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Author(s): Jan Yün-Hua 冉雲華

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# TSUNG-MI

## HIS ANALYSIS OF CH'AN BUDDHISM \*)

BY

JAN YÜN-HUA 冉雲華

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The following abbreviations will be used in the notes:

- CSTP* *Chin-shih ts'ui-pien* 金石萃編 ('Selected epigraphical texts from metal and stone inscriptions'). Ed. by Wang Ch'ang (1724-1806). Shanghai: Tsui-liu-t'ang, 1893.
- HTC* *Hsü-tsang-ching* 續藏經 ('The Supplement to the Chinese Tripiṭaka'). Shanghai: Han-fen-lou reprint, 1923.
- SKSC* *Sung Kao-seng-chuan* 宋高僧傳 ('Sung Biographies of eminent monks'). By Tsan-ning 贊寧 (988). T. No. 2061.
- T* *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 ('Taishō edition of Tripiṭaka in Chinese'), Tokyo, 1924-1929.
- YCC* *Yüan-chüeh-ching* or *Ta-fang-kuang Yüan-chüeh hsiu-to-lo Liao-i-ching* 大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經. T. No. 842

### INTRODUCTION

In Chinese Buddhism Shih Tsung-mi 釋宗密 (780-841 A.D.) occupies a very special place. His contribution to the history and ideology of the Ch'an school during the VIIIth century A.D. and

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his works on the comparative study of Chinese religions are all important. He was one of the few scholars who were able to earn an inter-religious and inter-sectarian reputation and respect. Several modern scholars from China and Japan, as well as from Europe and America, have paid attention to this distinguished Buddhist thinker. However, the broadness of his scholarship, as we will see, was very extensive and it is difficult for any single scholar to make a thorough and complete assessment of his contribution. Up to this moment, his review of Buddhist Chinese sects is comparatively well-known through the efforts of Hans Haas, Fung Yu-lan, Ui Hakuju and others, and through the recent compilation of W. de Bary <sup>1)</sup>. His assessment and critical judgement of Ch'an Buddhism is famous in China and Japan, but the relevant documents are still not available in any Western language. His competence in the Hua-yen school has been noted, but far from completely <sup>2)</sup>. His relations with other schools of Buddhism as well as with Confucianism are gradually emerging into clarity, though not systematically <sup>3)</sup>.

Considering his scholarly achievements, the reputation of Tsung-mi in medieval China was far from receiving a fair judgement. To the Neo-Confucianists, he still was a Buddhist; to Ch'an monks, he was an ex-member who did not share their sectarian enthusiasm nor limit himself within the practice formalized by various Ch'an sects; moreover, the particular sect of Ch'an with which he was once associated has declined and been out of the main stream of Ch'an Buddhism for a thousand years. The philosophical school of Hua-yen, in which he is respected as the fifth Patriarch, has

<sup>1)</sup> Hans Haas, "Tsungmi's Yuen-zan-lun, eine Abhandlung über den Ursprung des Menschen aus dem Kanon des chinesischen Buddhismus," *Archiv f. Religionswiss.* Bd. XII (1909), 491-532; Nukariya Kaiten 滑谷快天, *Zengaku shisō shi* 禪學思想史, I (Tokyo, 1923, reprint 1969), 526-544; Fung Yu-lan, *Chung-kuo che-hsüeh shih* 中國哲學史, II (Shanghai, 1934; Hong-Kong reprint, 1959), 780-799; Ui Hakuju 宇井伯壽, *Zenshūshi kenkyū* 禪宗史研究, I (Tokyo, 1939), 261 ff.; and especially his translation, *Zengen-shosenshūtojo*, Iwanami Bunko Nos. 1888-1890 (Tokyo, 1939); W. T. De Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition* (New York, 1969), 179-196; Furuta Shōkin 古田紹金, "Keihō Shūmitsu no kenkyū 圭峯宗密の研究," *Shina bukkyō shigaku*, II (1938), no. 2, 83-97.

<sup>2)</sup> Takamine Ryōshū 高峯了洲, *Kegon shisō shih* 華嚴思想史 (Tokyo, 1963), 299-316.

<sup>3)</sup> De Bary, *op. cit.*; Michihata Ryōshū 道端良秀, *Tōdai bukkyō shi no kenkyū* 唐代佛教史の研究 (Kyoto, 1957), 320-324; Araki Kengo 荒木見悟, *Bukkyō to jukyō* 佛教と儒教 (Tokyo, 1966 reprint).

ceased to be influential in China for centuries. His liberal views, though regarded as objectionable by sectarian monks of Ch'an Buddhism, are congenial to modern scholarship. This, of course, does not mean that his outlook on religion is as objective and academic as scholarship of our time would require. One has to remember that he was a faithful monk and sincerely regarded himself as a member of the Ho-tse 荷澤 sect of Ch'an Buddhism. He respected Shen-hui 神會 (670-762) as the seventh Patriarch of the Ch'an school. The difference between him and his Ch'an colleagues lies in the fact that his sectarianism did not hinder his regard for the doctrines and practices of other branches of Buddhism, as well as other religions.

Tsung-mi's works on Ch'an Buddhism have been particularly attractive to Chinese and Japanese scholars. As early as 1934, when Fung Yu-lan published the second volume of his monumental work, *Chung-kuo che-hsüeh-shih* 中國哲學史, two-thirds of the chapter on Ch'an Buddhism were based on Tsung-mi's analyses <sup>1)</sup>. Later, he revised this chapter for the English version of the volume, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II, replacing his early text by a section from another book written in 1947, *The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy* <sup>2)</sup>. The new version is based on the traditional account of the Ch'an doctrine, which is more systematic and exerted more influence on the later history of the school; but in an historical and philosophical perspective, the later account represents only one or two of various Ch'an traditions which flourished in the VIIIth century. In recent Chinese and Japanese studies of Ch'an Buddhism, however, scholars pay high tribute to Tsung-mi. This tendency is clearly indicated in works by Jen Chi-yü 任繼愈, Kuo Ch'an-po 郭湛波, Sekiguchi Shindai 關口真大, Yamasaki Hiroshi 山崎宏, etc. <sup>3)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> Fung Yu-lan, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2)</sup> Comp. Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, II, *The Period of Classical Learning*, transl. by D. Bodde (Princeton, 1953), 386-406; and Fung, *The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy*, transl. by R. E. Hughes (London, 1947), 159-167.

<sup>3)</sup> Jen Chi-yü 任繼愈, *Han T'ang Chung-kuo fo-chiao ssu-hsiang shih lun-chi* 漢唐中國佛教思想史論集 (Peking, 1963), 105-109; Kuo Ch'an-po 郭湛波, *Chung-kuo chung-ku ssu-hsiang shih* 中國中古思想史 (Hongkong, 1967), 318-328; Sekiguchi Shindai 關口真大, *Zenshū shisō shi* 禪宗思想史 (Tokyo, 1964); Yamasaki Hiroshi 山崎宏, "Keihō Shūmitsu ni tsuite 圭峯宗密について," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, XV (1965), 490-495, and "Keihō Shūmitsu kō 圭峯宗密考," *Ryūkoku shidan* 龍谷史壇, 56-57 (1967), pp. 104-115.

In contrast with the tendency mentioned above, Tsung-mi's work on Ch'an Buddhism is still far from well-known in Western works. Although his name is occasionally referred to <sup>1)</sup>, there are still no detailed studies on his life and cultural achievement.

The main purpose of this paper is to present his analyses on Ch'an Buddhism in VIIIth century China. If one wishes to adopt a new term for this phase of Ch'an Buddhism, 'Middle Ch'an' may be the aptest term. It is the period after the early Chinese Patriarchs, but before the systematization into Five Sects. As there are many works on the earlier and the later developments of the school, a study of Middle Ch'an should be useful as it links the other two.

As far as Western readers of Ch'an Buddhism are concerned, the documents by Tsung-mi are particularly important. This is due to the impact of T. D. Suzuki, who introduced and stimulated Western interest in Zen (Ch'an) Buddhism. After some decades of research, scholars have gradually realized that Suzuki only represented the Zen of the Rinzai 臨濟 sect (the sect of Lin-chi). Consequently the interest in Sōtō 曹洞 Zen (Chinese Ts'ao-tung) emerged <sup>2)</sup>. Though these schools have become the two influential streams of the Five Sects in East Asia, yet as one will see they are comparatively later developments.

The rebellious, anti-textual, anti-ceremonial, anti-institutional tendency in Zen Buddhism, as generally known to Western students, is only part of the Ch'an complex. In other words, the objections to the reading of scriptures, to the study of dogmatics, to worship and sitting in meditation, were only supported by certain sects of the Ch'an school, at a certain time, but were not at all universal. In this respect, the contribution of Tsung-mi is indeed unique: he analysed the sects without sectarian sentiment, and insisted on the metaphysical foundations of Ch'an practice.

His comparatively objective attitude and highly scholarly works were not an accidental development, but a result of his thorough study, deep understanding and personal involvement in Ch'an and other schools of Buddhism. This means that his outlook on Ch'an Buddhism is closely related to his personal experience.

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<sup>1)</sup> For example, Hu Shih, "Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in China, its History and Method," *Philosophy East and West*, III (1953), 14 ff.; H. Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism* (New York, 1963), 41, 84; Kenneth Ch'en, *Buddhism in China* (Princeton, 1964), 248, 316; P. B. Yampolsky, transl., *The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York, 1967), 46 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> Ed. Conze, *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies* (Columbia, 1968), pp. 30 ff.

If one wants to evaluate his contributions to Buddhist thought and to understand his attitude, one has to examine his personal life, his academic background, his associations and his cultural environment.

#### YOUNG SCHOLAR

All biographical sources agree that Tsung-mi was born in 780 in a Ho 何 family at Hsi-ch'ung 西充 county of Kuo prefecture (Kuo-chou 果州) in the central part of the present Szu-ch'uan province. The Ho family was influential and prosperous in the locality <sup>1)</sup>. The boy studied the Confucian classics since his early age. His writings show that he had thoroughly understood Confucianism. His study of the Confucian scriptures lasted from the age of seven until seventeen, which was the common practice in Chinese education at that time. The aim of the study of the Confucian classics was to pass the imperial examinations, and thus to become an official or a minister and to realize Confucian ideas through one's public career. Tsung-mi "wished to take part in social life, and thereby to benefit the living beings" <sup>2)</sup>. Under these circumstances, his study had to follow the system and subjects of the examinations. During the middle of the T'ang period in which Tsung-mi lived, the highest examination was divided into the degrees of *ming-ching* 明經 (literally Understanding the Scriptures) and *chin-shih* 進士 (Advanced Scholar, usually known as Doctor). The subjects of these two sets of examinations both stressed the Confucian classics, poetic composition and dissertations in prose on current affairs; but the Taoist scriptures were also included at one time, before Tsung-mi's lifetime <sup>3)</sup>. The difference lies in that the former examination put more emphasis on scriptural knowledge and oral examination, while the latter's emphasis was on literary composition and written examination. To a serious student of philosophy, as Tsung-mi was, these subjects must have been highly disappointing. To the mind of a young man, the Chinese philosophy of both Confucianism and Taoism was unable to offer a satisfactory answer to his ultimate questions, viz., if the goodness of life is derived from Tao or from primordial matter or from Heaven, then from where do evil and injustice come into

<sup>1)</sup> "本豪家", *CSTP*, 114/6d, line 18; "家本豪盛", *SKSC*, vi/741c, line 23.

<sup>2)</sup> "欲干世以活生靈", *ib.* line 24.

<sup>3)</sup> Ts'en Chung-mien 岑仲勉, *Sui T'ang shih* 隋唐史 (Peking, 1957), 183-189; R. des Rotours, *Le Traité des Examens...* (Paris, 1932), 29, 172.

the world. As he found, there is no mention of causation in Chinese thought, where the problem remains unanswerable. These questions would become more urgent in his mind with the advancement of his power of understanding, the progress of his age as well as the events in his family. Therefore, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two, he often attended Buddhist discourses and readings of sūtras and śāstras as a lay Buddhist. From twenty-three to twenty-five, his time was again devoted to the study of Confucianism<sup>1</sup>). He must have studied it with a split mind, to fulfil his scholarly duties as his family expected him to do, while being dissatisfied with the subjects which he was studying.

Looking into his life more deeply, one may find causes of mental distress in the vicissitudes of his family as well as in the possible change of his career training. In one of his works, Tsung-mi himself writes: "I, Tsung-mi, must have committed a sin, as I lost my parents in my early age. Whenever I suffered from hard experience, I had eternal remorse for being unable to recall my parents to life and to look after them"<sup>2</sup>). His biographer, Tsan-ning (919-1001), also states: "Being a man of eminent talent, he was [forced] to follow an accountant"<sup>3</sup>) for a career. These references indicate that though his family was rich and powerful, and he studied Confucian classics and was encouraged to become an official, yet all these things must have happened when his parents were still alive. After the death of his parents, Tsung-mi probably lost the affection and support of his surviving relatives, and was forced to look for an easy-got but far from respectable job as an apprentice of an accounts officer. In ancient Chinese society, the profession of an accountant was never regarded as respectable

<sup>1</sup>) YCC *Ta-shu ch'ao*, HTC, 1/14/3. p. 222b lines 5-8: "實而言之卽七歲乃至十六七為儒學;十八九二十一二之間,素服莊居,聽習經論;二十三又却全功專於儒學;乃至二十五歲過禪門方出家矣".

<sup>2</sup>) "宗密罪薈,早年喪親,每履雪霜之悲,永懷風樹之恨." T. No. 1792, p. 505a lines 3-5. The passage is one of the best examples of Tsung-mi's scholarship in Confucianism. Literally, the word *feng-shu* (wind-tree) is an abbreviation from a passage in *Han-shih wai-chuan*, transl. J. R. Hightower, (Cambridge, Mass. 1952), p. 292: "The tree would be still, but the wind would not stop; the son wishes to look after them, but his parents will not tarry."

<sup>3</sup>) "負俊才而隨計吏", SKSC, vi/741c lines 23-24. The passage has escaped the notice of most researchers. I suspect that his parents probably passed away sometime between his ages of 18 and 22. Tsung-mi himself states that during these years he had "worn white (mourning) garments and lived at his farm 素服莊居", see footnote 1 above.

by people of the *élite*. Taking these personal mishaps into consideration, Tsung-mi's problem of evil and injustice was not merely for him an academic question, but probably a problem which arose out of the depth of his mind and sufferings.

The year 807 was a significant date in Tsung-mi's life. Now aged 27, his studies and scholarly attainments had qualified him to be included into the list of candidates for the prefecture. He therefore left his native country and went to the prefecture. While there, purely by chance, he met a visiting monk of the Ch'an sect and attended sermons delivered by him. Though he had no opportunity of talking with the monk personally yet the young man highly admired him. There is no information about the subject of the sermons by the Ch'an monk, though they were probably connected with the urgent questions that were burning in the mind of the young student. Otherwise he would not have been so attracted to the monk as to decide to renounce his household life. The decision and choice of becoming a Ch'an monk were understandable. There were a number of members of this sect native from Szu-ch'uan province. This geographical factor must have played a role in favour of his future career. Despite his renunciation of the worldly life, his Confucian studies had left a profound imprint on him. The ethical conscience and elegant style of his writings testify to this influence.

The Ch'an monk whom he had met was Tao-yüan 道圓, about whom our information is solely from the writings of Tsung-mi. According to this information, Tao-yüan belonged to the Ho-tse sect of Ch'an Buddhism, and claimed to rank as the third generation from the founder, Shen-hui (670-762), the well-known sectarian leader of the Southern School of Ch'an Buddhism <sup>1)</sup>. Tao-yüan seems to have been an average master of the sect, but not a scholar, as no work is attributed to him. His power of judgement was accurate as shown by his treatment of Tsung-mi. He maintained a friendly relation with his associates as testified by his popularity when he succeeded to the abbotship of his teacher in Ch'eng-tu in 822 A.D. <sup>2)</sup>. Following their first encounter, Tsung-mi immediately requested Tao-yüan to shave his head and to admit him as a

<sup>1)</sup> The best work on Shen-hui in a western language is J. Gernet, *Entretiens du Maître de Dhyāna Chen-houei de Ho-tsō* (Hanoi, 1949). See also P. Demiéville, "Un nouveau manuscrit des Logia de Chen-houei", *Essays presented to Prof. Zenryū Tsukamoto* (Kyoto, 1961), 1-14.

<sup>2)</sup> Ui Hakuju, *op. cit.* 258 f.

disciple. The request was granted. The young scholar now became a novice. Then he was ordained into the Saṅgha as a monk with full commitment by a Master of Monastic Discipline named Ch'eng 拯. Thereafter, he followed this master as a junior member, running through the routine life of monks. One day, the master and the disciples were invited to the house of Jen Kuan 任灌, a Buddhist devotee. In the course of the recitation of scriptures in the family, Tsung-mi got hold of a copy of the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* 圓覺經 ("Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment")<sup>1)</sup> Before finishing the reading of one roll of the text, he jumped in excitement and tears flowed down as he was overwhelmed by his new discovery<sup>2)</sup>. When the recitation was over, he went back to the monastery and reported his new experience to his teacher. The Ch'an master was deeply touched by the enthusiasm of the young disciple, so he soothed the latter with these words: "You will greatly spread this doctrine of Complete and Sudden Enlightenment. Buddhas handed down this scripture for you only"<sup>3)</sup>.

