wén Yuán had written: "I am now eighty-one years old and have read [the *Platform Sūtra*] sixteen times." Cháo states he later had this manuscript published. Hu Shih has shown that Wén Yuán was the famous scholar Cháo Jiǒng 晁迥 (951-1034), and that he turned eighty-one in 1031.[20]

The Kōshōji edition is in two fascicles and eleven chapters, just like the edition Huìxīn describes. It bears the simple title *Liùzǔ tánjīng* [*Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*] and no compiler is named. One page is missing. It appears to be a reprinting of a Japanese *Gozan* 五山 edition from the Kamakura 鎌倉 period (1185-1333), and probably dates to the end of the Muromachi 室町 period (early 16th c.).[21] What appears to be a bookcase reference carved on the plates of the Kōshōji edition has led scholars to believe that it was ultimately based on a Sòng canon edition, but none of the Sòng canon catalogues known today list a *Platform Sūtra*.[22]

Several other editions of the *Platform Sūtra* have survived in Japan, all in two fascicles and eleven chapters. They are clearly closely related and it seems reasonable to make the working assumption that all are derived from Huìxīn's edition. However, as I show below, each of the extant versions preserved in Japan has been edited, and none is an exact copy of Huìxīn's edition. Textual comparison allows us to group them into three versions, according to the criteria described above:[23]

3.1 Kōshōji version

Several Japanese editions of the *Platform Sūtra* are very close to the Kōshōji edition. First is the Kan'ei 寛永 edition. No title or information appears in front of the text, however after each of the fascicles the title *Liuzu tanjing* is given. No prefaces or postscripts are attached, but at the end of the text a note gives the year Kan'ei 8 (1631) and the name of the Japanese publisher.[24] The *Hōbōdankyō kōkan* 法寶壇經肯款 by

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[19] Chāng (1975:3.1947) gives a list of references to him.

[20] See Hu Shih (1975).

[21] See Ui (1941:3.60); and Komazawa daigaku zenshū kenkyūkai (hereafter *Enō kenkyū*) (1978:407). On *Gozan* editions, see Komazawa daigaku nai zengaku daijiten hensanso (hereafter *Zengaku daijiten*) (1978:341a).

[22] *Enō kenkyū*, p. 408, and *Zengaku daijiten*, p. 1142b. See also Ishii (1979:78b).

[23] Here I discuss only editions that I have been able to examine; my discussion in Schlütter (1989) touches on a few other editions.

[24] Held in the Komazawa University library, call no. 121:1-16. It is included in Ishii (1980, 1981).

Ekijun 益淳 from 1697 lists the Kan'ei edition, which it identifies as the reprint of a Chinese Sòng edition from the Qìngyuán 慶元 period (1195-1200).[25] The second edition is the Kanazawa Bunko 金沢文庫 manuscript. Only three fragments, totaling eight pages, of this edition are still extant.[26] One of these fragments contains the beginning of chapter three, the title of which is identical to that of the same chapter in the Kōshōji edition. Yanagida Seizan dates the Kanazawa manuscript to the Kamakura period.[27]

Close comparison shows that the Kanazawa fragments are strikingly similar to the corresponding passages of the Kōshōji edition. Furthermore, when the texts of the Kan'ei edition and the Kōshōji edition are compared they prove to be remarkably alike. Thus these three texts, according to the formula outlined earlier, must be considered to be different editions of the same version, referred to here and below as the Kōshōji version.

3.2 Daijōji version

Another major version of the *Platform Sūtra* that ultimately must derive from that of Huìxīn is represented by the Daijōji 大乗寺 edition, discovered at the Sōtō Zen 曹洞禪 temple Daijōji in Kaga 加賀 in the 1930s.[28] It is a manuscript copy bearing the title *Sháozhōu Cáoxī shān Liùzǔ shī tánjīng* 韶州曹溪山六祖師壇經 [*The Platform Sūtra of the Master, the Sixth Patriarch from Mt. Cáoxī in Sháozhōu*].[29] No compiler is given. The layout of its eleven chapters corresponds to that of the Kōshōji edition, but the chapter titles vary somewhat.[30] The text has a lacuna at the end where Huìnéng's last *gāthā* and a few sentences following it are missing. The Daijōji text does not include Huìxīn's preface; instead is attached a preface by a Bhikṣu Cúnzhōng 存中 (d.u.) from Fútáng 福唐, in present day Fújiàn 福建 Province. The preface is dated 1116, and provides little information beyond stating that the edition is a second printing. At the end of the Daijōji manuscript is a note saying "Written by Dōgen." Dōgen 道元 (1200-1253) was the founder of the Japanese Sōtō 曹洞 sect of Zen who travelled in China 1223-1227/1228, but it is more likely that the real copyist was his disciple Tettsu Gikai 徹通義介 (1219-1309), the founder of the Daijōji as a Sōtō temple, who may have made the copy during his stay in China from 1259 to 1263.[31]

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[25] Quoted in Ui (1941:3.60), and *Enō kenkyū*, p. 408b.

[26] A photographic reprint is found in Yanagida (1976:395-400).

[27] See the table that appears at the beginning of Yanagida (1976).

[28] The manuscript is photographically reproduced in Yanagida (1976:89-113). A printed edition appears in Yáng (1993:76-111).

[29] Cáoxī 曹溪 is also read "Cáoqī."

[30] See Ishii (1979:91-111) for a list of the various chapter titles.

[31] See Ui (1941:3.61). On Gikai, see *Zengaku daijiten*, p. 194a. Dōgen was critical of the *Platform Sūtra* as he knew it, and rejected it as the words of Huìnéng; see *Shōbōgenzō* 91 (*Shizen Biku*).