Tsung-mi's excitement about the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* was not accidental. The metaphysical formulas contained in it were exactly the philosophy which he had sought for a long time. It is only through an all-inclusive approach that the unconditional absolute can be determined, differences of various religious philosophies and practices can be understood and contradictions can be harmonized dialectically. There must have been unsolved problems in his mind which made him restless before his conversion. Later, after he entered into the monkhood, the teaching of Tranquil Wisdom and Absence of Thought as taught by Shen-hui's school of Ch'an Buddhism might have put his mind at peace, intuitively. Yet it was only by a philosophical system that Tsung-mi's questions could be intellectually solved. It was under these circumstances that Tsung-mi found the sūtra, and no wonder that he was excited and even tearful at the moment of the discovery.

Later, in the preface to his voluminous commentary of the

<sup>1)</sup> T. 842. An English translation is now available in Charles Luk, *Ch'an and Zen Teaching*, III (London, 1962), 149-278. Scholars like Mochizuki Shinkō 望月信亨 and others have expressed doubts about this work as a Chinese translation of a Sanskrit scripture. They suggest it might be a Chinese composition based on other Buddhist texts. See Mochizuki, *Bukkyō kyōten seiritsu shiron* 佛教經典成立史論, (Kyoto, 1946), 509 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> P'ei Hsiu's preface to T. 1795, 523c, line 6.

<sup>3)</sup> "汝當大弘圓頓之教。此經諸佛授汝耳。" *Ib.* line 7.

sūtra, Tsung-mi summarized his personal feelings and the reasons why he was attracted to it. He says:

In boyhood I studied the Confucian classics exclusively; I acquired Indian [Buddhist] scriptures in my twenties. However, both of them are attached to the means rather than to the goal: their taste is like rice-chaff and dregs. Fortunately, I was then attracted to the Master of P'ei-shang (a region in Szu-ch'uan) and had a harmonious relationship with him, as close as a needle and a tiny particle. For Ch'an I had the Southern School; for doctrinaire teaching I encountered this text. Under the impact of one word, my mind was opened. Within one roll of this text, the heavenly world of philosophy became clear <sup>1)</sup>.

He further points out:

This text is rich in literature, broad in philosophical meaning. Truly it is not mixed with superficial elegance, but, as far as it indicates the substance and makes people surrender to the incitement of Buddhism, no other text is comparable to the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* <sup>2)</sup>.

The all-inclusive doctrine presented in this scripture was very close to the synthetic and dialectic tendencies of Tsung-mi. These tendencies first made him appreciate this sūtra and then led to his conversion to the Hua-yen school, which is well-known for its one-and-all philosophy.

It was a common practice within the Buddhist community, especially among the Ch'an monks, to travel to various centers of learning. Tsung-mi thus paid a visit to the monastery of his master's teacher, Wei-chung 惟忠 (whose lay surname was Chang 張, an abbot of Sheng-shou monastery 聖壽寺 at Ch'eng-tu in Szu-ch'uan, died 822?) <sup>3)</sup> who kindly encouraged the young

1) “髻專魯誥，冠討竺墳，俱溺筌罟，唯味糠粕。  
幸於涪上，針芥相投，禪遇南宗，教逢斯典。  
一言之下，心地開通，一軸之中，義天朗耀。”

Tsung-mi's preface to T. 1795, 524b, lines 20-23.

2) “文富義博，誠讓雜華。指體投機，無偕圓覺。” *Ib.* lines b/29 to c/1.

3) There is some confusion about this monk and another master of Ch'an. Both of them were called Wei-chung, though their lay surnames were different and they belonged to separate sub-sects of the Ch'an school. Despite this discrepancy, most scholars prefer the information of Tsung-mi. See Nukariya Kaiten, *op. cit.*, 527 ff., Furuta, *op. cit.* 85 ff.; and Ui, *op. cit.*, 256 ff. In an unfinished Ms., Hu Shih took up the controversy again and pointed out that this Wei-chung did not belong to the Ho-tse school of Ch'an, but was a disciple of the Ching-chung Monastery of Ch'an, i.e., the Second House as mentioned by Tsung-mi in document B. Hu further alleged that this confusion was purposefully created by Tsung-mi with an evil intention, i.e., to affiliate himself with the school founded by Shen-hui of

monk, saying: "You are a suitable person for preaching. You ought to succeed at the imperial capitals" <sup>1</sup>). He also met monk Shen-chao 神照 (776-838), another native of Szu-ch'uan, who was then studying at Ch'eng-tu under Master Wei-chung. Later Shen-

Ho-tse, which was, according to Hu, most influential at that time. See Hu Shih 胡適, "Pa P'ei Hsiu ti T'ang ku Kuei-feng Ting-hui Ch'an-shih ch'uan-fa-pei 跋裴休的唐故圭峯定慧禪師傳法碑", *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica*, XXXIV/1 (1962), 5-26, especially pp. 9-10. I am, however, not convinced by Hu's arguments. (a) Hu derives his main arguments from *SKSC* which was completed in 988 A.D., much later than Tsung-mi's work of the early IXth century. Moreover, there are other confusions in *SKSC*. It is difficult to disprove the authenticity of an earlier work by the evidences of a later work. There are a number of Ch'an masters mentioned in the work of Tsung-mi who failed to be included in *SKSC*. It is dangerous to disprove early information because it is omitted in a later work. (b) Tsung-mi clearly mentions the surnames of the Ch'an Master to whom he was related and it differs from that of *SKSC*, which Hu regards as reliable. (c) At the time of Tsung-mi, the school of Ho-tse Shen-hui no longer remained as the only influential school of Ch'an. There were a number of masters from other sub-sects of the Ch'an school who were active at the T'ang court. This situation is evident from the debate concerning the orthodox genealogy of Ch'an patriarchs in 796 A.D.; cf. Chih-p'an, *A Chronicle of Buddhism in China*, 581-960, transl. by me (Santiniketan, 1966), pp. 75 ff. (d) Had Tsung-mi really falsified the lineage of his teachers, his contemporaries would not have remained silent. One has to remember that during the second quarter of the IXth century, when Tsung-mi's work on Ch'an history was published, the political atmosphere was tense, power struggles were hot at the court and Tsung-mi was involved in one of these struggles; the sectarian feelings were keen, and the genealogy of the patriarchs was a focusing topic among Ch'an Buddhists themselves. It was almost impossible for one to proclaim a false lineage of contemporary patriarchs, though it was easy to claim an ancient lineage of Indian patriarchs. One has also to remember that monk Shen-chao (died 838), whom Hu regards as a true disciple of Shen-hui's sect, had personal relationship with Tsung-mi. P'ei Hsiu, the epitaph writer, was not unfamiliar with Ch'an history as he had been closely connected with the Ch'an Master Huang-po (see *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, transl. by J. Blofeld, New York, 1958, 27-28) before he wrote his epitaph of Tsung-mi. Both of them, however, never challenged the lineage of Tsung-mi.

(e) When one has gone through the works of Tsung-mi, one cannot help thinking that Tsung-mi would not be so vulgar in spirit. Should he have really falsified his genealogical lineage as a means to enhance his own prestige as Hu suspects, Tsung-mi would not have left the Ch'an school. For enhancing his position at the court, he had already Ch'eng-kuan, the most influential Buddhist leader of the period. Taking all these considerations together, I feel Hu's suspicion is rather out of context.

<sup>1</sup>) "傳教人也當盛於帝都." *CSTP*, 114/6d line 1.

chao became a famous master at Loyang, the Eastern capital. Tsung-mi made a strong impression on Shen-chao; the latter said: "This monk (Tsong-mi) is one of the Bodhisattvas; but only few are able to know his true identity" <sup>1)</sup>. The other monks praised him as well.

When he was 30, in 810 A.D., Tsung-mi went to Hsiang-yang 襄陽 in the present province of Hu-pei. It was at this place he had the opportunity to become acquainted with a monk of the Hua-yen school. The monk had been suffering from illness and gave him a copy of a commentary of the *Hua-yen-ching* (*Avatamsaka-sūtra*) written by Ch'eng-kuan 澄觀 (737-838) <sup>2)</sup>. He accepted the book and studied it by his own effort. He found that the book contained a profound, yet explicit philosophy. No other book had been as helpful to him as this work. He was so interested that he could not restrain himself from lecturing on this commentary of the *Hua-yen-ching*, even though he had not yet studied the sūtra itself.

In a way these episodes cannot be regarded as mere chance, as Tsung-mi's mental inclination was synthetic from the very beginning of his intellectual life, and so are the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* and the *Hua-yen-ching*.

A year later (811), he carried his mission of lecturing on the *Hua-yen-ching* farther to Lo-yang, the Eastern capital of the T'ang empire. The audience here was far larger and more learned. It seems that by this time the Hua-yen doctrine had been firmly and deeply established in his mind. Otherwise he would not have talked constantly on the newly acquired sūtra in place of Ch'an, in which he had more training and better qualifications. We are told that his sermons at Lo-yang were very brilliant and attractive. Some adepts of the Hua-yen school were overwhelmingly impressed by his lectures <sup>3)</sup>. Through the kind offices of a disciple of Ch'eng-kuan, Tsung-mi wrote his first letter to the master on Oct. 4, 811, begging

<sup>1)</sup> Text of an epitaph of Shen-chao by Pai Chü-i 白居易 (772-846) in *Pai-shih Ch'ang-ch'ing chi* 白氏長慶集, *Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed. ch. 70/391. As it has been pointed out in note 3, pp. 9-10, this monk knew Tsung-mi personally and was a fellow countryman of Tsung-mi. He agreed that Tsung-mi belonged to Shen-hui's school. Should Tsung-mi have really made a false lineage, why did this monk not voice any protest?

<sup>2)</sup> SKSC, 742a, line 3. The commentaries by Ch'eng-kuan are edited in T. 1735-1737.

<sup>3)</sup> T. 1795, p. 577b, line 14, mentions T'ai-kung 泰恭, *ib. c.*, line 4 mentions Chih-hui 智輝.

him to explain some difficulties. About a month later, he received a reply (November 1st), which led to his second letter to the master, dated November 12th<sup>1</sup>). This friendly correspondence brought about the second turning point of Tsung-mi's life, i.e., his final decision to become a scholarly monk of the Hua-yen school, though he still retained good relations with the Ch'an sect.

#### SCHOLARLY AGE

The decision to associate himself with Ch'eng-kuan was indeed a great turning point in Tsung-mi's life. For one thing, Ch'eng-kuan was then the central figure in the Chinese Buddhist world. He was a very learned monk, well-versed in the doctrines of various schools, connected with great personalities senior to him; a joint translator of the *Hua-yen-ching*, he wrote a number of important commentaries on this scripture, and was respected by the emperors as their personal teacher. As early as 799, he had already been awarded the title of Ch'ing-liang Kuo-shih 清涼國師 (Imperial Master of Purity and Coolness). Thereafter, he continued his association with the Imperial Court. In 810 A.D., his reputation was further enhanced as Emperor Hsien-tsung 憲宗 honored the master with a golden official seal, and appointed him Kuo-shih-t'ung 國師統 (Imperial Master and Superintendent of Monks)<sup>2</sup>). It was at the height of Ch'eng-kuan's career that Tsung-mi came into contact with him. The contact had three consequences. (1) Tsung-mi became a follower of the Hua-yen school and thereafter lived together with other scholarly monks around Ch'eng-kuan. In other words, he moved into an intellectual world from the world of intuitive practice of Ch'an. (2) More research facilities were now available to him as Ch'eng-kuan had connections with various great monasteries. This made it possible for him to be productive in writing. And (3) it brought him into association with the *élite* and the Imperial Court. Each of these consequences had its impact on Tsung-mi's life. The first two consequences were, of course, beneficial to his scholarship; the third brought a mixture of effects: official honours as well as risks in political involvement.

Encouraged by his correspondence with Ch'eng-kuan, Tsung-mi went to the Western capital, Ch'ang-an, and became a disciple of Ch'eng-kuan in 812. The meeting was satisfactory to both the master and the disciple; the master found that the young

<sup>1</sup>) *Ib.* 576c-578a.

<sup>2</sup>) Cf. Chih-p'an, *op. cit.* (note 3, p. 10), pp. 75, 94.

monk was a very promising scholar with unusual talent. He blessed the new disciple by these words: "Except you, who is better qualified for travelling to the Lotus world of Vairocana Buddha together with me?"<sup>1)</sup> As to Tsung-mi, this was a rare opportunity of learning. He closely attended the master day and night for a period of two years. After that intensive study, Tsung-mi lectured and preached at various monasteries for the next few years<sup>2)</sup>. He continued his intimate contact with the master and received support and help from him.

In February of 816, Tsung-mi went to Chung-nan 終南 mountain, not far from Ch'ang-an, settled at Chih-chü Monastery 智矩寺, vowed for a seclusion and devoted three years' full time to reading the *Tripiṭaka*. It seems that this was probably the first time that Tsung-mi had to read the whole collection of the Chinese Buddhist Scriptures extensively and systematically. It was during this period of seclusion that Tsung-mi completed his first work, *Yüan-chüeh-ching K'o-wen* 圓覺經科文, an annotated outline of the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* in two chapters<sup>3)</sup>.

After these three years of seclusion, he returned to the capital, Ch'ang-an, sometime in 819. There he wrote the *Chin-kang Pan-jo-shu* 金剛般若疏 or a commentary of the *Vajracchedikā-prājñā-pāramitāsūtra*, when staying at Hsing-fu Monastery 興福寺<sup>4)</sup>. It should be noted that this sūtra was a favourite reading of the South School of Ch'an Buddhism. Tsung-mi must have been familiar with the text from the very beginning of his career as a Ch'an monk. At the beginning of 820, he moved to Pao-shou Monastery 保壽寺. It was in those two monasteries that he wrote a commentary on *Wei-shih San-shih-lun Sung* 唯識三十論頌 (*Triṃśikā Vijñaptimātra Kārikā*)<sup>5)</sup>. This was his only work on Yogācāra philosophy; it was very remarkable for an adept of the Ch'an and Hua-yen schools in the late T'ang period to have taken up the study of this highly systematized philosophy of ancient India. His commentary was based on the works written by Asanga and Vasubandhu, and an early Chinese commentary by monk Chao 肇 of Ta-yün Monastery 大雲寺<sup>6)</sup>.

1) "毗盧華藏能隨我遊者其汝乎?" CSTEP, 114/6d, 2-3.

2) S. Mochizuki, *Bukkyō daijiten*, p. 2379b.

3) The work is lost.

4) T. 1701.

5) The commentary is no longer in existence.

6) Otherwise unknown.

His stay at Ch'ang-an was longer than a year, and it was a productive phase of his life as a writer. His personal interest was, however, more in a secluded life in the mountains and in Buddhist learning, rather than in the glammers of the capital. He therefore left the imperial city for Ch'ing-liang 清涼 Mountain (the Wu-t'ai shan in present Shan-hsi) in the first lunar month during the first year of the Ch'ang-ch'ing period (821 A.D.). From there he travelled to Ts'ao-t'ang Monastery 草堂寺 near Kuei-feng 圭峯 mountain, also not far from Ch'ang-an. This monastery was a historical monument where the eminent Central Asian monk, Kumārajīva, once stayed and rendered a number of important Buddhist scriptures into Chinese from Indic languages, at the beginning of the Vth century. It was also the place where Tsung-mi's master, Ch'eng-kuan, wrote a commentary to the *Hua-yen-ching* <sup>1)</sup>. Tsung-mi was deeply attracted to the place. He decided to live in seclusion at the monastery so as to "break his worldly activities and to cease all external occasions in order to nourish his soul and to refine his knowledge" <sup>2)</sup>. Within the period of this seclusion, he accomplished his monumental work *Yüan-chüeh-ching Ta-shu* 圓覺經大疏, i.e. *A Great Commentary of Yüan-chüeh-ching* in twelve volumes, which he had planned since long ago <sup>3)</sup>. The work was started in the spring of 822, and completed in the fall of 823. He critically studied all the early commentaries of the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* by Wei-ch'üeh 惟惔, Wu-shih 悟實, Chih-chien 志堅 and Tao-ch'üan 道詮 respectively <sup>4)</sup>. Thus he firmly established himself as an authority on the *Yüan-chüeh-ching*. The number of disciples at his lectures often exceeded a hundred.

Meantime, he moved to Feng-te Monastery 豐德寺 of the Southern Mountains near Ch'ang-an for a while and there he completed his book *Hua-yen lun-kuan* 華嚴論貫 <sup>5)</sup>; he then returned to Kuei-feng Monastery and continued his reading of the scriptures and the

<sup>1)</sup> SKSC, 737b, l. 25.

<sup>2)</sup> "絕迹息緣，養神鍊智."

<sup>3)</sup> Available in *HTC*, I/14/2.

<sup>4)</sup> Information about these four early commentators is solely found in Tsung-mi's *YCC Ta-shu*: "Those who made commentaries on the sūtra are Wei-ch'üeh, a Master of Law of Pao-kuo Monastery in the capital city; Wu-shih, a Master of Ch'an of Hsien-t'ien Monastery; Chih-chien, a Master of Law of Chien-fu Monastery; and, Tao-ch'üan, a Master of Law [of Tsang-hai Monastery] of Peking. . ." *HTC*, I, xiv, 2, 120a.

<sup>5)</sup> The work is lost.

practice of Ch'an Buddhism at this place. He wrote another commentary on *The Discipline in Four Divisions* (*Dharmaguptavinaya*)<sup>1)</sup>.

The most important work of Tsung-mi was *Kuei-feng lan-jo Ch'an-tsang* 圭峯蘭若禪藏 or *The Ch'an Piṭaka of Kuei-feng Monastery*<sup>2)</sup>, which is better known by another title, *Ch'an-yüan chu-ch'üan* 禪源諸詮 (*Various Explanations on the Sources of Ch'an*), a comprehensive study and collection of Ch'an Buddhism in one hundred fascicles. The text was compiled in 833, at the height of his literary career as well as his reputation. Unfortunately, this work is no longer in existence, though its preface survives<sup>3)</sup>. From Tsung-mi's other works and from his association with the Ch'an School and his access to the monastic libraries, one can imagine the importance of this work. In this connection, one has to remember the long-lasting struggle for patriarchal orthodoxy amongst the Ch'an sects and the government's intervention in the matter in 796; no doubt there had accumulated a lot of material on Ch'an Buddhism to which Tsung-mi should have had privileged access<sup>4)</sup>.

The other works of Tsung-mi deal with Buddhist rituals, philosophy, the doctrines and history of Ch'an Buddhism. Of them, the commentaries on the *Awakening of Faith*<sup>5)</sup>, *Ritual of Ullambana*<sup>6)</sup> and rules of other formal religious ceremonies are significant. They indicate the broadness of Tsung-mi's scholarship.

One may ask why he had such varied interests? Was not that a boasting of scholarship? Tsung-mi himself has clearly stated his purpose in studying various Buddhist scriptures. He said, "I have collected materials from the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, classified the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, outlined the *Vinaya* disciplines and explained the *Vijñāptimātra Kārikā*. Although there are ten thousand medical prescriptions, only the right one should be chosen for a specific disease"<sup>7)</sup>. In his opinion, various religious doctrines

<sup>1)</sup> Also lost.

<sup>2)</sup> In the epitaph and the biography, the work is abbreviated as *Ch'an-tsang* 禪藏.

<sup>3)</sup> T. 2015.

<sup>4)</sup> Chih-p'an, *op. cit.* (p. 10, n. 3), p. 75.

<sup>5)</sup> The work is included in the Tokyo edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka (1880-1885), section T'iao 調, volume 8.

<sup>6)</sup> T. 1792. For a full list of Tsung-mi's writings, see Takamine Ryōshū, *op. cit.* pp. 301-302.

<sup>7)</sup> T. 1795, p. 524b, last three lines.

are spiritual prescriptions. The monk who makes the gift of Buddha-truth is like a physician who must possess a broad knowledge of medical science to enable him to choose a suitable medicine for curing different diseases. Since there is no medicine which is capable of curing all diseases, the physician has to have a broad knowledge of all branches of medical science. If any man has a particular character at any moment, then he needs certain particular methods for his emancipation. Any skillful teacher should provide this suitable medium for the different needs of his disciples.

#### SOCIO-POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Another consequence of his stay in the capital was his association with bureaucratic circles which brought him certain privileges as well as risks. The privileges were the honours he received from the Court, and his association with learned lay Buddhist officials, notably P'ei Hsiu 裴休, who prefaced some works of Tsung-mi. He also wrote the text of Tsung-mi's epitaph, and understood the thought of Tsung-mi deeply and with a high degree of admiration and respect. The cordial relationship between these two distinguished Chinese of the IXth century is well stated by P'ei Hsiu himself in his epitaph. He says:

To evaluate my friendship with the great Master (i.e. Tsung-mi), in the light of Buddhism, we were like dear brothers; in the light of righteousness, we were good friends; in the light of personal learning, he was the good teacher (*kalyāṇa-mitra*); in the works of the Buddhist Church, he was a protector of the religion from within [monastic order] and I am from without. Therefore, I knew him very well and in detail as he is not known to other people <sup>1</sup>).

It seems very likely that the best ones of the honorific posthumous titles conferred upon Tsung-mi by the throne were due to the initiative and support of P'ei Hsiu, because they were conferred while P'ei was premier and influential at the T'ang Imperial Court <sup>2</sup>).

Tsung-mi's reputation at the T'ang court reached its peak in 728, when he was invited to attend the celebration of the imperial birthday held in the palace in the tenth lunar month <sup>3</sup>). On that

<sup>1</sup>) CSTEP, 114/7d lines 2-4.

<sup>2</sup>) A biography of P'ei Hsiu exists in *Chiu T'ang-shu* 舊唐書, ch. 177 and *Hsin T'ang-shu* 新唐書, ch. 182. For his relations with the Buddhist community and his contribution to Buddhism, cf. K. Nukariya, *op. cit.* pp. 543 ff.; H. Furuta, *op. cit.* pp. 94 ff.

<sup>3</sup>) CSTEP, 114/7b.

occasion he discoursed on Buddhism before the Emperor and greatly impressed him. As a reward for his discourse, a purple robe was bestowed upon Tsung-mi, and he was also put in the rank of Monks of Great Virtue (*bhadanta*).

One of the risks resulting from Tsung-mi's association with high officials and ministers was his connection with Li Hsün 李訓<sup>1)</sup> (d. 835). We do not know the exact starting date of this association, though Li was in the capital during the twenties of the IXth century and was one of the eight henchmen under the leadership of Li Feng-chi 李逢吉 when the latter was premier under Emperor Ching-tsung 敬宗. The group lost its influence at court; Li Hsün was banished to Hsiang-chou 象州 in present Kuang-hsi. Under an amnesty, he returned home and resided in Lo-yang to mourn the death of his mother. He came back to the capital again in 834, secured support from the party of eunuchs and through their good offices was recommended to the throne. He was soon appointed Assistant Professor, then promoted to the post of Professor of *The Book of Changes* in the Imperial University, and Imperial Lecturer in the Hanlin Academy. Thereafter Li became prime minister and the most powerful man at court. Though he came to the top through the assistance of the eunuchs, yet he became increasingly hostile toward them. In the winter of 835, he organized a plot to remove the eunuchs, but failed to accomplish his plan. Consequently, his family as well as most members of his party were massacred by the eunuch troops. Li alone escaped and ran to Tsung-mi's monastery at Chung-nan mountain. As he had been friendly with the monk for a long time, he requested Tsung-mi to save him by shaving his hair and hiding him in the monastery. Tsung-mi was, however, stopped by his followers from granting the request, so Li had to change his plans and left the monastery for Feng-hsiang 鳳翔, to the west of Ch'ang-an. He was soon captured and killed by a general of his opponents.

When Ch'ou Shih-liang 仇士良 (779-841)<sup>2)</sup>, the eunuch leader,

<sup>1)</sup> Li Hsün was a nephew of Li Feng-chi. The latter was a disciple of Ch'eng-kuan, the master of Tsung-mi. Cf. *SKSC*, v./737c. Tsung-mi was probably acquainted with the Li family when they were in power during the twenties of the IXth century. Cf. *Chiu T'ang-shu*, ch. 169, and *Hsin T'ang-shu*, ch. 179.

<sup>2)</sup> For discussions on this event, see Ch'en Yin-k'o 陳寅恪 *T'ang-tai cheng-chih-shih shu-lun kao* 唐代政治史述論稿 (Peking, 1956), pp. 112 ff.

heard the report of Li's escape to the monastery, he immediately arrested Tsung-mi and kept him in the headquarters of the Left Army. He accused him of failing to report the arrival of Li at the monastery and intended to execute him. Tsung-mi replied to the charge with a calm expression; he said: "I, a poor monk, have known Li Hsün for years and am also aware of his rebellion. Yet my own Master [Buddha] taught me to save suffering wherever encountered even at the expense of my own life. I am contented if I have to die for it" <sup>1</sup>). One of the eunuch officers named Yü Heng-chih 魚恒志 <sup>2</sup>) was very much impressed by the courage of the monk at the time of the interrogation. With his help, Tsung-mi was released from the charge. When the news of his release became known, officials of the court were deeply relieved and even wept at the happy news.

This reaction of the officials testifies to their friendship and high esteem for Tsung-mi. The biography of the monk explains that, "beginning from the time when Tsung-mi's attainment of Tao became higher, his name became well-known. Flocks of members within the Saṅgha now were attracted to him; the *élite* in the imperial court had similar responses" <sup>3</sup>). At the same time, political struggles became more dangerous and complicated with confrontations between two ministerial parties led by Niu Seng-ju 牛僧儒 (779-847) and Li Te-yü 李德裕 (787-850) and also between the central government and local military warlords, and finally at the court between scholarly officials and the imperial eunuchs <sup>4</sup>). As far as Tsung-mi was concerned, he seems to have had a closer though indirect association with the anti-eunuchs group. His biography states: "Since the time of Yüan-ho 元和 and Ch'ang-ch'ing 長慶 (806-824), the eunuch officials who achieved

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About the struggle between ministerial and eunuchs' groups, cf. J. K. Rideout, "The Rise of the Eunuchs in the T'ang Dynasty," *Asia Major*, I (1949), 53 ff.; III (1953), 42 ff.

<sup>1</sup>) "貧道識訓年深，亦知其反叛；然本師教法，遇苦即救，不愛身命，死固甘心。" SKSC, 742b, lines 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>) In SKSC, 742b, the name appears as Yü Heng-chih 魚恒志, while in *Chiu T'ang-shu* ch. 169 it is Yü Hung-chih 魚弘志. In Chinese historiography, Hung and Heng are interchangeable as the former was tabooed during the T'ang period. See Ch'en Yüan 陳垣, *Shih-hui chü-li* 史諱舉例 (Peking 1958 reprint), p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>) "初密道既芬馨，名惟烜赫，內衆慕羶既如彼；朝貴答響又如此。" SK SC, 742a lines 22-23.

<sup>4</sup>) Ch'en Yin-k'o, *op. cit.* 89 ff.; Ts'en Chung-mien, *op. cit.* 397 f.

merit and controlled the administration were ablaze with fire. Eunuchs and officials were mutually suspecting each other and the position of the ruler was in danger. Li Hsün, then prime minister, held Tsung-mi in high esteem. . . .”<sup>1)</sup>

Since Tsung-mi had had a long training in the Confucian tradition and was a scholar in his own right, traces of Confucian mentality remained in him, and his friendly connection with the ministerial wing at the court is understandable. This aspect of Tsung-mi did not receive favourable comment from some orthodox Buddhists. Such disapproval is clearly reflected in the biography of the monk. His biographer writes:

There are some people who blame Tsung-mi, saying that it was improper for him either to receive nobles and officials or to visit the Emperor. I [Tsan-ning] would answer this charge with these words: “[Buddha] entrusted the Dharma to kings and ministers. If one has no connection with kings and ministers, how can the religion be spread and flourishing? Is Buddha’s word about the helpful power of sovereigns (Cakravartin) and ministers incorrect? The sentiment of men in the present age is critical to anyone who is closely associated with the court. This is because the critics do not fully understand the purpose of those who are associated with kings and ministers. Should their association be merely for personal fame or profit, I would be grateful to these critics. However, should the association be only for the sake of religion, one should strive after that great achievement rather than escape insignificant criticism. His critics objected to his actions and simply were jealous of him; but their criticism is meaningless if we understand the intention of the monk”<sup>2)</sup>.

It is generally known that Tsung-mi was a great thinker, while his biographer, Tsan-ning was principally an historian<sup>3)</sup>. Nevertheless, both of them possessed high scholarship and were attacked in their age due to their association with the imperial court, and

<sup>1)</sup> “當長慶元和已來，中官立功執政者孔熾。內外猜疑，人主危殆。時宰臣李訓酷重於密. . .” SKSC 742a, lines 23-25.

<sup>2)</sup> “教法委在王臣，苟與王臣不接，還能興顯宗教？以不 (i.e. 不以) 佛言力輪王臣是歟？今之人情見近王臣者則非之，曾不知近王臣人之心。苟合名利，則謝君之誚也，或止為宗教親近，豈不為大乎？寧免小嫌，嫌之者亦嫉之耳！若了如是義，無可無不可。” SKSC 743a, lines 11-17.

<sup>3)</sup> Cf. author’s paper, “Buddhist Historiography in Sung China,” *ZDMG*, 114/2 (1964), 362 ff., especially 364. It should be noted that though both Tsung-mi and Tsan-ning were associated with their respective governments, yet their attitudes were quite different. For the former, it was a passive acceptance; while for the latter, he made many arguments in defence of his relations with the imperial court. These different attitudes plus their positions in the government made Tsung-mi a religious philosopher and Tsan-ning an historian and administrator.

we may infer that Tsan-ning's defence of Tsung-mi can be regarded as self-defence as well. But it is equally true that similar social and cultural experiences made Tsan-ning's understanding of Tsung-mi deeper and more appreciative than was the case with most of the other monks. The relationship between the Buddhist community and the government, between Church and State constantly posed a dilemma to monks. Such a dilemma reflects the nature and the degree of tension between the religious and the lay society. Political involvement is capable of bringing great advantage as well as disadvantage to a religious community under certain historical circumstances. No one can give a simple or general judgement unless historical and cultural as well as personal conditions are all fully taken into consideration.

The years 835-841 were a silent and inactive period for Tsung-mi. Did old age or political harassment depress him? There is no clear information to answer this question. What is known to us is that there was no activity nor any written work after his political involvement with Li Hsün in 835. I presume that he was most probably frustrated by a series of events: the resumption of the eunuchs' power as the dominant force in the T'ang government not only made him lose influence at court, but may also have affected his standing as a monk. In 839 Ch'ou Shih-liang, the eunuch who arrested and threatened to execute Tsung-mi, became the Commissioner for Meritorious Affairs for the Left Streets of Ch'angan<sup>1</sup>). Such a Commissioner was the government's agent for controlling the Buddhist community in the T'ang capital. His main source of inspiration, his dear master Ch'eng-kuan passed away in the same year (839). His ministerial friends had either lost power in the capital or were banished. The monk now had to stand on his own legs, lonely and without friendly support. He must have lived quietly and gloomily, trying to avoid any unnecessary suspicions from the eunuch camp. Intellectually speaking, he must have faced a number of difficult questions. For example, he was known as a person who "did not criticize other people's attainments because of his own excellencies," nor did he "conceal others' virtues because he did not yet possess them"<sup>2</sup>). He must have now

<sup>1</sup>) Cf. Tsukamoto Zenryū, "Tō chūki irai no Chōan no kudokushi 唐中期以來の長安の功德使," *Tōhōgaku hō*, VI (1934); and Yamasaki Hiroshi, *Shina chūsei bukkō no tenkei* (Tokyo, 1942), 593.

<sup>2</sup>) P'ei Hsiu writes: "不以其所長病人, [故無排斥之說], 不以其未至蓋人, [故無胸臆之論]. T. 1795, p. 523c, lines 16-17.

asked himself why his friendly attitude and actions had such bad effects?

With this heavy and gloomy mind, Tsung-mi left the world on February 1st, 841 A.D. at Pagoda yard of Hsing-fu Monastery 興福塔院 in the right half of the capital city. After his death, "he retained his usual appearance, though his countenance looked happier" <sup>1)</sup>. In his will, he instructed his disciples to offer his flesh to the birds and animals, to burn his bones into ashes, to throw the ashes away, and not to enshrine them in a pagoda. The disciples should not feel sad for his death so that their contemplation should not be disturbed. Whenever the Ch'ing-ming festival should come, the disciples should lecture on scriptures for seven days as a memorial to him and then disperse. The funeral ceremony should be conducted in accordance with monastic discipline. Anyone who would not follow these instructions would not be regarded by him as his disciple.

After the body had laid several days for people to pay their last homage, he was put into a coffin. It was then carried to his residential monastery at Kuei-feng on February 17th. The cremation took place on March 4th, 841 <sup>2)</sup>.

From 842 to 845, Buddhism was persecuted in China. As many as 4600 monasteries and forty thousand and more smaller temples were confiscated or destroyed, and 260,500 Buddhist monks and nuns were forced to return to laity. Although the final order in 845 was not thoroughly carried out in some regions of China, yet as far as the region of the capital is concerned, the measures of the T'ang government were rather effective <sup>3)</sup>. Some of Tsung-mi's manuscripts must have been lost during this stormy period. It was not until the next ruler took over the throne and Tsung-mi's dear friend, P'ei Hsiu became prime minister, that his accomplishments received official recognition; the posthumous title of Ting-hui Ch'an-shih 定慧禪師, ('The Ch'an Master of Concentration and Wisdom') was conferred on him. It was also declared that a pagoda should be built to preserve the remains of Tsung-mi, and the pagoda was officially named 'Blue Lotus' 青蓮. If the epigraphical sources are reliable, all these events took place in 853, twelve years after the death of Tsung-mi <sup>4)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> "儼然如生容貌益悅." *CSTP*, 114/7b, lines 7-8.

<sup>2)</sup> *Ibid.* There is another date which has been mentioned as the death-date of the monk, but this epigraphical source is the most reliable one.

<sup>3)</sup> Chih-p'an, *op. cit.* 95 ff.; Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, "The Economic Background of the Hui-ch'ang Suppression of Buddhism," *HJAS*, 19 (1956), 67 ff.

<sup>4)</sup> *CSTP*, 114/7c.

The imperial bestowal of a posthumous title was an institution in China; the choosing of the title was usually done carefully. It was regarded as an official honour as well as a final judgment on a man's accomplishments. In this connection, the words of Concentration and Wisdom denote Tsung-mi's achievement very well, as he was proficient in both disciplines owing to his training of Concentration through Ch'an Buddhism and in Wisdom through Hua-yen Buddhism.

#### RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES

It seems clear that Tsung-mi was well-trained both in the Chinese tradition and in the Buddhist tradition. The former includes Confucian and Taoist learning; the latter embraces the Buddhist culture of India and China. In other words, he had been exposed to various religious and philosophical experiences in his life. Each of these traditions had its impact and left an imprint upon him, helped him to form his own religious attitude and philosophical standpoint.

On the one hand, his early training in the Chinese tradition, as it was unsatisfactory to his spiritual and philosophical needs, ultimately led to his renunciation of laymanhood; yet on the other hand he did not make an all-out attack on this tradition as some of the Buddhists did. He kept a mild tone in criticizing Confucian and Taoist thought as imperfect insofar as they lacked a comprehensive system to explain the infinite nature of reality. He questioned the Taoist theory of Nature by saying that if two produces a myriad things without dependence on certain causes, then why can grass not produce man? Similarly, he questioned the Confucian theory of *ch'i* 氣 or an undifferentiated Primal Force by saying that if the original *ch'i* or Heaven is devoid of knowledge, then how can human beings, a product from the same material, yet possess it? Despite these criticisms, Tsung-mi still claimed that "Confucius, Lao-tzu and Śākya Buddha were perfect sages". Their doctrines were established in response to "the demands of the age and the needs of the various beings" <sup>1)</sup>.

The imprint of Confucianism on Tsung-mi is also traceable in Tsung-mi's works and his manner of living. For example, in his commentary of *Ullambana*, *Yü-lan-p'en-ching Shu* 盂蘭盆經疏, he writes this: "Starting from the chaotic beginning [a great vitrue which] fills the whole space between Heaven and Earth, common

<sup>1)</sup> De Bary, *op. cit.* 181.

both to men and gods and nobles and humbles, is respected as their principle both by Confucianists and Buddhists: it is the Way of Filial Piety only" <sup>1)</sup>. He further states that he had the misfortune of losing his parents at an early age, suffering both from the lack of parental affection and of elders of his own to attend by him. Thereafter, he had searched for a way to express his filial piety, until he found this scripture (the *Ullambana*). Here, Tsung-mi claims filial piety as a supreme virtue which should be equally honoured by Confucianists and Buddhists. As far as the Buddhist esteem of the virtues is concerned, Tsung-mi claims:

All Buddhas have two bodies, one Real and one Transformed. Śākya Buddha in his Transformed body preached according to the need of circumstances; Vairocana Buddha as a Real Body preaches the Absolute Truth. "Teaching, means [the Truth as embodied in] Sūtras and Vinayas. Sūtras explain Wisdom; Vinayas explain discipline. Though there are a myriad actions, yet filial piety is the principal one" <sup>2)</sup>.

Here, Tsung-mi not only claims filial piety as a worldly virtue, but as Absolute Truth. He justifies his contention by a quotation from the *Hua-yen-ching*, supposed to have been preached by Vairocana Buddha, the Real Buddha <sup>3)</sup>. Nakamura Hajime has remarked that: "The virtue which corresponds to the idea of filial piety is, of course, taught in the original Buddhist sūtras, but only as one of the virtues and not as the supreme virtue" <sup>4)</sup>. Therefore the recommendation of filial piety as the supreme virtue can be viewed as characteristic of Tsung-mi. And this, with other characteristic attitudes, made him a representative of Chinese Buddhism.

The Confucian spirit also inspired his sympathetic involvement in Li Hsün's anti-eunuch attempt. The opposition to the interference of eunuchs in politics was always regarded as right in the Confucian tradition. The same spirit also shines in the manner of Tsung-mi's life. In the epitaph, Tsung-mi is portrayed as such a teacher:

<sup>1)</sup> "始乎混沌，塞乎天地，通人神，貫貴賤，儒釋皆宗之，其唯孝道矣." T. 1792, p. 505a, lines 1-2.

<sup>2)</sup> "...一切佛皆有真化二身，釋迦化身說隨機權教；舍那佛真身說究竟實教。教者經律也，經詮理智；律詮戒行。戒雖萬行，以孝為宗." *ibid.* b lines 13-16.

<sup>3)</sup> "孝順父母，師僧三寶，孝順至道之法，孝名為戒，亦名制止." *ib.* lines 20-21.

<sup>4)</sup> *The Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India-China-Tibet-Japan* (Honolulu, 1964), 269. Cf. Kenneth Ch'en, "Filial Piety in Chinese Buddhism" *HJAS*, 28 (1968), 81-91.

If a distressed boy did not return to his home and a poor girl was not enriched, our Master would feel shameful [for his inability to help them]; if the Three Vehicles [of Buddhism] were not flourishing and the Four Divisions [of the Discipline] were not observed, our Master would feel shameful; if both loyalty and filial piety were not taught or he felt unable to assume his responsibilities, our Master would feel shameful; escaping fame for the sake of appearance or concealing one's shortcomings so as to increase one's pride made our Master feel shameful. Therefore, his mind was busily engaged in helping and saving others and he was always restless in inducing others to the truth . . . <sup>1)</sup>,

This description portrays Tsung-mi as a man of righteousness, who "in fear and trembling, with caution and care . . ." <sup>2)</sup>, "never grew tired of learning nor wearied of teaching" <sup>3)</sup>. In other words, his manner was that of an active Confucian rather than a passive or quiet Buddhist who detaches himself from worldly interests.

The religious philosophy of Tsung-mi was very liberal in spirit. This spirit is apparent through all the events of his life. He was first initiated into the Ch'an school, had personal experience in intuitive and meditative practices. Unlike Ch'an monks in a later age, who often received ordination within the Ch'an establishment, Tsung-mi entered the monastic order under the supervision of a Vinaya Master. Thus he had first-hand knowledge of the usefulness of moral restrictions. He studied the systems of Buddhist philosophy as presented in Hua-yen, Yogācāra and Prajñāpāramitā literature, and clearly understood their value for spiritual life. He participated in religious rites. This broad attitude of Tsung-mi is well summarized in his epitaph:

Therefore, in the practice of Tao, the great Master considered knowledge and insight as the wonderful gate [to truth]; the tranquil purity as the correct taste [of religion]; compassion and forbearance as an armour; wisdom and [its power of] cutting evil as weapons <sup>4)</sup>.

Though all these means were different in form, yet they aimed at the same goal. This attitude of Tsung-mi is based on the metaphysical foundation of Hua-yen Buddhism, which emphasizes the

<sup>1)</sup> "窮子不歸, 貧女不富, 吾師恥之; 三乘不興, 四分不振, 吾師恥之; 忠孝不並化, 荷擔不勝任, 吾師恥之; 避名滯相, 匿我增慢, 吾師恥之; 故違違於濟拔. 汲汲於開誘 . . ." *CSTP*, 114/7a, lines 9-12.

<sup>2)</sup> *Analects*, viii/3, from Arthur Waley's translation (New York, Vintage Books), 133.

<sup>3)</sup> *Ibid.* vii/2, 123.

<sup>4)</sup> "故大師之為道也, 以知見為妙門, 寂淨為正味, 慈忍為甲盾, 慧斷為劍矛 . . ." *CSTP*, 114/7a, lines 6-7.

perfect harmony of noumenon and phenomenon, the interpenetration and mutual dependence of all things <sup>1)</sup>).

The development of Hua-yen philosophy had already been completed by the predecessors of Tsung-mi in the school. The classification of doctrines, the Ten Forms of Teachings, the Four Realms of the Universe, Three Methods of meditation, Ten Mysterious Gates, and the theory of Six Characters had all been established <sup>2)</sup>. Tsung-mi's philosophical contribution to the school is not so impressive; yet, he did bring some significant novelties into Hua-yen thought. First of all, he enlarged the perspective of Hua-yen philosophy. In the early efforts at classification of the teachings, the scope of classification was limited to Buddhist thought, especially to its Indian developments. Tsung-mi was the first who systematically extended the comparison to Confucian and Taoist teachings. Secondly, Tsung-mi was responsible for including the *Yüan-chüeh-ching* among the scriptures of the Hua-yen School. And thirdly, he was the first who unified Ch'an practices with the philosophical theories of Hua-yen on the one hand, and crystallized the metaphysical bases of various Ch'an sects on the other. All these contributions made Buddhism come closer to the Chinese mind than it was before. In this respect, Tsung-mi is one of the most significant thinkers of Chinese Buddhism.

From the sectarian standpoint, Tsung-mi's liberal outlook and his shifting affiliation from one school to another was not only unacceptable, but even dangerous to sectarian orthodoxy. Therefore, some of the sectarians questioned the behaviour of Tsung-mi during his lifetime. This situation is clearly reflected in the epitaph of Tsung-mi and in his biography in the *Sung Kao-seng-chuan*. In the epitaph it is stated:

The critics consider that the Great Master [Tsung-mi] did not observe the practice of Ch'an, but extensively lectured on sūtras and śāstras, that he travelled to famous cities and big capitals, and made it his business to construct monastic establishments. Does this not show that he was enslaved by over-learning (*bahuśruta*)? Is it not that he had not yet forgotten fame and profit? <sup>3)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> For Hua-yen philosophy, see Fung Yu-lan, *op. cit.* (note 2, p. 3), pp. 339 ff.; Ch'an Wing-tsit, *A Source-book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton 1963), pp. 406 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3)</sup> “議者以師不守禪行，而廣講經論，遊名邑大都以興建為務，乃為多聞之所役乎？豈聲利之所未忘乎？” *SKSC*, 742b, lines 9-11.

To answer these charges, P'ei Hsiu, the epitaph-writer defended him in this way:

Alas! Do the critics know the tendency of the Great Tao? Now, the one Mind is the totality of the myriad dharmas. When divided, it is known as discipline (*śīla*), concentration (*śamādhi*) and wisdom (*prajñā*); when analysed, it is known as the Six Perfections (*pāramitā*); when dispersed, it becomes the myriad practices. Nevertheless, the myriad practices are never apart from the one Mind, and the one Mind never conflicts with the myriad practices. *Dhyāna* (Ch'an) is only one of the Six Perfections: how can one regard it as the total of all dharmas? <sup>1)</sup>

As may be gathered from the foregoing paragraphs, the causes of Tsung-mi's formal departure from the Ch'an sect were two-fold: first, his interest in philosophy; second, his synthetic and non-sectarian approach to Buddhism. Unfortunately, the current attitude of Ch'an Buddhists at that time was far from harmonious. Tsung-mi himself notes this unhappy state of affairs. He writes that "the conflict between [the followers of Hui-] neng (638-713) of the South and [Shen-] hsiu (died 706) of the North, is like water and fire; the break between the schools of Ho-tse (i.e., Shen-hui, 670-762) and Hung-chou (i.e., Tao-i, 709-788) resembles Orion and Lucifer which never see each other" <sup>2)</sup>. Or again: "The adepts of Sudden and Gradual [Enlightenment] view each other as enemies; the conflict between South and North recalls the fighting between Ch'u and Han" <sup>3)</sup>. Considering these struggles within the Ch'an school as well as the dispute between Ch'an and other schools of Buddhism; and the conflict between Buddhism and other currents of Chinese religion, the profound dissatisfaction of a liberal like Tsung-mi is quite understandable.

Though later Hua-yen scholars respected Tsung-mi as the fifth Patriarch of their school, his religious attitude was much more eclectic. This question is discussed in his biography: "Someone asked whether Master Mi was an adept of Ch'an or of the Vinaya, or of the Sūtras and Śāstras. The answer is that Master Mi was like a land disputed by different warring powers, no one being able to claim him under any banner. All well considered, one would

<sup>1)</sup> "嘻! 議者為知大道之所趣哉? 夫一心者万法之總也, 分而為戒定慧, 開而為六度, 散而為万行. 万行未嘗非一心, 一心未嘗違万行. 禪者六度之一耳, 何能總諸法哉?" *CSTP*, 114/6d, lines 11-14.

<sup>2)</sup> "南能北秀, 水火之嫌; 荷澤洪州, 參商之隙." *T.* 2015, p. 401 b, lines 1-2.

<sup>3)</sup> "頓漸門下, 相見如仇讎; 南北宗中, 相敵如楚漢." *ibid.* 402b, lines 2-3.

say that he was a great, wise, perfect and illuminated Bodhisattva, who had realized the truth himself and worked for the benefit of others" <sup>1</sup>).

#### ANALYSES OF CH'AN BUDDHISM

With this broad and liberal view, Tsung-mi wrote quite a few important works on Ch'an Buddhism. Though the most extensive collection on Ch'an Buddhism written by him has been lost for a long time, nevertheless the outlines of his analyses of the school and its sects are still available. The historical significance of Tsung-mi's documents has been recognized by many scholars, notably Hu Shih, Ui, Yampolsky, and particularly Sekiguchi, but his analyses of Ch'an Buddhism still require more attention.

All scholars are agreed that the most important contribution of Tsung-mi to the study of Buddhism lies in his identification of Ch'an practice with Buddhist thought as "taught" in the traditional scriptures of the Canon. Fung Yu-lan was fully aware of this and he pointed it out very well. He states: "So-called Ch'an (*Dhyāna*) is but one of the religious practices of Buddhism. Though in later times Ch'an developed into a great school of Buddhism, yet its principal topics concern the method of religious cultivation. The metaphysical foundation of this cultivation has to be sought in 'teaching' (*chiao* 教). The analysis of Buddhism made by Tsung-mi may not be exactly congruous with history, yet when one takes Ch'an Buddhism as a learning, one has to adopt Tsung-mi's method of synthetic approach to practice and teaching" <sup>2</sup>).

On this point one encounters another major topic in the history of religions, namely the limitation of the usefulness of language in religion. This is particularly important as the Ch'an monks were repeatedly emphasizing that they "did not establish written language" 不立文字. Yet, in the course of time, the Ch'an Buddhists themselves gradually became aware of the usefulness of language. One of the Ch'an writers states: "The Tao originally is nameless, yet it becomes known through names. The Dharma originally is speechless, yet it becomes realizable through speaking" <sup>3</sup>). This

<sup>1</sup>) "或曰：密師為禪耶律耶經論耶？則對曰：夫密者四戰之國也，人無得而名焉！都可謂大智圓明，自證利他大菩薩也。" SKSC 742b, lines 6-8.

<sup>2</sup>) Fung, *op. cit.* (note 1, p. 2), p. 791. *Chiao*, "teaching", meaning canonical doctrines, is constantly attacked and rejected by the Ch'an school.

<sup>3</sup>) Wang Sui 王隨 (ca. 1035) says: "夫道本無名，因名而顯道；法本無說，因說以證法。" *Ch'uan-teng yü-ying chi* 傳燈玉英集 (Taipei: *Chung-hua ta-tsang-ching* 中華大藏經), I/76, p. 32928b.

explains why an anti-scriptural sect such as Ch'an Buddhism gradually built up its own literature. In this respect Tsung-mi was right in insisting on the usefulness of philosophy in religion.

In the view of Tsung-mi, despite the Seven Sects of the Middle Ch'an Buddhism as they had been historically divided at his time, the ideological division was actually only between three, viz., (I) the sect which taught the cessation of falsity and the cultivation of Mind; (II) the sect of Emptiness; (III) the sect of the Direct discovery of Mind-Nature. In correspondence to these three sects, he classified Mahāyāna Buddhist thought into three corresponding groups. These three groups have to be examined one by one.

(1) "Esoteric teaching on the Characters as based on their Nature" <sup>1)</sup> He explains:

The Buddha has seen that the Six Ways of sentient beings (the six conditions of transmigration) in the Three Worlds (of Desire, of Matter and Immaterial) are all Characters of the True Nature itself. They originate from the sentient beings being deluded about the True Nature substance in itself; and do not have any substance of their own; therefore their nature is said to be Dependent (*paratantra*). For those whose faculties are dull, it is impossible to be awakened (from the delusion). So the Buddha discourses on the Law according to the Characters which they see, in order to ferry them over gradually. Therefore it is called discourse on Characters. As Ultimate Truth is not expressly revealed in this teaching it is called esoteric (*mi-i* 密意, having a hidden meaning) <sup>2)</sup>.

In Tsung-mi's view, this is the metaphysical foundation of sect I as mentioned in Document A. This sect destroys the attachment to external objects by the theory of Consciousness-only. When people understand that external objects are merely projections of subjective consciousness, they will not attach themselves to phenomena. They will then devote themselves to the cultivation of consciousness. This is what he calls cessation of falsity and cultivation of Mind.

(2) The second group is classified by Tsung-mi as "Esoteric teaching of revealing Nature itself by negation of the Characters" <sup>3)</sup>. He clarifies this as follows:

According to the ultimate meaning of Truth, the false tenets are originally empty, so there is nothing to negate. All pure Dharmas are originally the True Nature, and have forever their wonderful functions in accordance

<sup>1)</sup> "密意依性說相教". From "General Preface to Various Explanations on the Source of Ch'an", T. 2015, p. 403a, line 16.

<sup>2)</sup> *Ibid.* l. 16-18.

<sup>3)</sup> "密意破相顯性教", *Ibid.* p. 404a, l. 6-7.

with circumstances. Therefore, they are also not to be negated. However, there is a kind of sentient beings who are unable to awake, as their vision is obstructed by attachment to empty Characters. So the Buddha negates all Characters without distinction of good and evil or pure and impure. He considers both the True (Buddha) Nature and its wonderful functions as not non-existent; but he cannot discuss it explicitly and he says they are non-existent. That is what is called esoteric teaching. It also means that the intention of the teaching is to reveal the True Nature, but its linguistic expression only negates Characters. Since the intention is not explicitly expressed, that is why it is called esoteric (secret) <sup>1)</sup>.