The Tenneiji 天寧寺 edition, now in the Tōhoku University library, belongs with the Daijōji edition.[32] It is a manuscript copy, but gives no indication of who the copyist was. Its title and chapter headings are the same as those of the Daijōji edition, and again no compiler is given. At the end of each fascicle two seals are stamped, in a style often found in works from the Kamakura period.[33] Like the Daijōji edition, the Tenneiji edition includes the 1116 preface by Cúnzhōng. An additional preface, written in a hand different from the rest of the text and signed by the Japanese monk Hakuei Egyoku 白英惠寶, appears before Cúnzhōng's piece. In this preface, dated 1747, Egyoku states the edition comes from the library of the Kinzan Tenneiji 金山天寧寺 and that it differs from the version of the text that was otherwise circulating in his day. He also notes that the text of this edition does not depart from that of the Daijōji edition by as much as a word, and that he replaced missing parts using the Daijōji manuscript.[34]

A comparison of the Daijōji and Tenneiji editions shows that the texts are indeed very close to one another, and each individual discrepancy rarely involves more than one character.[35] In addition to these minor differences, the Daijōji and the Tenneiji differ conspicuously in their lists of the Indian patriarchs. Here the Tenneiji, like other two-fascicle editions of the *Platform Sūtra*, follows the list of names found in the Dūnhuáng *Platform Sūtra*, while the Daijōji text has the names found in the *Bǎolín zhuàn* 寶林傳 (801), the list that later became universally accepted.[36] We may surmise that the copyist of the Daijōji manuscript changed the list of patriarchs from the original to bring it into compliance with what had become orthodox. Setting aside this difference, the two editions are all other respects sufficiently similar to be considered editions of the same version, and it is likely both were copied from a copy of Cúnzhōng's edition since both have his preface.

3.3 Shinpukuji version

The Shinpukuji 眞福寺 edition is the most recently discovered two-fascicle manuscript copy of the *Platform Sūtra*. It was named after the Shingon 真言 temple in the library of which it was found, and was first described and made available in 1976 by

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[32] A photographic reproduction of the manuscript appears in Yanagida (1976:67-86). See Shiina (1975) for discussion of this edition.

[33] See Shiina (1975:292b).

[34] He is obviously referring to about 800 characters, which are in his handwriting and occur at the beginning of the second fascicle.

[35] I have counted about 90 readings in which they differ. In most of these cases the Tenneiji readings appear to be miswritten characters, as all the other editions agree against it.

[36] See Yampolsky (1967/2012:47-49).

Ishii Shūdō.[37] The Shinpukuji edition has the same title as the Kōshōji edition, *Liùzǔ tánjīng* [*Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*], but its chapter headings are almost identical to those of the Daijōji and the Tenneiji editions. Like the Kōshōji version, the Shinpukuji version includes Huìxīn's 967 preface that is here entitled "*Sháozhōu Cáoxī shān Liùzǔ tánjīng* xù" 韶州曹溪山六祖壇經序 [Preface to *The Platform Sūtra of the Master, the Sixth Patriarch from Mt. Cáoxī in Sháozhōu*]; like the other two-fascicle editions no compiler is given. The text also has a short postscript by Zhōu Xīgǔ 周希古 (d.u.), dated 1012. In this postscript, the title of the *Platform Sūtra* is given as *Cáoxī Liùzǔ dàshī tánjīng* 曹溪六祖大師壇經 [*The Platform Sūtra of the Great Master, the Sixth Patriarch from Mt. Cáoxī*], and the names of three otherwise unknown people involved in its publication are mentioned. Little is known about Zhōu Xīgǔ, but it appears that he was from Fujian, and received his *jìnshì* 進士 degree in 988.[38] Ishii Shūdō proposes that the manuscript is probably from the Nambokuchō period 南北朝 (1336-1392) or the late Kamakura period.[39]

Comparison of the Shinpukuji version with the other two-fascicle texts reveals that it differs substantially from the others, and we must conclude it is the only edition of the version it represents.

3.4 Analysis of the Huìxīn versions

Let us now turn to an analysis of the different two-fascicle eleven-chapter editions, using the methodology of textual criticism. The process has been greatly facilitated by an edition published by Ishii Shūdō (1980, 1981). Using the Shinpukuji as his basis, he has prepared a variorum edition of the *Platform Sūtra*, listing all differences among the Kōshōji, the Kan'ei, the Shinpukuji, the Daijōji, and the Tenneiji texts. In addition, he has also inserted the text of the Dūnhuáng manuscript (S5475) for easy reference. Since I have found this edition extremely convenient and reliable, I use it for reference in the following, calling it the "Ishii edition."

It is not practicable here to undertake a full textual analysis to establish the most authoritative readings of the texts of the Kōshōji /Kanazawa /Kan'ei version and the Daijōji /Tenneiji version, nor is it necessary for our investigation. In the following I take the Kōshōji edition as the representative of the Kōshōji /Kanazawa /Kan'ei version, and use the Daijōji edition as representative of the Daijōji /Tenneiji version, apart from its list of Indian patriarchs, for which the Tenneiji edition is used.

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[37] Ishii (1979:91-112). No direct copy of the manuscript has been published, but I am grateful to Professor Ishii for having made a photocopy available to me.

[38] Chāng (1975:2.1476). See also Ishii (1979:78b-79a).

[39] Ishii (1979:75b).

This, then, leaves us with three different versions of the *Platform Sūtra* in two fascicles and eleven chapters to compare: the Kōshōji, the Daijōji, and the Shinpukuji. Despite their differences, 70 to 80% of the text of these three versions is identical, and they are undoubtedly closely related. Opposed to this we find the Dūnhuáng version, which, although it contains largely the same material and follows a similar outline, is considerably shorter and often less detailed than the two-fascicle editions, and seldom corresponds with them exactly in wording. This substantiates the view, held by several scholars, that all the two-fascicle works ultimately stem from the same edition and that the Dūnhuáng manuscript conveys an earlier and less developed version of the text.

Examining the three versions, the following relevant observations can be made:[40]

    1. a.) The Kōshōji and the Shinpukuji in about 210 cases have readings that agree against the Daijōji. Most differences affect both meaning and style.

    1. b.) The Daijōji and the Shinpukuji in about 430 cases have readings that agree against the Kōshōji. Again, most differences affect both meaning and style.

    1. c.) The Kōshōji and the Daijōji in about 75 cases have readings that agree against the Shinpukuji. Almost all of these differences appear to be copyist errors in the Shinpukuji, usually concerning single words, and few affect meaning and style.

    1. d.) In about 40 instances the Kōshōji, the Daijōji and the Shinpukuji each have their own readings and do not agree with any of the others. In most of these cases, the readings in the Shinpukuji seem to be copyist errors.

Furthermore, when the Kōshōji, Daijōji, and Shinpukuji versions are compared to the Dūnhuáng version, we observe the following:

    2. a.) The Kōshōji has several readings that are close to the Dūnhuáng, against the Daijōji and the Shinpukuji which then coincide. [41]

    2. b.) The Daijōji also has several readings that clearly are close to the Dūnhuáng, against the Shinpukuji and the Kōshōji which then coincide.

    2. c.) The Shinpukuji has no readings that are close to the Dūnhuáng, against the Daijōji and the Kōshōji which then coincide.

Finally, the following may be noted:

    3. a.) In at least one instance in which all three texts differ, the Kōshōji is closer to the Dūnhuáng than is the Daijōji or the Shinpukuji.

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[40] Several examples illustrating these points appear in Appendix A of Schlütter (1989:104-113).

[41] Here I use the word 'close' as passages may not be word-for-word identical. However, the texts are sufficiently similar in wording that it is clear that their readings are related.

3. b.) In at least three instances in which all three texts differ, the Daijōji is closer to the Dūnhuáng than is the Kōshōji or the Shinpukuji.

3. c.) In at least two instances in which all three texts differ, the Shinpukuji is closer to the Dūnhuáng than is the Kōshōji or the Daijōji.

It is possible that other relevant observations can be made, but any attempt to draw conclusions about the relationships among the two-fascicle editions, as well as their relationship to the Dūnhuáng and Huìxīn editions, must take these points into consideration, and any theory must be able to explain them.

Let us now turn to a *stemma* that has been proposed by Ishii Shūdō, who was the first to describe and publish the Shinpukuji text. Professor Ishii suggests that Shinpukuji is the closest of the three to the Huìxīn edition and that it is based on the Zhōu Xīgǔ edition, which also became the basis for the Daijōji and the Tenneiji editions through Cúnzhōng's edition, whereas the Kōshōji derived from the Huìxīn in a separate line.[42]

In this *stemma*, we would expect the Kōshōji and the Shinpukuji texts to sometimes side against the Daijōji text (1. a. above), but more often we would expect the Daijōji and Shinpukuji to side against the Kōshōji (1. b.), which is indeed exactly what we find. We would also expect some cases of the Kōshōji and the Daijōji texts siding against the Shinpukuji (because the editor of the Shinpukuji would have at least made some changes to Zhōu Xīgǔ's edition), which again is what we observe (1. c.). Furthermore, also conforming to our data, in some cases the Kōshōji text is closer to the Dūnhuáng than to the Shinpukuji and Daijōji (2. a.), but we have no cases in which the Shinpukuji text is closer to the Dūnhuáng against a common reading in the Kōshōji and Daijōji (2. c.). The only cases in which the Shinpukuji text is closer to the Dūnhuáng text than to the two others are those in which all three differ, which again we do find in a few cases (3. c.).

In all these ways, this *stemma* seems to fit our textual data perfectly. However, there is one problem: as stated above, everything that is common to both the Kōshōji and Shinpukuji editions must have originated with Huìxīn's edition, and any reading that is close to the Dūnhuáng must also have originated with the Huìxīn edition. Therefore, in the *stemma* above, it should never be the case that the text of the Daijōji has a reading that is close to the Dūnhuáng text against a common reading in the Kōshōji and the Shinpukuji texts. But, in fact, we do observe several such instances (2. b.). This would seem to invalidate the *stemma*.

Indeed, it was this very observation that led me to reject Ishii's *stemma* in my earlier article. Instead, I favored an interpretation of the data that argued that the Shinpukuji text could have been based on both the Kōshōji and the Daijōji; that is, the editor of the Shinpukuji had access to both of the other texts, and chose in different cases to either

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[42] Ishii (1979:80).

follow one or the other. While that scenario does fit the observable facts, I no longer believe that it is likely to have been the case. A less complicated explanation is that the editor of the Daijōji text's ancestor, probably Cúnzhōng or perhaps the editor of the text Cúnzhōng used, must have had access to at least a fragment of a text that was similar to the Dūnhuáng version, which he consulted together with the Zhōu Xīgǔ edition. It seems likely that it was only a fragment of the first part, because all the Dūnhuáng readings in question are found in the first section of the Daijōji (through sec. 10 in the Ishii edition). We cannot determine what text Cúnzhōng or his predecessor used, only that is was similar to the Dūnhuáng text. Thus, with some modification, Professor Ishii's *stemma* appears to be essentially correct, and can be shown this way:
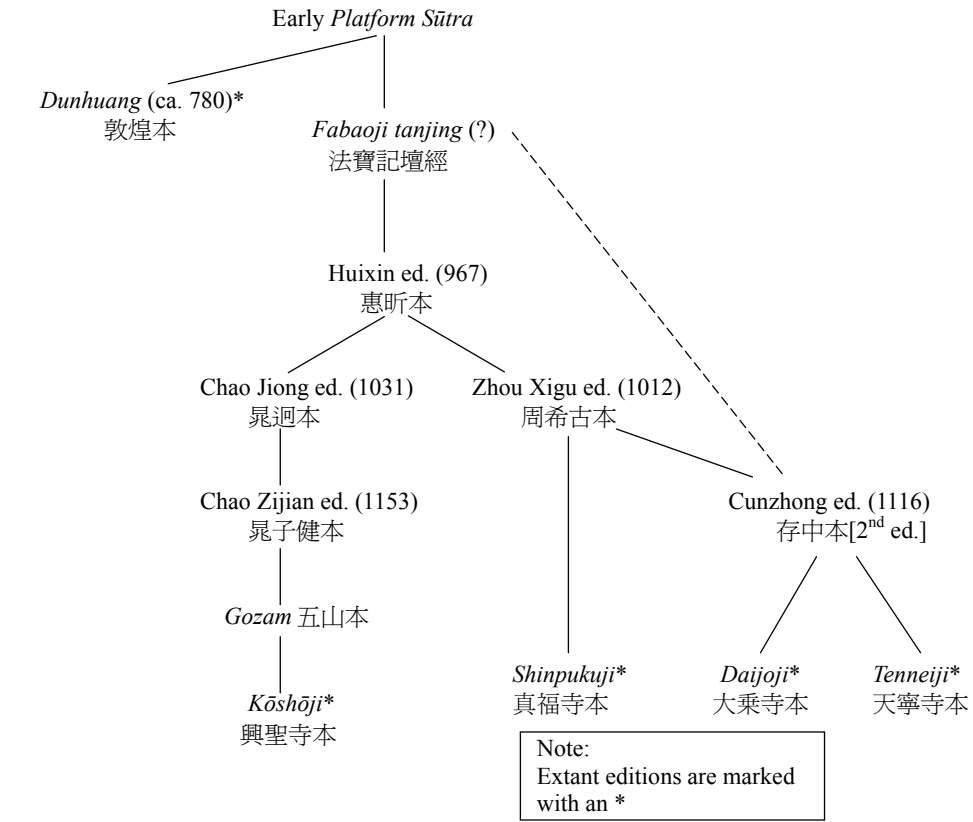