Tsung-mi regarded this doctrine as the metaphysical foundation of sect II as mentioned in Document A.

(3) The third type of Buddhist thought is termed by Tsung-mi as "the exoteric teaching revealing that the True Mind itself is the (Buddha) Nature" <sup>2)</sup>. He comments this formula as follows:

This teaching directly points to the Mind as being the True (Buddha) Nature. The revelation of Truth is limited neither by phenomenal nor by mental Characters, so it is said that Mind itself is the (Buddha) Nature. As this teaching is not through the skilful means of esotericism, it is called exoteric revelation <sup>3)</sup>.

Tsung-mi classifies this doctrine as the metaphysical foundation of sect III as mentioned in Document A.

It is true that in the above mentioned three divisions Tsung-mi is not entirely free from sectarianism because he puts the third sect as the highest. Yet Tsung-mi himself did not claim that the Ho-tse sect of Ch'an Buddhism was the only way or 'final teaching'. He wrote:

However, the age in which he [Shen-hui, the Master of Ho-tse] lived was the period when Gradual Enlightenment was in full bloom, while the school of Sudden Enlightenment was in a ruinous condition. In order to refute erroneous views, he laid more emphasis on the Absence of Thought as its principle, but did not establish other means [for cultivation] <sup>4)</sup>.

This means that in his view, the doctrine of this sect of Ch'an Buddhism was a response to the need of an historical condition; it is a means (a gate or entrance) to enlightenment, but not enlightenment itself. In other places, Tsung-mi repeatedly states: "One should free oneself from all the above mentioned errors and accept

<sup>1)</sup> *Ibid.* 1. 7-9.

<sup>2)</sup> "顯示真心即性教", *ibid.* b, 1. 26.

<sup>3)</sup> *Ibid.* 1. 26-27.

<sup>4)</sup> Cf. Document B, section VII below.

all of them as parts of the body of an elephant" <sup>1)</sup>. "Essentially speaking, when these doctrines are viewed in a limited perspective, each of them is wrong; while looking at them from a comprehensive perspective, all of them are right" <sup>2)</sup>. These passages show that Tsung-mi considers all the doctrines and practices of Ch'an Buddhism as devices only. In other words, while he recognizes that the fundamental problems of the phenomenal world are basically the same, yet the spiritual needs may be different from man to man. Therefore, there is no dispute about the painful aspect of worldly life, but there do exist differences about the means or the ways helpful to each individual. This is one of the key points that may lead men to ideological struggles and even to war. Institutional religious establishments, religious philosophy and discipline, worship and meditation, travel and social works, etc., are different means or devices for spiritual exploration. Each of these devices are useful and helpful only to certain groups of people to which the device is suitable and adopted. As far as these people are concerned, it is correct and productive; however, if one proclaims the device to be the only absolute or ultimate way to salvation, and imposes it upon other people, then the device becomes an obstacle rather than a help. After all, there is no single medical formula that is capable of curing all kinds of diseases.

This recognition of the individual need is one of the most distinct contributions of Ch'an Buddhism. Ch'an Buddhists pointed out that if any religious man chose an unsuitable device for spiritual cultivation, it would be impossible for him to attain the expected fruit. In that case, religious practice may become a source of suffering, rather than of liberation from suffering. Ch'an therefore laid stress on the freedom of choice as to the means adopted to reach the religious goal. It was a pluralistic approach to religious practice, but not anarchistic as imagined by most young people today. It only denied the claim of the absolute or universal suitability of the devices, but was not a total denial of the devices. After all, the overwhelming majority of successful Ch'an followers achieved their religious attainment through religious discipline and within the monastic system.

Ch'an Buddhism was mainly concerned with the method of religious cultivation; if its religious goal is communicable either

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<sup>1)</sup> *Ibid.* (Introduction).

<sup>2)</sup> Document A below, p. 37.

through intuitive experience or through philosophical language, then philosophy and practice are two wings of religious life. Tsung-mi adopts these two wings as a key to his analyses of Ch'an Buddhism. He defines the doctrine of his first House, that of the North School, as wiping out the dust (impurity), the practical cultivation aiming at understanding the delusive nature of phenomena through the study of scripture and through meditation. Tsung-mi's second House of Ch'an stresses concentration of Mind on three conceptions which are achievable through three kinds of practices: Absence of Memory through the practice of morality (*śīla*); Absence of Thought through concentration (*samādhi*); and intuitive response through Wisdom (*prajñā*). The third House disclaims the usefulness of the doctrinaire and institutional practices of Buddhism; its corresponding method of cultivation is the total removal of consciousness. The fourth House lays emphasis on the pan-realistic nature of phenomena; freedom of Mind being the way of cultivation. The fifth one teaches the non-existence of phenomena with the cessation of feeling as the means. The sixth considers the concentration of thought on Buddha as the true reality; a rite of invocation (vocal orison) being the practice. The last House offers Absence of Thought as its doctrine, extinguishment of false thought as its practice<sup>1)</sup>. This balanced view with equal emphasis on doctrine and practice is typical of Ch'an Buddhism and Tsung-mi has clearly demonstrated in document B that he understood it thoroughly. In fact, he was the only Chinese scholar who reviewed the Middle Ch'an Buddhism in such a comprehensive and explicit manner.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TSUNG-MI

From the foregoing pages, it is clear that the main trend of Tsung-mi as shown in his life and his works is a pluralistic approach and an all-inclusive harmony. If all religious teachings are merely means or media for realizing the truth, and if phenomenal lives are conditioned, there must be some differences among men themselves. Some of the conditions are common to all beings, some belong only to certain people. For this reason man has various reactions, and should be offered different or even contradictory solutions to his problems. Each of these reactions or solutions is partly true and capable of leading some people toward spiritual advancement. From this viewpoint, all sorts of religious doctrines,

<sup>1)</sup> Document B below.

practices and accomplishments are different gates leading to the same destination. They are complementary rather than contradictory. Sectarianism and religious conflicts arise from the lack of this higher perspective. This pluralistic approach and the recognition of the value of different means does not, however, qualify Tsung-mi as a pluralist. In fact, his conception of the phenomenal is pluralistic; but his idea of noumenal reality is constantly monistic. In a way, his philosophy is dialectical and he does not have a tendency of "either-or" as prevails in the Western way of thinking <sup>1)</sup>. "One of the outstanding facts in the history of Chinese philosophy has been its tendency and ability to synthesize" <sup>2)</sup> and Tsung-mi's thought is one of the best examples.

Comparing Tsung-mi's presentation of Ch'an Buddhism with most of the publications on Ch'an in Western languages, one cannot but think that Ch'an Buddhism in China during the VIIIth and IXth centuries was much richer and varied than it seems. The difference is due to the later history of the school: the later sects, known as "the Five Houses" or "Seven Sub-Sects", were developed from only one or two of the early sects <sup>3)</sup>. The anti-traditional, anti-textual and anti-institutional tendency had not yet become dominant in "Middle Ch'an", but was only part of a complex development. The radical aspect of Ch'an Buddhism is over-emphasized in most of the current writings on the topic. The reason for this over-balance is partly due to the influence of later Ch'an ideology, partly to current religious sentiment, i.e., a rebellious spirit against tradition and authority. Tsung-mi's presentation of Ch'an Buddhism should be of interest to both moderate and radical elements.

The synthetic approach is reflected not only in Tsung-mi's analyses of Ch'an Buddhism, but also in his attitude towards other schools of Buddhism as well as other religious systems. The same spirit also is revealed in his balanced view of doctrine and of practice, in his dialectical understanding of noumenon and phenomena. All these features are characteristic of the Chinese way of thinking as it has been repeatedly pointed out <sup>4)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> Charles A. Moore, *The Chinese Mind* (Honolulu, 1967), p. 6.

<sup>2)</sup> W. T. Chan, "Synthesis in Chinese Metaphysics", in Moore, *op. cit.* p. 132.

<sup>3)</sup> See appendix I. Cf. H. Dumoulin, *op. cit.* 106 ff., and especially his *The Development of Chinese Zen after the Sixth Patriarch*, transl. by R. F. Sasaki (New York, 1953), Also see John C. H. Wu, *The Golden Age of Zen* (Taipei, 1967).

<sup>4)</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*; Nakamura, *op. cit.*

Tsung-mi's balanced presentation with equal emphasis on doctrine and practice is indeed typically Chinese. This is one of the key points where the Chinese Buddhists differ from their Indian Mahāyāna brethren.

Although the identity of the unconditioned and the conditioned had already been pointed out by ancient Indian Buddhist thinkers, the insistence on practice had never been emphasized as it was in China. This does not mean that there had been no religious practice in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism, but only that the practical aspect of religious life was comparatively neglected. From the compilation of Abhidharma literature till the flourishing of Tantric Buddhism, Wisdom had always been regarded as supreme in Buddhist spiritual disciplines, especially in Mahāyāna schools of philosophy. "The *pāramitā*-discipline is common both to the Mādhyamika and the Yogācāra, but the difference between them is purely theoretical; it centres around the content of *prajñā*"<sup>1</sup>). "The practice of virtues and concentration of mind are for the sake of attaining *bodhi* or *prajñā*... The other *pāramitās* cannot even be *pāramitās* (perfections or excellences) without *prajñā-pāramitā*"<sup>2</sup>). The emphasis lies on the meaning of religious practices. It is obvious that unless the adept knows the significance of his actions, the action itself cannot lead to *bodhi*. As a result of this stress on knowledge, Indian Buddhist thinkers paid more attention and devoted more energy to philosophy and thus they contributed a great deal to logic and metaphysics. In that respect their achievement was splendid. However, when scholars were preoccupied with speculative efforts, a gap was created within the Buddhist community. The minority of philosophers stayed in an academic world of their own, while the mass of the monks shared only a very limited interest with their scholarly colleagues. This seems to have been one of the key reasons that led to the Tantric transformation of Buddhism. It might also have been one of the factors responsible for the decline of Buddhism in India<sup>3</sup>).

The refutation of bookish knowledge made by Ch'an and other practical schools of Buddhism in China was a reaction against scholasticism. It rescued Buddhism from over-intellectualization, restored its position as a living religion rather than a school of academic philosophy. Therefore, to the Ch'an Master, "This law

<sup>1</sup>) A. K. Chatterji, *The Yogācāra Idealism* (Varanasi, 1962), p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>) T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London, 1960), 31.

<sup>3</sup>) I will elaborate this point in a forthcoming paper.

[i.e., *Mahāprajñāpāramitā*] must be put into practice and does not depend on its recitation. If we do not put it into practice, it amounts to an illusion and a phantom”<sup>1</sup>). As far as Ch’an Buddhists are concerned, religious knowledge becomes useful only when it is carried out and authenticated by actions. Otherwise, the knowledge itself will become an obstacle and unnecessary burden to men in their striving for the release from suffering. The contrast between the emphasis put by Ch’an Buddhism on practice and by Indian Buddhism on knowledge is striking, and the result was no less remarkable: the flourishing period of Ch’an Buddhism during the VIIIth to XIIth centuries was also the time when Buddhism declined in India.

Tsung-mi’s familiarity with Indian Buddhist thought was remarkable among Buddhist scholars of his time. He analysed Indian Buddhist thought into three groups, viz., Hīnayāna, Yogācāra and Śūnyatāvāda. He pointed out the contribution, and defects of these schools. His definition of the ultimate school, i.e., Ekayāna or “the exoteric teaching revealing that Mind itself is the (Buddha) Nature,” may be regarded as Chinese Buddhist philosophy. Though the concept of the ultimate absolute in Tsung-mi’s thesis is the same as in India, yet the spirit and the ways of expression are quite different. For example, in his presentation of Buddhism, there is an over-whelming optimistic outlook rather than indifference. This new point is synthetic rather than analytical; practical rather than dogmatic. It is even difficult to regard his teaching as merely an extension of Mādhyamika philosophy, as the latter refused to offer any position of its own.

The clarification of Buddhist metaphysics made by Tsung-mi also clarifies the influence of Indian Buddhist thought on Ch’an and Hua-yen Buddhism in China. He points out that the first, the second, the third and the sixth Houses of Middle Ch’an correspond with the doctrines of Consciousness-only. The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* provides the main metaphysical foundation for the fourth House; and the fifth House is connected with the teaching of Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) as propounded by the Mādhyamikas. In this way, six Houses of Ch’an Buddhism are shown to be derived from sources in Indian Buddhist philosophy. But the seventh House, the sect formed by Shen-hui, is clearly a synthetic school which may be characterized as purely Chinese.

<sup>1</sup>) *The Platform Scripture, the Basic Classic of Zen Buddhism*, transl. by W. T. Chan (New York, 1963), 69.

In his introduction to *The Chinese Mind*, Charles A. Moore has listed twenty-one characteristics of Chinese philosophy. If one uses these characteristics to define the loosely used term of Chinese Buddhism, one will find that the views of Tsung-mi are very close to most of them. The Chinese stress on the inseparability of philosophy and life, on humanism, ethical consciousness, filial piety, optimism, the ideal of harmony, the synthetic approach, the expression of "both-and", the tolerance, the balance of knowledge and action, etc. <sup>1)</sup> are all found in Tsung-mi's works. Fung Yu-lan has well said: "This does not mean that the Indians must have been without these [Chinese] tendencies, but it means that the Chinese Buddhist scholars were more elaborate in these respects" <sup>2)</sup>. This is quite a fair definition of the term, Chinese Buddhism.

By offering a philosophical counterpart to Ch'an practice, Tsung-mi himself was fully aware of the limitation of an intellectual discussion on Ch'an sects. None of these sects would ever admit that its doctrines and its practices represented only a branch of Buddhism, but insisted that they were 'the only true teaching of Buddha' Tsung-mi himself stated:

I, Tsung-mi, am interested in comparative studies by natural inclination. I compared each of these [Ch'an] sects and found out their doctrines as described. Should one take my words and ask the scholars who belong to those sects, all of them would refute my view. If one asks about existence, the reply would be emptiness; or to a question about emptiness they would answer existence. Some of them may say that both alternatives are wrong, or both [existence and emptiness] are unobtainable, or cultivation and non-cultivation are the same, or other similar answers. The reason is that these scholars are always afraid to be trapped by words, or to be hindered by what they have obtained. They, therefore, reject the questions, whatsoever is asked <sup>3)</sup>.

These words of Tsung-mi are the admission of an honest scholar. In a way, the same dilemma was faced not only by Tsung-mi, but is common to most comparative researchers on religion. Adepts of various religious sects often express their doubt about the value of such questions. Religious fanatics regard them as not only useless but dangerous to their doctrinaire purity. Therefore,

<sup>1)</sup> Moore, *op. cit.* pp. 4 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> Fung, *op. cit.* (note 1, p. 2), p. 663.

<sup>3)</sup> Translated from *Ch'an-men shih-tzu Ch'eng-hsi T'u* in *HTC* 1 B/15/5, p. 436b, lines 5-9.

from the moment Tsung-mi departed from Ch'an practice and entered into scholarly investigations and comparative studies, he was the target of criticism. We have seen P'ei Hsiu's defence of Tsung-mi immediately after the death of the monk; yet the criticism did not stop there. In the biography written by Tsan-ning in the Xth century, Tsan-ning still states:

There are at present some narrow-minded people of the Ch'an school who criticize Tsung-mi by saying that he should not have discoursed on the scriptures embodying traditional teaching. I [Tsan-ning] would counter this criticism with this answer: has not Bodhidharma [the founder of the Ch'an sect] said himself: 'My law agrees with the Teaching of Proven Truth' (*nītārtha*)? Now when people are badly trained in their studies, have insufficient knowledge, their mind is associated with passions and delusions: how could they not be jealous [of Tsung-mi]? <sup>1)</sup>.

If one feels uncomfortable about these persistent criticisms of Tsung-mi made by sectarian monks in medieval China, then Tsung-mi's non-sectarian, non-dogmatic and scholarly analyses of Ch'an Buddhism as well as his comparative approach will appear still more valuable and significant.

#### DOCUMENT A

[The Three Divisions of Ch'an Buddhism.]

*Ch'an-yüan chu-ch'üan-chi tu-hsü*, T. 2015, p. 400 b l. 28-c l. 7; p. 400 c l. 21-l. 24.

There are various schools of Ch'an mutually conflicting with each other. Here in this collection <sup>2)</sup> I have included about one hundred masters and classified them into ten houses, namely, Chiang-hsi, Ho-tse, Master Hsiu of the North, Master Hsien of the South, Niu-t'ou (Ox-Head), Shih-t'ou, Pao-t'ang monastery, Hsüan-shih, Ch'ou and Na, T'ien-t'ai <sup>3)</sup>.

The doctrines preached by these established sects are contradictory and obstructive to each other. Some of them regard Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) as the foundation; some regard Wisdom (*prajñā*) as the source. Some say that only Silence <sup>4)</sup> is true; some that [all actions such as] walking and sitting are right. Some claim that from morning to evening all actions

<sup>1)</sup> “今禪宗有不達而譏密不宜講諸教典者，則吾對曰：達磨可不云乎：‘吾法合了義教’？而寡學少知者，自既不能，且與煩惑相應，可不嫉之乎？” SKSC, 743a, lines 6-7.