Figure 1

It should be noted that once we recognize that at least one editor must have used more than one edition in producing his own edition, we are dealing with what in textual criticism is called "contamination," and this then opens up a whole host of different

possible scenarios. However, most of these are not very probable and I will not go over them here.[43]

The Zhōu Xīgǔ edition must have been fairly close to Huìxīn's edition but it was not identical to it. This is shown by the fact that some Kōshōji readings are closer to the Dūnhuáng version, against coinciding readings in the Daijōji and the Shinpukuji versions. Common readings in the Daijōji and Shinpukuji must have come from Zhōu Xīgǔ's edition, but the Dūnhuáng readings in the Kōshōji must have been derived from from the Huìxīn edition.

Since Huìxīn states that he divided the text into two fascicles, he probably worked from a one-fascicle edition, and scholars have assumed that this was the Dūnhuáng version. Similarities between Huìxīn's edition and the Dūnhuáng version indicate clearly that the text he used in many ways did resemble the Dūnhuáng text. However, internal evidence suggests that Huìxīn cannot have relied on an actual copy of the Dūnhuáng version, and other clues indicate that the text he used differed from it in significant ways.

Thus toward the end of the *Platform Sūtra*, Huìnéng offers a veiled prediction of the appearance of Shénhuì as the defender of his teachings, and in the Dūnhuáng version, Huìnéng simply says that twenty years from now, when evil teachings have become rampant, someone will come forward to establish the correct and false in Buddhism at the risk of his life. However, the Huìxīn edition is more elaborate and detailed; in it Huìnéng states that the person who would restore his Dharma after twenty years would be from Nányáng *xiàn* 南陽縣 (deleted in the Kōshōji text) and that he would propagate it in the Luòyáng 洛陽 area.[44] The extra information in the Huìxīn edition makes it much clearer that the prediction points to Shénhuì, who lived at a monastery in Nányáng and who began his crusade in Luòyáng in 730. But by the time Huìxīn compiled his version in 967, Shénhuì's role in establishing Huìnéng as the Sixth Patriarch had been largely forgotten, and it is highly unlikely Huìxīn would have added such details. It must therefore have been present in the text (or one of the texts) that Huìxīn used for his edition.

Also important in this connection is how the transmission of the *Platform Sūtra* itself is described differently in the Dūnhuáng and Huìxīn versions. The Dūnhuáng version says that the text's compiler, Fǎhǎi 法海, at his death entrusted the *Platform Sūtra* to his fellow disciple Dàojì 道際 (in Stein 5477 written 道漈), who at his death passed it on to his disciple Wùzhēn 悟真, who "is now transmitting the Dharma at the Fǎxīng 法興 monastery in Cáoxī." Except for Fǎhǎi, none of the masters in this lineage are known from other sources, and Fǎhǎi's "fellow disciple" Dàojì is not among the ten disciples of Huìnéng listed in the Dūnhuáng *Platform Sūtra*. However, the parallel passage in Huìxīn's edition has it that when Fǎhǎi passed away he transmitted the

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[43] See Schlütter (1989) for discussion of various possible scenarios.
[44] Ishii edition, sec. 58, lines 6-7.

Platform Sūtra to Zhìdào 志道, who transmitted it to Bǐ'àn 彼岸, who transmitted it to Wùzhēn 悟真, who transmitted it to Yuánhuì 圓會. Nothing further is said about Yuánhuì.[45] Zhìdào is indeed mentioned in all the versions of the *Platform Sūtra* as one of Huìnéng's ten main disciples, although the other masters in the lineage are otherwise unknown. The more awkward lineage in the *Platform Sūtra* is clearly the older of the two, if only because the Huìxīn version adds several more people. It also seems the lineage in the Huìxīn version has been "normalized" by having Fǎhǎi transmitting the text to a fellow disciple who is mentioned in the text. In any case, it is again extremely unlikely that the expanded version of the lineage originated with Huìxīn himself, since at his time the transmission of the *Platform Sūtra* was almost certainly not an issue, and in any case the lineage described is too short to have had direct relevance for Huìxīn's contemporaries. Rather, this passage was probably retained by Huìxīn from the edition he used, and thus provides further indication that this text was not identical to the Dūnhuáng version. This edition would likely have been produced later than the Dūnhuáng version, judging by its longer lineage. It is thus possible that a number of the changes to the text of the *Platform Sūtra* that appear to have been introduced by Huìxīn were already present in the version he used, and various indications suggest that this text was an early version of the *Platform Sūtra* known as the *Fǎbǎo jì tánjīng* 法寶記壇經 [*Platform Sūtra of the Dharma Treasure Record*].[46]

4. The longer *Platform Sūtra* editions

For most of the history of the *Platform Sūtra*, the only editions in circulation belonged to what I here call the longer version, which first appeared in the thirteenth century under the title *Liùzǔ dàshī fǎbǎo tánjīng* 六祖大師法寶壇經 [*Platform Sūtra of the Dharma Treasure of the Great Master*, *the Sixth Patriarch*]. Many different editions of the longer version are extant, almost all of them in one fascicle and ten chapters. They are considerably longer than either the Dūnhuáng version or the extant two-fascicle editions, and contain many new stories about Huìnéng and his encounters with disciples and others, as well as much other material that does not appear in the Dūnhuáng or Huìxīn versions. Editions of the longer version came to enjoy great popularity, and it

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[45] Ishii edition, sec, 65, line 1-2.

[46] A text with *Fǎbǎo jì tánjīng* in the title is listed by the Japanese monk Ennin 圓仁 (794-864+) among the books he brought back from China in 847, and this was also the title of the version of the *Platform Sūtra* known in Korea until the 14th century. See Jorgensen (2002:416-417). It is also mentioned by Muchaku Dōchū 無着道忠 (1653-1744), who implies that his copy was dated to 826, see Nakagawa (1976:237). I plan to treat the *Fǎbǎo jì tánjīng* in greater detail in the future.

eventually completely forced other versions out of existence in both China and Korea, and effectively in Japan as well.

The relationship between various extant longer editions is complex, many signs point to contamination, that is, editors having used multiple texts as the basis for their own edition.[47] However, all the longer editions of the *Platform Sūtra* appear to stem from one of two editions that were first published in the early Yuán 元 dynasty (1271-1368), known as the Déyì 德異 and Zōngbǎo 宗寶 editions after their presumed compilers.

The Zōngbǎo edition came to dominate in China, and it is also the edition included in the Japanese modern Buddhist canon, the *Taishō Daizōkyō*.[48] The Taishō edition of the *Platform Sūtra* is based on an edition from the Míng 明 (1368-1644) dynasty kept in the Japanese Pure Land temple Zōjōji 増上寺, and is in one fascicle and ten chapters. The title of the text is given as *Liùzǔ dàshī fǎbǎo tánjīng* 六祖大師法寶壇經 [Platform Sūtra of the Dharma Treasure of the Great Master, the Sixth Patriarch] and the monk Yuán-dynasty monk Zōngbǎo 宗寶 (d.u.) is listed as the compiler. At the very end of the text is included a postscript by Zōngbǎo, who states that he had in his possession three different editions of the *Platform Sūtra*, each with its own faults and merits. He corrected mistakes, filled out lacunae, and added material about the disciples' encounters with Huìnéng. Zōngbǎo then relates how an official, identified as Yúngōng Cónglóng 雲公從龍 (d.u.),[49] came by his room and saw his edition of the *Platform Sūtra*, and then ordered printing blocks for it to be carved.[50] The postscript is dated Summer 1291, and signed "Shì Zōngbǎo of Nánhǎi 南海釋宗寶." Nánhǎi, of course, was the place in south China (modern Guǎngzhōu area) where Huìnéng supposedly lived before he went to see the Fifth Patriarch.

Zōngbǎo's edition of the *Platform Sūtra* also contains a preface by the monk Méngshān Déyì 蒙山德異 (1231-?), as well as a eulogy to the *Platform Sūtra* by the famous scholar-monk Qìsōng 契嵩 (1007-1072).[51] This is rather confusing, since both Déyì and Qìsōng are associated with their own editions of the *Platform Sūtra*.

The Déyì edition is known from the preface by Déyì dated Spring, 1290, entitled "*Liùzǔ dàshī fǎbǎo tánjīng* xù" 六祖大師法寶壇經序 [Preface to the Platform Sūtra of the Dharma Treasure of the Great Master, the Sixth Patriarch]. In his preface, Déyì complains that later generations had abbreviated the *Platform Sūtra* and thus had made it impossible to know the complete teachings of the Sixth Patriarch. But, Déyì says,

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[47] For a description of a number of the editions, see Ui (1941:1.1-172).

[48] T. 48, pp. 345-65. A fine English translation of the whole text with all its attached materials is found in McRae (2000b).

[49] Otherwise unknown.

[50] T. 51, 364c.

[51] T. 48, p. 345, c8-346, a7 and p. 346, a10-347, c17.

when he was young he saw an old edition and, after seeking it everywhere for more than thirty years, he obtained a complete text through the worthy Tōng 通 (d.u.).[52] He then had it published at the Xiūxiū Chán Refuge 休休禪庵 in Wúzhōng 吳中 (near present-day Sūzhōu 蘇州).[53]

Although Déyì's preface is found attached to most editions of the longer *Platform Sūtra*, certain editions have only his preface, and neither have Zōngbǎo's postscript nor list Zōngbǎo as compiler. These editions differ from the one attributed to Zōngbǎo in certain other ways, and are therefore considered to have been prepared by Déyì. The earliest such edition we have evidence of is a Korean one, which according to its postscript was published in Yányòu 延祐 3 (1316).[54] The Yányòu edition begins with the preface by Déyì; then, the title of the *Platform Sūtra* is given as *Liùzǔ dàshī fǎbǎo tánjīng* (same as that of the Zōngbǎo edition) and "the disciple Fǎhǎi" is listed as the compiler. After this follows a 'Brief Preface' understood to be composed by Fǎhǎi. Then comes the main body of the text, divided into ten chapters. The chapter titles are quite different from those of the *Taishō* edition, and the chapter divisions are somewhat different as well.

When the Zōngbǎo and the Déyì editions are compared, we can readily observe that they both convey what is basically the same text, and, in spite of some obvious differences, are close enough to be considered editions of the same version. Given that they seem to have been compiled just within a year of each other in very different parts of China, it is unlikely that one is based on the other, a conclusion also supported by other evidence, discussed below. We can conclude that the two editions must ultimately be based on the same single version of the *Platform Sūtra*, which I will call the "ancestral longer version."