<sup>2)</sup> I.e., T. 2015.

<sup>3)</sup> Detailed analysis of these schools by Tsung-mi in Document B and C below.

<sup>4)</sup> 寂默.

arising from the view (*dr̥ṣṭi*) of discrimination (*vikalpa*) are false <sup>1)</sup>; some say all discriminate doings are real. Some preserve all the myriad practices; some suppress even Buddhas. Some give free course to their will; some restrain their mind. Some respect the sūtras and the vinayas as authorities to rely on; others regard both of them as obstacles to the Tao...

Essentially speaking, when these doctrines are viewed in a limited perspective, each of them is wrong; while looking at them from a comprehensive perspective, all of them are right <sup>2)</sup>. One has to use the words of Buddha, to show the meaning and the advantages of each school, and thus to classify these teachings into three divisions corresponding with the three teachings [of Buddhism]. Unless this is done, how can one become a skilful teacher of the age and make all the schools important and wonderful entrances to the law?

*Ib.* p. 402b, l. 18 - p. 402 c, l. 3.

I. Firstly, the sect which taught the stopping of falsity and the cultivation of mind <sup>3)</sup>. Although it is said that all sentient beings innately possess the Buddha-nature (*buddhatā*) <sup>4)</sup>, yet the Nature cannot be seen as it is covered up by the beginningless ignorance (*avidyā*), and they are, therefore, dragged within the wheel of birth and death (*saṃsāra*). When Buddhas have eliminated false thought, they see their Nature in its fullest extension <sup>5)</sup>; they are freed from the bondage of birth and death and acquire super-natural powers and independence. One should be aware of the different functions of common men and saints, and this difference exists both in their treatment of external objects and in their mind within. It is, therefore, necessary for [disciples to] rely on the spoken teaching of a master, to detach themselves from outward objects and contemplate their mind <sup>6)</sup>, thus to extinguish false thoughts. When thoughts are completely extinguished, one immediately attains Enlightenment (*bodhi*), which is omniscient. It is like a mirror obscured by dust; one has to cleanse it diligently; only when the dust is wiped out completely, does the mirror become bright and able to reflect all things.

One should also have a clear understanding about skilful means to enter into the realm of *Dhyāna*: to keep oneself far away from confusion and noise, to stay in a quiet place, to harmonize one's body and breath, and sit cross-legged in silence, putting the tongue upward against the palate and concentrating the mind on one point <sup>7)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> 見今朝暮分別為作一切皆妄。This passage seems similar to the term of *wang-chien fen-pieh* 妄見分別 as mentioned in *Ta-chih-tu-lun* (T. 1509) which K. Venkata Ramana has translated as "perversions and imaginative constructions", see *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as presented in the Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-sāstra* (Tokyo, 1966), pp. 90, 352.

<sup>2)</sup> 舉要言之，局之則皆非，會之則皆是。

<sup>3)</sup> 息妄修心宗。

<sup>4)</sup> For the Indian conception of this topic, see E. Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India* (Ann Arbor, paperback, 1967), pp. 198, 229 sq.

<sup>5)</sup> 見性了了。

<sup>6)</sup> 背境觀心。

<sup>7)</sup> Literally "one object" (一境, *viśaya*).

Master Hsien of the South <sup>1)</sup>, Master Hsiu of the North <sup>2)</sup>, members of the Pao-t'ang monastery <sup>3)</sup> and the disciples of Master Hsüan-shih <sup>4)</sup> are all classified in this division of teaching. Other people like those of Ox-head <sup>5)</sup>, T'ien-t'ai <sup>6)</sup>, Hui-ch'ou <sup>7)</sup> and Guṇa <sup>8)</sup> all followed approximately these external practices as skilful means for professing, but their views were different.

*Ib.* p. 402 c, l. 3 - l. 15.

II. Secondly, the sect which taught absolute annihilation <sup>9)</sup>, this is to say that everything, both profane and sacred is dreamlike illusion and entirely non-existent. Original non-existence does not begin from the present. Even the knowledge which leads one to attain to nothingness <sup>10)</sup> is unobtainable. In the *Dharmadhātu* which is all identity (*samatā*) there are no Buddhas nor sentient beings; the *Dharmadhātu* itself is merely a borrowed name. If the mind is non-existent, who will talk about *Dharmadhātu*? As the cultivation itself is non-existent, one should not cultivate; and as Buddhas are non-existent, so their worship is unnecessary. If one claims that there is a Dharma which is better than *Nirvāṇa*, I would still say that it is a dreamlike illusion. There is no Law to follow, nor a Buddhahood for one to attain <sup>11)</sup>. Whatever the effort <sup>12)</sup>, all is deluding and false. To avoid going against truth, the only way is thus to understand thoroughly that originally nothing exists, and that one should not attach his mind to any thing. Only after this is one called liberated. From Shih-t'ou <sup>13)</sup> and Ox-head down to Ching-shan <sup>14)</sup>, all preached this doctrine. They consequently asked their disciples to practice mentally in accordance with this doctrine, and not to let their feelings be hindered by any single Dharma. In course of time the defiled habits would be eliminated by themselves, and one would be without any obstacles from hate or affection, sorrow or happiness. Because of this doctrine, there were a kind of Taoist priests <sup>15)</sup>, Confucian scholars <sup>16)</sup> and idle Buddhist monks <sup>17)</sup> who had some vague knowledge

<sup>1)</sup> See document B, Section II.

<sup>2)</sup> *Ibid.* Section I.

<sup>3)</sup> 保唐寺.

<sup>4)</sup> See *ibid.*, Section IV.

<sup>5)</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, Section V.

<sup>6)</sup> 天臺.

<sup>7)</sup> 惠稠.

<sup>8)</sup> 求那.

<sup>9)</sup> 泯絕無寄宗.

<sup>10)</sup> 達無之智.

<sup>11)</sup> 無佛可作.

<sup>12)</sup> 凡有所作.

<sup>13)</sup> Cf. Yampolsky, *op. cit.* pp. 54 ff. More information on this monk and his doctrine in Ui, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 396 ff.

<sup>14)</sup> I.e. Tao-ch'in; see Document B, Section V.

<sup>15)</sup> 道士.

<sup>16)</sup> 儒生.

<sup>17)</sup> 閑僧.

of Ch'an and liked to speak such words and regard them as the highest. These people are, however, not aware of the fact that this sect does not regard only these words as being its law <sup>1)</sup>.

The disciples of Ho-tse, Chiang-hsi <sup>2)</sup> and T'ien-t'ai are also preaching this teaching, though they did not regard it as their principal doctrine.

*Ib.*, p. 402 c, l. 15-403a, l. 11.

III. Thirdly, the sect which taught direct revelation of the Mind-nature<sup>3)</sup>: this is to say that all Dharmas, whether existent or empty, are nothing but the absolute Nature <sup>4)</sup>. The absolute Nature is characterless and non-active <sup>5)</sup>, and its substance differs from all phenomena; it is neither profane nor sacred, neither cause nor effect, neither good nor evil. Nevertheless, the functioning of the substance is able to create all kinds of manifestations, meaning that it is capable of manifesting itself as profane or sacred, as material forms or other characters.

Here, one may point out two kinds of manifestations of Mind-Nature.

First, things such as language and action, desire and hatred, compassion and patience, good and evil deeds, suffering and enjoyment, all these are the Buddha-nature in yourselves; they are the original Buddha [in you] apart from which there is no other Buddha. When one understands that this natural reality is spontaneous (*svayambhū*) <sup>6)</sup>, the longing for cultivation of the Tao does not arise in one's mind. The Tao is the Mind itself <sup>7)</sup>; one cannot use the Mind to cultivate the Mind. Evil also is the Mind itself <sup>8)</sup>; one cannot cut off the Mind with the Mind itself. Non-cutting and non-cultivating <sup>9)</sup>, following one's self-nature freely, may be called liberation (*vimokṣa*). The (Mind-) Nature resembles emptiness; nothing can be added to it nor taken away from it. What necessity is there for completing it? The only thing one has to do is to stop one's own Karma and to nourish one's own spiritual power, at all times and places where one lives, thus to strengthen the womb of holiness <sup>10)</sup> and to manifest the wonder of spontaneity. This is the true awakening, the true cultivation and the true realization.

Second, they say, all Dharmas are dreamlike illusions, and this has been taught by all saints. Originally, therefore, false thought is calm, worldly phenomena are empty, and the empty and calm Mind is self-knowing and never obscured <sup>11)</sup>. This empty and calm knowledge is your own real Nature; whether deluded or enlightened, the Mind is always self-knowing. It does not depend on other conditions for birth, nor does it arise from external

<sup>1)</sup> 不但以此言為法。

<sup>2)</sup> 江西。

<sup>3)</sup> 直顯心性宗。

<sup>4)</sup> 真性, i.e. Buddha-nature.

<sup>5)</sup> 無相無為。

<sup>6)</sup> 天真自然。

<sup>7)</sup> 道即是心。

<sup>8)</sup> 惡亦是心。

<sup>9)</sup> 不斷不修。

<sup>10)</sup> 聖胎。

<sup>11)</sup> 靈知不昧。

objects. The one word knowledge <sup>1)</sup> is the gate to all wonders. Being deluded by the beginningless ignorance, one wrongly grasps his physical body (*rūpa*) and mental elements (*nāma*) as the Self, from which thoughts of desire, hatred and so forth arise.

If one has a good and learned friend to open and indicate the empty and calm knowledge of Sudden Enlightenment, and [to indicate] that the knowledge itself is thoughtless and formless, then who will make a distinction between self and others? When one realizes that all characters are empty, thoughts will naturally not remain in his mind. When a thought arises, one is immediately aware of it; and with this awareness, thought becomes nothing. The wonderful gate of religious cultivation is here and not elsewhere. Although a myriad ways of cultivation are available, yet the Absence of Thought is the principal.<sup>2)</sup> Only when one becomes aware of the Absence of Thought, do love (*rāga*) and hatred (*dveṣa*) naturally become calm; compassion (*karuṇā*) and wisdom (*prajñā*) naturally become brighter; evil karmic effects are naturally cut off, and meritorious actions naturally advance. After one thoroughly understands that all characters are no characters, one naturally cultivates without cultivation. When passions are ended, one is freed from the bondage of birth and death. When birth and death are annihilated, one is confronted with Nirvāṇa-illumination, whose responses to the needs <sup>3)</sup> are inexhaustible; and this is called Buddha-hood. [Despite their differences] these two views are both aimed at the unity of all characters and the return to (Buddha-) Nature. They are, therefore, to be considered as having the same principle.

*Ib.* p. 403a, l. 11 - l. 15.

The three divisions mentioned above are further divided by their attitudes towards traditional "teaching": either looking up to it or looking down on it <sup>4)</sup>, either following its characters or destroying them <sup>5)</sup>. Their methods for the refutation of external challenge, their skilful means towards the lay community, their modes and manners of teaching disciples, are varied and different. All these differences, however, are modes of action beneficial to and adapted to circumstances. There is no loss therein. The principle which they respect is non-dual. This is why they should be understood comprehensively in accordance with the words spoken by Buddha.

<sup>1)</sup> 知之一字: Hu Shih translates the passage as 'the one word "knowledge" is the gateway to all mysteries', which D. T. Suzuki considers a mistake. Suzuki prefers to translate the Chinese word *chih* 知 as *prajñā*-intuition. Cf. Hu, "Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in China: Its History and Methods," *Philosophy East and West*, III/I (1953), p. 15; and D. T. Suzuki, "Zen: A Reply to Hu Shih," *ibid.* pp. 31 ff. As far as this passage is concerned, I prefer Hu's version as it refers to the gate (*men*) to mysteries or wonders, but not the wonder (*miao*) or reality itself. Cf. *Lao-tzu*, ch. I: 玄, 衆妙之門.

<sup>2)</sup> 無念為宗.

<sup>3)</sup> 應用.

<sup>4)</sup> 遵教慢教.

<sup>5)</sup> 隨相毀相.

## DOCUMENT B

[The Seven Houses of Middle Ch'an Buddhism.]

[Introduction]

YCC *Ta-shu*, HTC II, xiv, 2, p. 119c, l. 7 - l. 12.

Some taught to wipe out dust and look at purity through the study of scriptures on [the five] expediences <sup>1)</sup>. Some said that one should be mindful of the Three Phrases, and practice Morality (*śīla*), Concentration (*samādhi*) and Wisdom (*prajñā*) <sup>2)</sup>. Some said that one should not be restrained by [traditional] teaching or by conduct, but extinguish consciousness <sup>3)</sup>. Some taught that whatsoever one has contact with is the Tao, so that one should let his mind be free <sup>4)</sup>. Some said that originally all affairs are non-existent, so one should forget all feelings <sup>5)</sup>. Some adopted the transference of incense and thus preserved the existence of Buddha <sup>6)</sup>. Some regarded quietness and knowledge as the substance, and absence of thought as their principle <sup>7)</sup>. One should free oneself from all the above mentioned errors and accept all of them as parts of the body of an elephant <sup>8)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> The YCC *Ta-shu Ch'ao* (p. 277c, l. 14-p. 278b, l. 14) explains the meaning of these five expediences as follows: (a) the Essence of Buddha (*fo-t'i* 佛體), or Suchness as mentioned in the *Awakening of Faith* (translated by Y. S. Hakeda, New York: Columbia University Press, 1967, pp. 89-90); (b) the Buddha Knowledge (*fo-chih* 佛智), as mentioned in the *Saddharmapundarika* or *The Lotus of True Law* (translated by H. Kern, SBE, XXI, pp. 30,307); (c) the Unconceivable Deliverance (*pu-szu-i chieh-t'o* 不思議解脫), as mentioned in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (translated by E. Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, Louvain, 1962, pp. 50 ff.); (d) the True Nature (*cheng-hsing* 正性) of all Dharmas, as mentioned in *Szu-i-ching* 思益經 (T. 586, pp. 36 b-c); and finally, (e) the Unhindered Deliverance (*wu-ai chieh-t'o* 無礙解脫), as mentioned in the *Hua-yen-ching* (*Avatamsaka-sūtra* T. 278, P. 601a; 279 p. 242b). For the exposition of the doctrine of the master of the North School of Ch'an Buddhism, see Ui, *op. cit.*, pp. 449 ff. and Sekiguchi *op. cit.* 102 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> As far as the threefold formula of *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajñā* is concerned, the Ch'an school agrees with the teaching of the Middle Path in early Indian Buddhism. Cf. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism* (Calcutta: Oriental Book Agency, 1960), pp. 142 ff. The Three Phrases are, however, typical Ch'an terminology.

<sup>3)</sup> See section III of this Document below.

<sup>4)</sup> See section IV of this Document below.

<sup>5)</sup> See section V of this Document.

<sup>6)</sup> See section VI of this Document.

<sup>7)</sup> See section VII of this Document and section 1 of Document C.

<sup>8)</sup> *Hsiang-t'i* 象體. This refers to the well-known Buddhist parable about blind men who are unable to understand the body of an elephant as a whole. Cf. *Udāna: Verses of Uplift*, translated by F. L. Woodward in *The Minor Anthologies of the Pāli Canon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 82-83.

The teachings of the above mentioned schools are nothing but Concentration and Wisdom, both the gradual and the sudden cultivations of Enlightenment being included. Without Concentration and Wisdom, adepts will be mad and foolish. Partial cultivation of only one of the two is a heterodox view produced from ignorance. By adopting both, one becomes the most honoured of bipeds (*dvipadōttarama*, a Buddha).

*YCC Ta-shu Ch'ao, HTC I*, xiv, 3, p. 277c, l. 8-15.

[Now I am going to] outline the seven Houses.

I. The first House was developed after the Fifth Patriarch (Hung-jen, 601-671)<sup>1</sup>). Its original founder was Master Shen-hsiu (d. 706)<sup>2</sup>) and the doctrine was extensively preached by his disciples like P'u-chi (651-739) and others<sup>3</sup>). "To wipe out the dust" are words derived from the original verse written by Shen-hsiu:

"Cleanse it again and again,  
Let not [the mirror of mind] be soiled by dust!"<sup>4</sup>)

It means that the Nature of Enlightenment originally is within all living beings, just as a mirror has the nature of brightness. But the mind is covered by the passions (*klesha*), just as the mirror is covered by dust. Therefore, one has to annihilate false thoughts, and when false thoughts are completely annihilated the original nature will shine perfectly, just as by wiping away the dust the brightness of the mirror will reflect everything.

[Criticism:] But impurity and purity are like smoke which arises from conditional causes. They are unable to point out that originally false thoughts are non-existent, and that one's nature is one and originally pure. As their understanding is not thorough, how can they claim that their cultivation is true? If their cultivation is not true, how can they attain realization even after aeons? [...]

*Ib.*, p. 278 b, l. 15 - c, l. 13.

II. Those who said that one should be mindful of the Three Phrases, which are Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, belonged to the second House. Originally this was founded by one of the ten disciples of the Fifth Patriarch, named Chih-shen (d. 702)<sup>5</sup>). He was a native of the prefecture of Tzu (Tzu-chou, in present Szu-ch'uan) and he returned to his home town after his studies under the Patriarch and preached at Te-shun monastery of the same prefecture. His disciple was Ch'u-chi<sup>6</sup>), whose lay surname was T'ang. Following this, there were four successors of the latter, one of them being monk Kim of Ching-chung monastery at Ch'eng-tu prefecture

<sup>1</sup>) 弘忍. Cf. P. B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 13 ff.