When the text of the longer version (that is, the Zōngbǎo and Déyì editions) is compared with each of the shorter versions, it quickly becomes clear that it is closely related to the Kōshōji version, while no direct influence from the Dūnhuáng, Daijōji, or Shinpukuji versions is detectable. About 90% of the text of the Kōshōji occurs almost word for word in the longer versions, although the material has been completely rearranged.[55] It seems quite likely that this source text was the Qìngyuán-period (1195-1200) printed edition of the Kōshōji version mentioned by Ekijun (see above).

The fact that an edition of the Kōshōji version served as the primary source for the

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[52] Nothing further is known about this person.

[53] According to Ui (1941:3.13).

[54] It was reproduced and described in by Ōya Tokujō; see Ōya (1935:1-29). The text of the Yányòu edition follows immediately after Ōya's article. For a discussion of the identification of the Déyì edition, see Lǐ (1935:483-490).

[55] For detailed treatment, see Schlütter (1989:76-94).

compiler of the ancestral longer version of the *Platform Sūtra* is an extremely important point that unfortunately has been completely overlooked in other studies, which demonstrates the need for a character-by-character comparison of different versions of a text if we wish to understand how they relate to one another.

However, the Kōshōji version of the *Platform Sūtra* furnished only a portion of the text of the longer versions, which contain much additional material. Close word-by-word comparison shows that, by far, the most important source of this extra material was the seminal Chán transmission-line history, the *Jǐngdé chuándēng lù* 景德傳燈錄 [Record of the Transmission of the Lamp from the *Jǐngdé* era] from 1004.[56] The *Chuándēng lù* especially supplied many stories about Huìnéng's encounters with monks who came to be considered important disciples in the Sòng and later, but who do not appear in earlier versions of the *Platform Sūtra*. This was first noted long ago by Ui Hakuju (1941:3.34-44), but has since received little attention. Yet material from the Kōshōji edition and the *Chuándēng lù* together accounts for over 90% of the text of the longer *Platform Sūtra.* Other minor influences on the longer *Platform Sūtra* appear to come from the 1183 *Zōngmén liándēng huìyào* 宗門聯燈會要 [*Essentials of the United (Records of the Transmission of the) Lamps of our School*],[57] and the 952 *Zǔtáng jí* 祖堂集 [*Anthology from the Halls of the Patriarchs*].[58]

Without any doubt, we are dealing with borrowings from the *Chuándēng lù* by the longer *Platform Sūtra*, and not the reverse. This is attested to by the fact that whenever the longer *Platform Sūtra* uses material from the *Kōshōji*, it deviates from the *Chuándēng lù*, even if other parts of the passage are identical to the *Chuándēng lù*. That is, the compilers of the longer *Platform Sūtra* first followed the Kōshōji version and then supplemented it with material from the *Chuándēng lù.* If the compilers of the *Chuándēng lù* had used the *Platform Sūtra* as their source, they could not have consciously avoided passages that originally appeared in the Kōshōji text. This confirms that the compiler of the ancestral longer *Platform Sūtra* used the *Chuándēng lù* together with an edition like the Kōshōji to form his own text.

When we examine the relationships between the texts of the Kōshōji and the Zōngbǎo on one hand, and the Kōshōji and the Déyì on the other, we can observe that in several ways the Déyì is closer to the Kōshōji than is the Zōngbǎo. The most obvious example is the chapter titles, which in the Déyì are often similar to Kōshōji, but are completely different in the Zōngbǎo. When the texts of the Déyì and Zōngbǎo differ, the Déyì is usually closer to the Kōshōji than is the Zōngbǎo. However, this is not

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[56] T. 51, pp. 196-467. The preface of the work is dated 1004, but indications are that it was not published until 1009. See Ishii (1987:19) for this date.

[57] In *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* (hereafter abbreviated *ZZ*), 2b, 9, 3-5.

[58] In Yanagida (1984).

always so: in a handful of cases the Zōngbǎo is closer to the text of the Kōshōji than is the Déyì (Schlütter 1989:92). We therefore must conclude that both the Zōngbǎo and the Déyì are independent editions derived from a common source. This common source must have contained everything that is found in both the Zōngbǎo and Déyì texts, together with the features of each that are close to the Kōshōji version. As the Déyì has more features that are close to the Kōshōji than the Zōngbǎo does, it must be closer to the original source and perhaps was very much like it. After all, Déyì simply claims to have acquired an old edition that he had published, while Zōngbǎo talks about extensive editing based on three different versions, narrating how he added to and deleted from them, and filled in stories of the disciples' encounters with the master. This last item was, as just described, one of the main additions the longer version made to the Kōshōji text. However, if Zōngbǎo really was the editor of the edition associated with him, then we must dismiss his claims. Even if he introduced more alterations than did Déyì, the changes he made can only have involved new chapter titles, some rearrangement of chapter divisions, and fairly light editing of the text.

5. Qìsōng's *Liùzǔ fǎbǎo jì* 六祖法寶記

The relatively few scholars who have concerned themselves with the question of identifying the ancestral edition to the longer version of the *Platform Sūtra* have generally assumed that it was the one prepared by the famous Sòng-dynasty monk Qìsōng. However, the data presented above indicates that this scenario is very unlikely.

Qìsōng's edition is now lost, but it is known from a preface by the official Láng Jiǎn 郎簡 (d.u.), included in the *Tánjīn wénjí* 鐔津文集 compiled by Qìsōng himself.[59] The preface is entitled "*Liùzǔ fǎbǎo jì* xù" 六祖法寶記序 [Preface to the *Dharma Treasure Record of the Sixth Patriarch*]. In it, Láng complains that common people had added to and deleted from the words of the Patriarch, and made the style so vulgar and entangled (*bǐlǐ fánzá* 鄙俚繁雜) that the text could not be trusted. Láng then reports that he approached Qìsōng, who had written a piece in praise of the *Platform Sūtra*, and told Qìsōng that if he could correct it, he, Láng, would pay for its publication. Two years later, Qìsōng acquired an "old Cáoxī edition," edited it, and divided it into three fascicles, whereupon it was published. The preface is dated 1056.

However, if Qìsōng's edition was the ancestral long version of the *Platform Sūtra*, then as we have seen, he must have used an edition of a text like the Kōshōji as his source. But this text was probably first published in 1153, the year Cháo Zǐjiàn's preface is dated, since Cháo's preface probably does in fact refer to the ancestor of the

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[59] For references to Láng Jiǎn's biography, see Chāng (1975:3.1804). For the text of the preface, see Qìsōng, *Tánjīn wénjí*, T. 52, p. 703b-c.

Kōshōji edition. Of course, it may be that the text was in circulation earlier: Cháo Zǐjiàn's ancestor Cháo Jiǒng could have published his edition in the years before or after 1031 or, since he does not say anything about editing the text, he may simply have obtained an edition prepared by someone else at an earlier point. But Cháo Zǐjiàn mentions that the text he published was hand-written and he clearly considered it unique, and we have no indication that it might have been published or circulated earlier.[60]

Another point also suggests that Qìsōng's edition cannot have been the ancestor of the Déyì and Zōngbǎo editions. Qìsōng's *Chuánfǎ zhèngzōng jì* 傳法正宗記, from 1061, contains several passages that are parallel to passages in the longer *Platform Sūtra*, which can in turn be traced to the *Chuándēng lù*.[61] However, in the *Chuánfǎ zhèngzōng jì*, all of these passages employ wording that differs from the *Platform Sūtra* and the *Chuándēng lù*. It seems unlikely that before 1056, when Qìsōng prepared his edition of the *Platform Sūtra*, he would have been content to copy from the Kōshōji edition and the *Chuándēng lù*, while in the years prior to 1061, when he compiled the *Chuánfǎ zhèngzōng jì*, he rewrote everything and did not use any material from either text.[62]

Chinese literature contains several references to a *Liùzǔ fǎbǎo jì* 六祖法寶記 [*Dharma Treasure Record of the Sixth Patriarch*]. The earliest appears in the *Chóngwén zǒngmù* 崇文總目 [Complete Catalogue of Lofty Literature] from 1041, and this of course cannot be a reference to Qìsōng's 1056 edition.[63] In fact, here and everywhere else that this title is mentioned it is said to be in one fascicle, whereas Láng states that Qìsōng's edition was in three fascicles. It seems likely that "old Cáoxī edition" Qìsōng used was a copy of the one-fascicle edition of the *Platform Sūtra* with this title, but unfortunately we know nothing about what the text may have been like.

I have found no references to Qìsōng's edition of the *Platform Sūtra* in historical sources and no quotation that appears to be from it.[64] It seems that the Qìsōng edition

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[60] Citations attributed to Huìnéng or the *Platform Sūtra* in Chinese literature before the thirteenth century never correspond to the Kōshōji version of the text, but generally follow either the Dūnhuáng or the Huìxīn version.

[61] For these passages see T. 51, pp. 715-768.

[62] The *Chuándēng lù* was known to Qìsōng, who mentions it in his *Zhèngzōng jì*. See T. 50, 715c, line 2.

[63] *Chóngwén zǒngmù* 崇文總目, fasc. 10, p. 13a.

[64] The *Chányuàn méngqiú shíyí* 禪苑蒙求拾遺, of uncertain date, contains a long quotation from the *Platform Sūtra*, CBETA, X87, no. 1615, p. 100, a9-18 // Z 2B:21, p. 148, b15-c6 // R148, p. 295, b15-p. 296, a6. This corresponds to the longer *Platform Sūtra* in the Taishō edition, CBETA, T. 48, no. 2008, pp. 348, a14-349, b3, although a number of lines have been omitted. In Schlütter 1989:94, I made a serious mistake in confusing the *Chányuàn méngqiú shíyí* with the earlier *Chányuan méngqiú* 禪苑蒙求, from 1225. Furthermore, I failed to identify the quotation as being entirely from the longer *Platform Sūtra* and wrongly suggested that the quotation could have been from Qìsōng's edition.

failed to gain any widespread popularity, perhaps because of competition from the Huìxīn editions, and apparently, no trace of it has been preserved.

6. Some conclusions

The chart below shows what are almost certainly the main lines of textual development of the *Platform Sūtra*. While many details represented on the chart cannot be proven with absolute certainty, any alternative reconstruction of the relationship between the different editions of the *Platform Sūtra* must be able to explain the textual data summarized in this essay.
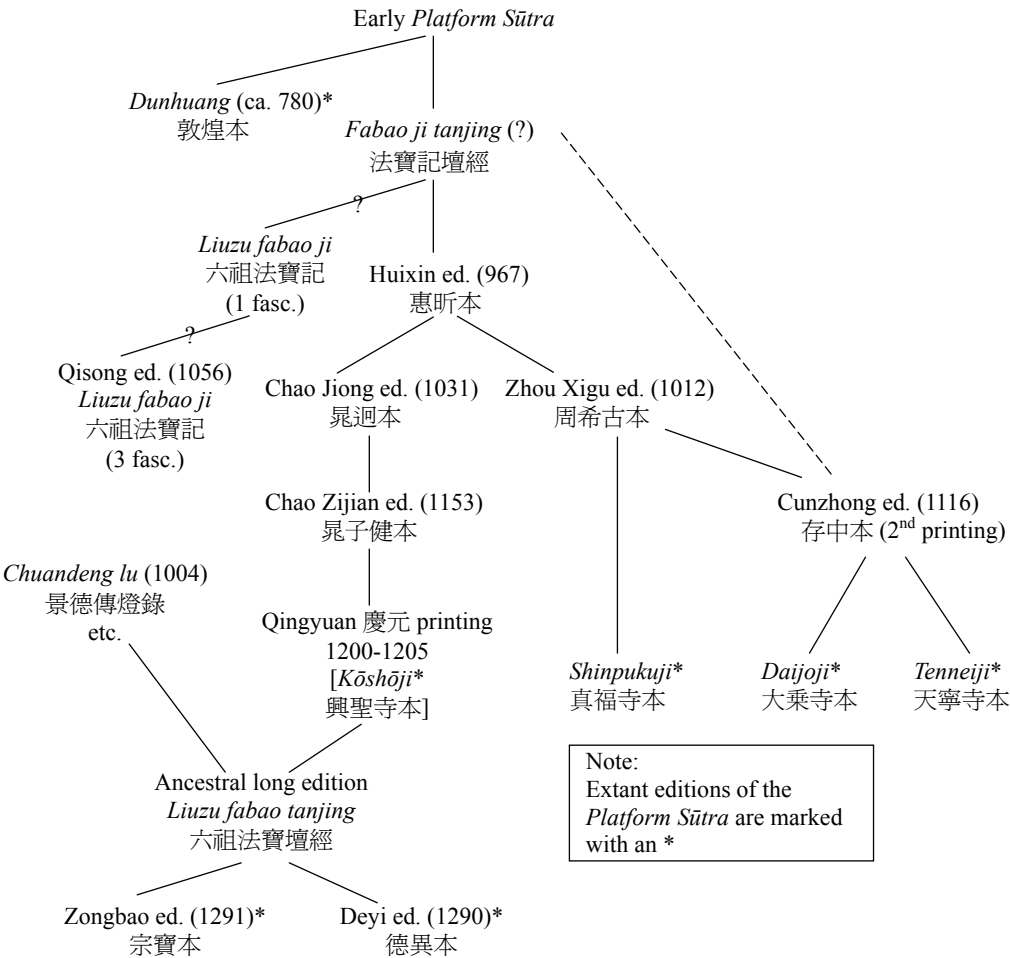
Early *Platform Sūtra*