<sup>2</sup>) 神秀. Cf. *ibid.* pp. 15-16.

<sup>3</sup>) 普寂.

<sup>4</sup>) Cf. the translations of this well-known verse by W. T. Chan, *op. cit.* p. 35 and Yampolsky, *op. cit.* p. 130.

<sup>5</sup>) 智詵. Cf. Yampolsky, *op. cit.* p. 43.

<sup>6</sup>) 處寂. *Ibid.*

whose religious name was Wu-hsiang (684-762) <sup>1)</sup> and who made a great contribution to the spread of the doctrine.

The Three Phrases referred to mean the absence of memory; the absence of thought; and do not forget [to conform] <sup>2)</sup>. The idea is to make disciples not be attached to the memory of the past, nor worry about the ups and downs of the future, and that they should always be able to conform to that knowledge, without confusion or mistake, which is called 'do not forget'. Or again, external environment should no longer remain in the memory, nor thought remain in the mind, so that one should be completely free from attachment. The order of priority of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom corresponds with the order of these Three Phrases. Although the House adopted other means for communication, yet its principal doctrines are included in these Three Phrases.

As to the ceremony of transmission (ordination), it is roughly as follows. According to the present practice of this country (i.e. T'ang China), there is an official estrade and the receiving of full ordination begins with a public announcement which is issued one or two months in advance. The announcement calls for an assembly of monks and nuns, lay men and women. A Mahāyāna ritual place is established, and a ceremony with confession is performed. Three to five weeks after the assembly, the ordination takes place. The ordination is always held in the night so as to avoid external distraction from noise and confusion. After the ordination, the disciples are ordered to set their mind at peace and to sit in meditation. Even those nuns or laymen who come from far distances, and are unable to stay at the assembly for long, are still required to sit meditating for one or two weeks; only after that do they disperse according to circumstances, as it is practiced in the Vinaya school. The procedure of the ceremony is that the receivers of precepts must be recommended by the community, and ordination certificates will be issued by the Registration Official of the government. The ordination is known as *k'ai-yüan* (the establishment of conversion) <sup>3)</sup>, and it is held once in one or three or two years, there being no fixed regulation in this respect.

*Ib.*, p. 278c, l. 14 - 278 d, l. 18

III. The practice of 'not being restrained by teaching or by conduct, but extinguishing consciousness', is taught by the third House. Originally, this house also came from the school of the Fifth Patriarch, and the founder was Old An (642-709) <sup>4)</sup>. This monk renounced his household life and received ordination at the age of 60, spent another sixty years within the Order and entered into the *nirvāṇa* when he was 120, wherefore he was called Old An. An is his name. He was honoured as her personal teacher by Empress

<sup>1)</sup> 金和尚 or Wu-hsiang 無相, a Korean, Cf. *ibid.* p. 44.

<sup>2)</sup> 無憶, 無念, 莫忘.

<sup>3)</sup> 開緣. This is of minor importance in Ch'an Buddhism, but it is significant for understanding the actual practice and procedure of Buddhist ordination in T'ang China.

<sup>4)</sup> 老安.

Tse-t'ien <sup>1)</sup>. His way and virtue were profound and great, his determined purpose was extraordinarily high; it is difficult for other famous monks to compare with his class of attainment.

Of his disciples, four were eminent by their high attainment. One of them was a layman named Ch'en Ch'u-chang <sup>2)</sup>, who was well-known to his contemporaries as Seventh Brother Ch'en <sup>3)</sup>. There was a monk named Wu-chu (714-774) <sup>4)</sup>, who attended the discourses given by Ch'en and was enlightened. [Wu-chu] was a resolute monk, who excelled in conduct and determination in conduct. Later, when he travelled to the central region of Shu (Szu-ch'uan) he encountered monk Kim who was teaching Ch'an. He attended his assembly and though he asked questions from the monk, it did not change his former understanding. He wished to preach his doctrine to the unlearned ones. He intended to assume the succession of the layman (i.e. Ch'en Ch'u-chang), but as it was not convenient he acknowledged monk Kim as his teacher. Although his instructions were broadly similar to those of Monk Kim, yet his ritual for transmitting the Law was completely different from that of Kim. The difference was that according to him the traditional works and formalities of Buddhism should be entirely disregarded. Those who want to renounce their household life are simply required to cut off their hair and to wear the seven-pieced religious robe <sup>5)</sup> at once; and there is no need to pass through a ceremony of ordination. Other works such as rites, confession, recitation of scriptures, painting the portrait of Buddhas and copying sacred books, are all false thought-constructions and should all be banned. In the residential quarters of the monks, there is no established cult of the Buddha. This is why they claimed 'not to abide by teaching or conduct'. As to 'extinguishing consciousness', it was their way of cultivating, the idea being that the circle of birth and death begins with the arising of thought. When thought arises, falsity is produced; truth is attained when thought does not arise, either good or evil. The House also taught there should be no action due to the appearance of things. Discrimination is considered as the enemy; non-discrimination as the wonderful Way.

Although this House transmitted the verbal teachings of the Three Phrases taught by monk Kim (i.e., monk Wu-hsiang, the principal teacher of the Second House), the third phrase 'do not forget' was changed into 'do not be false' <sup>6)</sup>. They explained that the disciples of monk Kim misunderstood the words of the late teacher, who actually taught that absence of memory and thought was true and that memory and thought were false. As the teacher rejected memory and thought, so the third Phrase should be 'no falsity'.

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<sup>1)</sup> Reigned 690-705. For her policy towards Buddhism, cf. Chih-p'an, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-47.

<sup>2)</sup> 陳楚章.

<sup>3)</sup> 陳七哥.

<sup>4)</sup> 無住.

<sup>5)</sup> 七條[衣].

<sup>6)</sup> 莫妄 instead of 莫忘.

The abolition of religious works is aimed at extinguishing differentiation (discrimination) in order to perceive truth in its totality. Therefore, wherever monks stay, they should make no arguments about clothes and food, and let people decide what to offer according to their own will: should they make offerings, monks would have warm clothes and sufficient food, all right; should they offer nothing, then monks should be ready to bear hunger and cold and should not ask for pious donations nor beg for food. If visitors come to the monastery, the monks should neither welcome them nor see them off, regardless whether the visitor is noble or humble. Whatever praise or offerings, blame or harm come upon them, they should take it easy.

As the House thus preaches non-discrimination, its practice is centered on non-distinction between right and wrong; they regard 'Absence of thought' <sup>1)</sup>, as the highest blessing. This is why they say 'Extinguishing consciousness'. [ . . . ]

*Ib.*, p. 279a, l. 2-17, and 279b, l. 2-8.

IV. The House which taught 'whatever one has contact with is the Tao, and let the mind be free', is the fourth. This House developed from the Sixth Patriarch (Hui-neng); its founder was Monk Jang (677-744) <sup>2)</sup> who resided at Kuan-yin Terrace <sup>3)</sup> on the Southern Sacred Mountain (in present Hu-nan), and was a disciple of the Sixth Patriarch. Originally he had no intention of preaching, but preferred to live on the mountain and cultivate the Tao. However, there was another monk from Chien-nan, (southern Szu-ch'uan) <sup>4)</sup> whose religious name was Tao-i (709-788) <sup>5)</sup>, whose former lay surname was Ma <sup>6)</sup>, and who was an ex-disciple of monk Kim. Tao-i had a high purpose and was determined for the Tao. He sat in meditation wherever he stayed. He resided for a long period on Ming-yüeh mountain of Ching-nan (in present Hu-pei) <sup>7)</sup>. Later, while on a pilgrimage to sacred

<sup>1)</sup> 無心. Tsung-mi himself explains the term of 'mindlessness' as 覺心無心, 為離心也 or "The Enlightened mind is mindless, as it is free from thought". Cf. *YCC ta-shu ch'ao*, pp. 277d.

<sup>2)</sup> Huai-jang 懷讓. Cf. John C. H. Wu, *op. cit.*, pp. 68 ff.,

<sup>3)</sup> 觀音臺.

<sup>4)</sup> 劍南.

<sup>5)</sup> 道一, better known as Ma-tsu, Patriarch Ma, as he had been born in a family called Ma. For later accounts of him, see Chang Chung-yüan, *The Original Teachings of Ch'an Buddhism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969), pp. 148 ff., and Wu, *op. cit.*, pp. 91 ff. The information on the early career of Tao-i as given in our document is remarkably different from later ones.

<sup>6)</sup> 馬.

<sup>7)</sup> In the Japanese translation of the document, Ui Hakuju translates the place as 荊州の南明月山 or 'the South Ming-yüeh mountain of Ching-chou', *Zengenshosenshūtojo*, p. 299, line 10. According to *Chiu-T'ang-shu, chih* 19 (Paina ed.), p. 43a, lines 3-4, the office of Regional Commander (*chieh-tu shih*) of Ching-nan had been established at Chiang-ling (Hu pei) during the late fifties of the VIIIth century. There are four Ming-yüeh mountains in Hu-pei province and they are respectively situated at Fang-hsien, Sung-tzu, Hsing-shan and Pa-tung. Cf. *Hu-pei t'ung-chih* 湖北通志

places, he came to the place of monk Jang. The two monks debated on the destiny of the school <sup>1)</sup>, and entered into difficult questions on the supreme principle. As his arguments were not up to those of Jang, and as he knew that the latter was the legitimate receiver of the robe from the patriarch of Ts'ao-ch'i (i.e. Hui-neng), he therefore decided to stay on with the master for religious cultivation. [Afterwards] he stayed at Chien-chou (Fu-chien), Hung-chou (Chiang-hsi) and Ch'ien-chou (Chiang-hsi) <sup>2)</sup>. Sometimes he resided on the mountains, sometimes in cities. He attracted more members and offerings to the community, and preached this law extensively.

[The House taught that all actions such as] the arising of mind, the movements of thought, a snapping of fingers, a sigh or a cough, or taking up a fan (or to raise the eyebrows) <sup>3)</sup>, all are functionings of the whole substance of Buddha-nature, apart from which there is no other second Lord. It is like various preparations of food made with wheat: whatever the preparations, all of them are nothing but wheat. The Buddha-nature is like that. All coveting, hatred and delusion, all acts of good and evil with their fruits of suffering and pleasure are nothing but Buddha-nature. To explain this view further: the physical body is made of the four primary elements (*mahābhūta*) with its flesh, tongue, teeth, eyes, ears, hands and feet; these cannot function by themselves in talking, seeing, hearing and acting. For example, if every thought is stopped at this very moment, the whole body does not change and decay, but the mouth will be unable to speak, the eyes to see, the ears to hear, the feet to walk, whilst the hands can do nothing. From this we know that talking and actions are the functions of the Buddha-nature. If we further enquire into the four elements of the physical body, none of them is conscious of coveting or hatred; thus coveting and hatred are the Buddha-nature. Though the Buddha-nature is undifferentiated, yet it can manifest itself in various differentiations. [ . . . ] They also said that there are Buddha-realms (*Buddha-kṣetra*) in which the raising of eyebrows, shifting of eyes, laughing, yawning, coughing or any movement

(Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1934), pp. 414b, 430a, 442a and 444a. Though the mountain situated at Fang-hsien is connected with Buddhist establishments, no record is available as regards the exact locality where Tao-i once resided.

<sup>1)</sup> 宗運. For the story of the robe in Ch'an history, see Yampolsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 60 ff. For a more detailed and critical account of this legend, see Hu Shih, *Hsüeh-shu wen-chi* 學術文集 (Hong-kong reprint), pp. 134 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> In *HTC*, these places are giving as Ch'ien-chou (in present Shen-hsi), Hung-chou and Hu-chou. Ui kept these names as they are in his translation of the document, (*ibid.* note 31) line 12. Most of the sources are, however, agreed that the activities of this monk were confined within the region of present Ssu-ch'uan, Hu-pei, Hu-nan, Fu-chien and Chiang-hsi. It seems the name of Ch'ien-chou 乾州 in the document is a mistake for Chien-chou 建州; and Hu-chou 虎州 is definitely a mistake for Ch'ien-chou 虔州 in present Chiang-hsi province. Cf. Ui, *op. cit.* (*Zenshūshi kenkyū*), pp. 388-388; Chang Chung-yüan, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>3)</sup> *HTC* notes that the word 扇 (fan) might be a misprint for 眉 (eyebrows).

are all regarded as Buddha-works. This is why they said that 'whatever one has contact with is the Tao.' [ . . . ]

As to their motto 'let the mind be free', it was their key practice for the cessation of *karma* and the nourishment of spirituality. It means the mind should not arise, either for good nor for evil actions, and there should be no cultivation of Tao. For Tao is the mind itself, and one cannot use the mind to cultivate the mind; evil is the mind itself, one cannot cut off the mind by means of the mind. Do not cut and do not act; let the mind be free as it pleases. One who attains this may be called a man of liberation, or a man of extraordinary capacity.

There is no Law to be restrained by, no Buddhahood to attain. Why? Because outside the mind and Buddha-nature, here is not any other Dharma which is attainable. That is why they said 'let the mind be free' as the way of cultivation. This doctrine is contradictory to the teaching of the third House: the Third House claims everything is unreal, the fourth School regards everything as real.

*Ib.*, p. 279b, l. 9 - c, l. 8.

V. Those who uphold the 'non-existence of all affairs' and 'forgetting all feelings' belong to the fifth House. Originally, this house is a branch from the school of the Fourth Patriarch (Tao-hsin, 580-651)<sup>1</sup>), and its founder was Hui-jung<sup>2</sup>) (alias Fa-jung,<sup>3</sup>) 594-657) the great Master of Niu-t'ou (Ox-head) Hill (near Nanking)<sup>4</sup>). He was a fellow-student of Hung-jen, the Fifth Patriarch. The first meeting between Tao-hsin and the Master took place only after the former had handed over the patriarchate to Hung-jen.

The power of understanding of Hui-jung was high and thorough, and his divine wisdom was very sharp. He had long been well versed in the school of *prajñā-sūnyatā* (the wisdom of emptiness) and had already freed himself from the attachment to all dharmas. Later he met the Fourth Patriarch who showed him how the absolute mind is originally enlightened as it is empty and without characters. [Because of his background of study of *prajñā-sūnyatā*] he understood the doctrine as soon as the Patriarch taught him. The Patriarch told him: "Since the time of the first generation of Patriarchs, this Law is transmitted only from one person to another. I have already selected a successor; you therefore may establish another school of your own."

Following this conversation, Master Jung went and resided at Ox-head Hill, severed all worldly contacts and 'forgot feelings'; he cultivated the characterless absolute and became the founder-patriarch of the House. The second Patriarch of the House was Chih-yen (600-677)<sup>5</sup>), the third

<sup>1</sup>) 道信. For a critical account of this patriarch, see Hu Shih, *op. cit.* (note 1, p. 46), pp. 198 ff. and Yampolsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 13 f.

<sup>2</sup>) 慧融. Cf. Sekiguchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 140 ff., and Chang Chung-yüan, *op. cit.*, pp. 17 ff.

<sup>3</sup>) 法融.

<sup>4</sup>) 牛頭.

<sup>5</sup>) 智嚴.

Hui-fang (629-695) <sup>1)</sup>, the fourth Fa-ch'ih (635-702) <sup>2)</sup> the fifth Chih-wei (646-722) <sup>3)</sup> and the sixth Hui-chung (683-769) <sup>4)</sup>. Monk Ma-su (668-752) <sup>5)</sup> of Ho-lin monastery at Jun-chou <sup>6)</sup> (the present Chen-chiang in Chiang-su) was a disciple of Chih-wei, and Ma-su's disciple was Tao-ch'in (714-792) <sup>7)</sup>, a monk of Ching-shan (Che-chiang) <sup>8)</sup>, who followed this tradition and transmitted the doctrine.

The 'Non-existence of affairs' means that whatsoever one perceives is the absolute only. This means that mental objects originally are empty; it is not merely from now on, but the mind is always tranquil. When one is deluded, the notion of existence appears, from which arise the feelings of hatred and love. All suffering is dependent on the arising of feelings, like a dreamer who suffers in a dream while he dreams. Therefore, when one understands completely that from the very beginning [the reality] is undifferentiated, then one destroys at once the notion of self and 'forgets the feelings'. When feelings are forgotten, one moves away from suffering (*dukkha*) and peril. This is why they regarded 'forgetting the feelings' as their cultivation.

#### [Comparison and Criticism]

The former House (i.e. the fourth) declares that Enlightenment means to perceive the truth through all things one comes into contact with; 'let the mind be free' is the way of cultivation. This [fifth] House, however, considers that Enlightenment is the 'non-existence of affairs' and that 'forgetting feelings' is the way of cultivation. This [fifth] House again differs from the other two Houses mentioned before. Taking perception of the truth as an example, the third House regards everything as false, the fourth House conceives everything as real, while this [fifth] House considers everything as non-existent. As to religious practice, the third House teaches the control of mind and the extinction of false thought; the fourth teaches unrestraint of mind-nature; and this one teaches the cessation of the arising of the mind. Nihilism is the ill of the third House; unrestraint is the ill of the fourth; and cessation is the ill of this one.

*Ib.*, p. 279c, l. 9-18.

VI. Those who adopted the 'transference of incense' as their practice and taught the 'preservation of Buddha', form the sixth House, which is also known as the Ch'an school of Nan-shan (South Mountain in Szu-ch'uan) for the invocation of Buddha <sup>9)</sup>. The founder of the House was named

1) 慧方.