Dunhuang (ca. 780)*
敦煌本

Fabao ji tanjing (?)
法寶記壇經

Liuzu fabao ji
六祖法寶記
(1 fasc.)

Huixin ed. (967)
惠昕本

Qisong ed. (1056)
Liuzu fabao ji
六祖法寶記
(3 fasc.)

Chao Jiong ed. (1031)
晁迥本

Zhou Xigu ed. (1012)
周希古本

Chao Zijian ed. (1153)
晁子健本

Cunzhong ed. (1116)
存中本 (2nd printing)

Chuandeng lu (1004)
景德傳燈錄
etc.

Qingyuan 慶元 printing
1200-1205
[*Kōshōji**
興聖寺本]

*Shinpukuji**
真福寺本

*Daijoji**
大乘寺本

*Tenneiji**
天寧寺本

Ancestral long edition
Liuzu fabao tanjing
六祖法寶壇經

Note:
Extant editions of the
Platform Sūtra are marked
with an *

Zongbao ed. (1291)*
宗寶本

Deyi ed. (1290)*
德異本

Figure 2

To sum up, we can first conclude that the Dūnhuáng version of the *Platform Sūtra* is indeed the earliest version of the text available to us, although other early versions of the text also must have been in circulation. Some scholars have understood Huìxīn's remarks that the text of the old *Platform Sūtra* was *fán* to mean that the text was prolix, since *fán* also carries a connotation of "many" and "complex," and that Huìxīn complained that the text had been *expanded* and that he abbreviated it (e.g. Yìnshùn 1971:278; see also the discussion in Jorgensen 2002). According to this view, the longer *Platform Sūtra*, which has been considered orthodox for the last seven centuries, might somehow be considered close to an "original" *Platform Sūtra*, but this can now be conclusively disproven.

Huìxīn indeed must have expanded the text he worked with somewhat, although the main contribution of the edition associated with him seems to be its more polished language and clearer layout. Some of these "improvements" may well already have been present in the text (or texts) that Huìxīn used, but nonetheless his edition quickly become the standard one in the Sòng after its 967 publication. Huìxīn's edition became the basis for at least three different versions in the Sòng, and almost all quotations I have identified that are attributed to Huìnéng or the *Platform Sūtra* in Sòng literature can be traced back to it. Interestingly, what probably was Cháo Jiǒng's edition of Huìxīn's version, which we know from the Kōshōji edition and which was adopted by the compilers of the ancestral long edition of the *Platform Sūtra*, apparently did not circulate widely during the Sòng, judging from surviving quotations. But it indirectly became enormously influential as the longer versions of the *Platform Sūtra* came to dominate in the Yuán and later.

As Chán developed, and especially as the quirky and often startling "encounter dialogue" (*jīyuán wèndá* 機緣問答) came to be a hallmark of the enlightened Chán master, the Huìxīn versions of the *Platform Sūtra* apparently began to be considered inadequate, as did other even older versions that seem to have continued to circulate.[65] It is unsurprising, especially after the publication of the *Chuándēng lù*, that Sòng-dynasty students of Chán felt that something was missing from the *Platform Sūtra*. This had been expressed already in the 1056 preface to Qìsōng's edition, and the same sentiment is found in the *Zǔtíng shìyuàn* 祖庭事苑 from 1108 which, although it notes that the *Platform Sūtra* was circulating widely, laments the fact that no "complete version" of it and of other older Chán texts could be found.[66] It was only a matter of time before someone would prepare an edition of the *Platform Sūtra* that included

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[65] This phrase *jīyuán wèndá* was coined by Yanagida Seizan, and cannot be found in any pre-modern Chán source; McRae (2000a:47).

[66] CBETA, X64, no. 1261, p. 423, b3-8 // Z 2:18, p. 110, d17-p. 111, a4 // R113, p. 220, b17-p. 221, a4.

famous dialogues between Huìnéng and his disciples, and other well-known stories about Huìnéng and his life. Once such a text had been compiled, it quickly came to be considered the orthodox *Platform Sūtra* and only in recent times have we begun to be aware of its long and complex history. It is to be hoped that scholarship on the *Platform Sūtra* will continue to develop and that the methodology of textual criticism will be an important component of it.

Abbreviations

CBETA   *CBETA Chinese Electronic Tripiṭaka Collection*
T   *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經
ZZ   *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經

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