2) 法持.

3) 智威.

4) 慧忠.

5) 馬素.

6) 潤州鶴林寺.

7) 道欽. Cf. Sekiguchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 339 ff.

8) 徑山.

9) 南山念佛門禪宗. Cf. *ibid.* pp. 192 ff.

Hsüan-shih<sup>1)</sup>; he also developed his doctrine from the Fifth Patriarch (Hung-jen, 601-671). Other preachers were monk Wei of Kuo-chou (in Szu-ch'uan)<sup>2)</sup>, Yün-yü of Lang-chou (in Szu-ch'uan)<sup>3)</sup> and a nun named I-ch'eng of Hsiang-ju county (in Szu-ch'uan)<sup>4)</sup>. [...]

The 'transference of incense' refers to the rite of the confessional ceremonies performed when the community first assembled; it is similar to that taught by monk Kim. At the time for conferring the Law, the transference of incense is adopted as a symbol of the transmission of authority. [On such occasions] the teacher hands down incense to his disciples first; the disciples then return it to the teacher; and finally, the teacher again hands it over to the disciples. This performance is repeated three times for every member of the assembly.

The 'preservation of Buddha' means that, when taught, the teacher first discourses the teaching and mental inclinations of religious cultivation. Then the Buddha is 'invoked as a single word' (*i-tzu nien-fo*)<sup>5)</sup>. First, the sound of the invocation is protracted, and then after the invocation it is gradually reduced to silence. Thus the Buddha is transmitted from a vocal expression to a mental idea. But this mental invocation is still coarse. The Buddha should penetrate into the mind (*hsin* 心), and be preserved in every thought. Thereafter, the Buddha remains within the mind forever, and even when the thought exists no longer, one attains the Tao.

*Ib.*, p. 279 d, l. 1-7, and p. 280 a, l. 1-4.

VII. Those who taught that 'quietness and knowledge' is the substance and 'absence of thought the principle' belong to the seventh House. This doctrine was transmitted by the Great Master of Ho-tse (Shen-hui, 670-762), the Seventh Patriarch of the South School of Ch'an Buddhism. It means that, all *dharma*s being empty, the substance of the mind is originally tranquil; being tranquil it is the Body of Dharma (*dharmakāya*, the Absolute). From tranquillity, knowledge is attained; and then knowledge is the true wisdom, also called *bodhi* or *nirvāṇa*. [...] This is the original source of the pure mind of all sentient beings; it is the *dharma* spontaneously innate in them.

As to 'absence of thought is their principle', it means that when one realizes that this *dharma* is fundamentally tranquil and knowing, one should apply one's mind searching for the fundamental, not allowing false thoughts to arise in his mind under any circumstance. The extinction of false thoughts is the way of cultivation. This is why this House regarded as its principle the absence of thought. [...]

They uphold the fundamental while following the conditions establishing various expedients (or means) [for cultivation]. This they considered as the only true view. Tranquillity and wisdom are as pure and bright as a mirror; the conditions are like images reflected in the mirror. Such was originally the profound intention of Ho-tse; at the time in which he lived,

1) 宣什.

2) 果州末和尚.

3) 閩州蘊玉.

4) 相如縣尼一乘.

5) 一字念佛.

however, Gradual Enlightenment was in full bloom while the school of Sudden Enlightenment was in a ruinous condition. In order to refute erroneous views, he laid more emphasis on the Absence of Thought but did not establish means [for cultivation].

# DOCUMENT C

## [I. The Teaching of the Seventh House.]

*Ch'an-men shih-tzu ch'eng-hsi t'u*, HTC II, xv, 5, p. 436 b, l. 12- c, l. 9.

As regards the school of Ho-tse, it is more difficult to talk about it. It deals with the original purpose of Śākya Buddha's descending into this world and of Bodhidharma's coming to China from afar. Reviewing this school from the viewpoint of the other schools mentioned before, it is quite different from them; however, if the other schools are collectively reviewed from the viewpoint of this one, they are completely identical. This is why it is difficult to talk about it. If I am forced to talk about it, I shall say that all saints have said that *dharma*s are like a dream. In this sense, false thoughts themselves are originally tranquil, the objective world of the six senses (*ch'en-ching*)<sup>1</sup> is originally empty, and what is empty and tranquil possesses spiritual knowledge and is not in the dark. This empty tranquillity and tranquil knowledge are the empty and tranquil mind which has been taught by Bodhidharma. Whether deluded or enlightened, the mind knows by itself, it is not dependent on conditions for its birth, nor does it arise because of external objects. When deluded by passions (*kleśa*), it knows; and this ability of knowing does not belong to the passions. When enlightened, it also knows by miraculous transformation; and this ability of knowing does not belong to the miraculous transformation [but to the mind]. The word 'knowledge' thence is the source of all wonders.

Because of delusion, this knowledge gives rise to the characters of the self. Through the belief in 'I' and 'mine', love and hatred are produced; good and evil follow thoughts of love and hatred, and thus arise good and evil actions. As a retribution of good and evil actions, one receives a physical form in one of the six conditions (*liu-tao*)<sup>2</sup> in which one is reborn. Henceforth birth is followed by rebirth, and life after life the circle of life and death (*samsāra*) rolls on endlessly.

If, however, one has a good [and learned] friend who suddenly awakens one to empty and tranquil knowledge, this knowledge is thoughtless and formless, and then who makes the distinction of self and other? When one realizes that all such distinctions are empty and that the true mind is thoughtless, when a thought arises then one is enlightened, and when one is enlightened, the thought vanishes. This is the only wonderful way of the practice of cultivation. Although there are ten thousand different practices, yet the only principal way is thoughtlessness. As soon as thought has vanished from the mind, love and hatred spontaneously become insipid, while compassion and wisdom spontaneously become brighter; sinful deeds are spon-

<sup>1</sup> 塵境.

<sup>2</sup> 六道, the six *gati* of transmigration (*samsāra*).

taneously cut off, and meritorious practices spontaneously progress. At the level of understanding, one sees that all the characters of things are no characters; at the level of practice, cultivation is called non-cultivation.

When passions are completely extinguished, birth and death come to an end. When birth and death are ended, tranquil illumination is attained. This attainment possesses inexhaustible power in its response to the needs; it is called Buddha.

[II. A Metaphorical Description of the Ch'an Houses.]

*Ib.*, p. 436c, l. 17-437b, l. 7.

[Reality] is like a luminous pearl <sup>1)</sup>, which is perfect, pure and bright <sup>2)</sup>, without any differentiation of colours in its appearance <sup>3)</sup>. Because its substance is luminous, it is able to reflect the characters of all differentiated colours <sup>4)</sup>. These characters have their own differentiations, but the luminous pearl does not change (though it reflects these different characters) <sup>5)</sup>.

Now, let us take up as an example, the black color reflected in the luminosity of the pearl, and compare it with the relationship between luminous knowledge and dark ignorance (*avidyā*). Although luminosity and darkness are conflicting against each other, yet both of them are co-existent in one and the same substance [i.e., the pearl]. This is to say that, when blackness is reflected in the pearl, the whole pearl seems black and not bright <sup>6)</sup>. If a stupid boy or a rustic sees the pearl, it is to him simply a black pearl, and when someone says to him saying that it is a bright pearl, he will obviously disbelieve it and may even become angry or complain that the speaker cheats him. Whatever the reasons the speaker may invoke to this kind of people, they will never listen to him <sup>7)</sup>. Even if people who believe that the

<sup>1)</sup> A *maṇi* pearl, luminous in the night. Tsung-mi explains in a note that the pearl symbolises the Supernatural Mind (*ling-hsin* 靈心), or the mind of self-knowing.

<sup>2)</sup> Author's Note: Knowledge of emptiness and tranquillity.

<sup>3)</sup> Note: This knowledge is without any differentiation between sacred and profane or between good and evil.

<sup>4)</sup> Note: Knowledge as the substance is capable of differentiating between all conditioned phenomena which it confronts, right and wrong, good and evil, and also to produce all affairs either worldly or supramundane. This is why it is called as 'following conditioning causes' (*sui-yüan* 隨緣).

<sup>5)</sup> Note: There are differentiations between ignorance and wisdom, good and evil; and grief and happiness, love and hate, coming and going may either appear or disappear. But the knowing mind is never interrupted. This is what is meant by 'it does not change'.

<sup>6)</sup> Note: In the ordinary (profane) man, the mind of supernatural knowledge is completely hindered by delusion, ignorance, covetousness and lust, and he cannot perceive the great and perfect knowledge of *Tathāgata*, similar to a mirror. This is why YCC says that 'the characters of body and mind are all ignorance'.

<sup>7)</sup> Note: I, Tsung-mi, have often met such sort of persons. If these persons are told that the knowing mind within themselves is the Buddha-mind, they simply disbelieve it, and even consider it as shallow words for cheating

pearl is bright as they are told, yet as they personally see it as black they will say the pearl is veiled and covered by blackness, and only when it is rubbed and polished and cleansed will the blackness be removed and the brightness appear: then only will they say that they personally see a bright pearl <sup>1)</sup>.

There are another sort of people who indicate that the blackness itself is the bright pearl and that the substance of the bright pearl is ever invisible. If one wants to know the pearl, blackness itself is brightness; and the same about other colors such as blue or yellow. Should such a position be accepted, fools who believe what they are told would only remember black or any other color as the bright pearl; or on other occasions, when they see the black kernel of a black bodhi-nut <sup>2)</sup>, or blue or green balls made of rice gum, or again red pearls, or amber beads, or white quartz-beads, or whatsoever, they would say all these are luminous pearls. Contrarily, when they see a genuine pearl which confronts no colour but only has the character of luminous purity, they do not recognize it, as they do not see the colours which they could recognize, and they are doubtful about the bright pearl itself <sup>3)</sup>.

There are another sort of people who, hearing that the various colors reflected in the pearl are false and that its substance is empty, hold that the pearl itself is entirely empty; and they say that only a wise man knows that nothing is obtainable, and that if anyone admits the existence of a single thing then he has not yet realized the truth. They are not aware that in spite of the emptiness of colorful characters there exists the pearl itself, and it is not empty <sup>4)</sup>.

Why should we not say straightforwardly that only the bright, pure, perfect and luminous quality is the substance of the pearl <sup>5)</sup>, while black, yellow, or any other colors reflected in the pearl are false <sup>6)</sup>. At the moment

ignorant and simple women. They directly refuse to reflect or to enquire into the matter, but simply say "I am a person of dull capacity, so I am unable to understand it!" This is a common reaction among adepts of Mahāyāna, Hīnayāna, Dharmalakṣaṇa and the doctrine of men and gods (*deva*), who are only capable of seeing things through their characters.

<sup>1)</sup> Note: This is the view of the North School of Ch'an. — Cf. the statement on House I in Document B above.

<sup>2)</sup> 黑栴子珠, *sapindus mukurosi*, used to make Buddhist rosaries.

<sup>3)</sup> Note: This is the view of the Master of Hung-chou, i.e., Tao-i (709-788). The fools mentioned mean the disciples of that master (who were contemporaries of Tsung-mi).

<sup>4)</sup> Note: This is the position of the Niu-t'ou (Ox-head) House.

<sup>5)</sup> Note: The substance is nothing but knowledge of emptiness and tranquillity. If one only talks of emptiness and tranquillity without stressing knowledge, it would be nihilism. It is like a bright porcelain ball, which, though pure, would lack luminosity. How could it be called a luminous pearl, capable of reflecting all things? This is what is meant by the Master of Hung-chou and the Master of Ox-head when they said "there is nothing that is not reflected in supernatural knowledge" (靈知).

<sup>6)</sup> Note: The differentiation of good and evil and the activities which arise from the mind, such as recognized by the Master of Hung-chou (Tao-i), are all characters (or forms). These characters are unreal, as it is said in the

when one sees the black color, blackness is fundamentally not black, there is only luminosity, and the same for blue, red, yellow and other colors. With this view in mind, when one is confronted with any colors, in each color one will see only the pure and perfect luminosity of the pearl <sup>1)</sup>. Not being deluded concerning the pearl, one realizes that the black is not real black, but is the bright pearl itself. And the same with all other colors. This shows both existence and non-existence are there such as they are bright and dark combined: what hindrance is there? <sup>2)</sup>

Either one recognizes that the bright pearl is a reflective substance and is unchanging <sup>3)</sup>, or one says that only the black is the pearl <sup>4)</sup>. One searches for the pearl apart from the black <sup>5)</sup>, or both the bright and the black and the pearl are non-existent <sup>6)</sup>. All these people have not yet seen the real pearl.

McMaster University, Hamilton (Ontario).

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scripture: "All characters are empty and unreal." From this one may understand that this school mistakes the unreal for the real.

<sup>1)</sup> Note: Everything is empty; only the mind is unchanging. Even when deluded, it remains knowledge, and so knowledge is not deluded. Even when a thought arises, it remains knowledge and so the knowledge is free from thought. [...]

<sup>2)</sup> Note: As regards this theory, the school of Ho-tse agrees with the other two schools. The school of Ox-head also argued that black is (really) not black; but it saw that all things are without blackness, so blackness itself is the pearl; while the school of Hung-chou said everything is Buddha-nature, so that there is no hindrance between sacred and profane, good and evil. [...]

<sup>3)</sup> Note: This is the viewpoint of Ho-tse (South School).

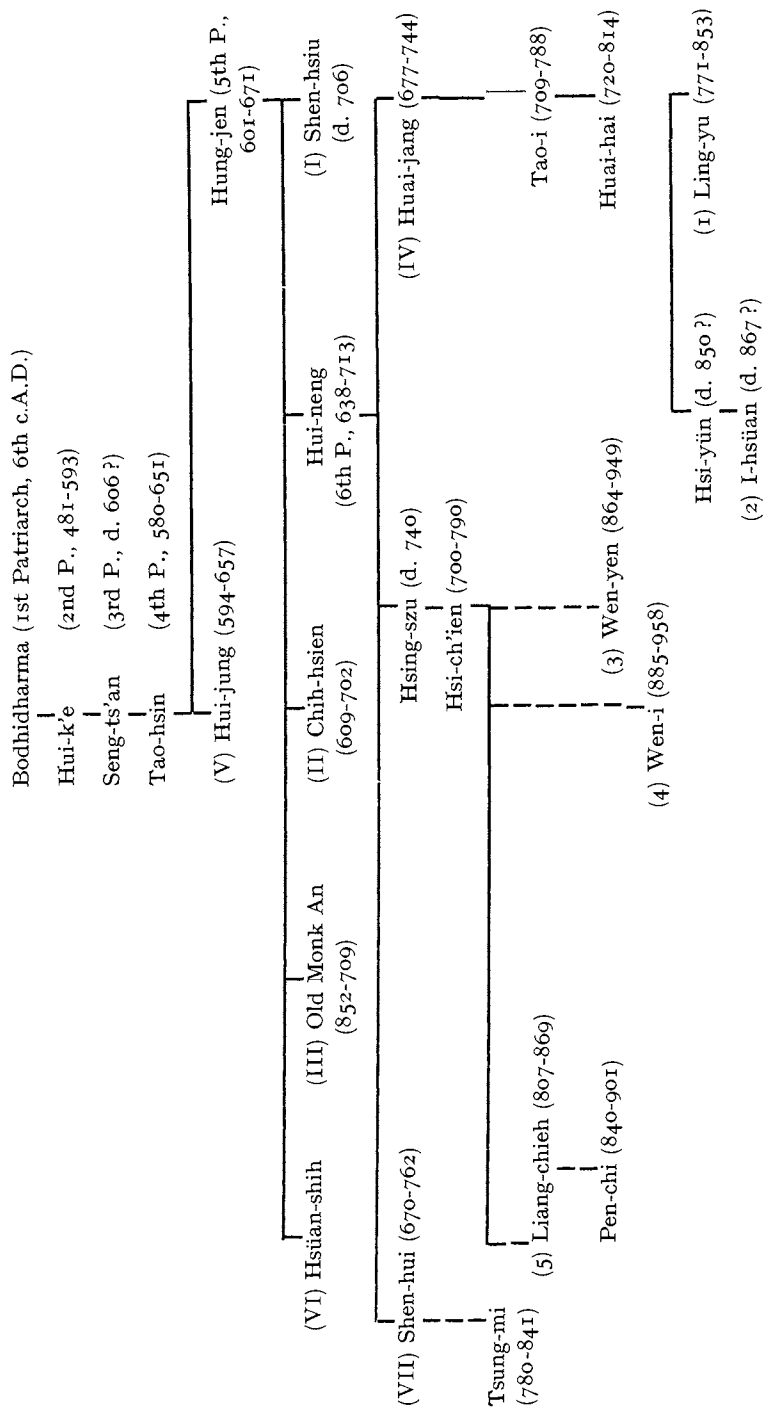
<sup>4)</sup> Note: Viewpoint of Tao-i, the Master of Hung-chou.

<sup>5)</sup> Note: Viewpoint of the North School (that of Shen-hsiu and his disciples)

<sup>6)</sup> Note: Viewpoint of the Ox-head school.

APPENDIX

THE SEVEN HOUSES OF MIDDLE CH'AN AND THEIR RELATION  
TO THE FIVE SECTS OF LATER CH'AN



Roman figures denote the seven Houses of Middle Ch'an as recorded by Tsung-mi.

Arabic figures denote the five Sects of Southern Ch'an as presented in later sources.