

*THE PLATFORM SUTRA
OF THE SIXTH PATRIARCH*

THE TEXT OF THE TUN-HUANG MANUSCRIPT
with TRANSLATION, INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES
by PHILIP B. YAMPOLSKY

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Southern School Sudden Doctrine, Supreme Mahāyāna Great Perfection of Wisdom: The Platform Sutra¹ preached by the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng at the Ta-fan Temple² in Shao-chou,³ one roll, recorded by the spreader of the Dharma, the disciple Fa-hai,⁴ who at the same time received the Precepts of Formlessness

1. The Master Hui-neng ascended the high seat at the lecture hall of the Ta-fan Temple and expounded the Dharma of the Great Perfection of Wisdom, and transmitted the precepts of formlessness. At that time over ten thousand monks, nuns, and lay followers sat before him. The prefect of Shao-chou, Wei Ch'ü,⁵ some thirty officials from various

¹ *T'an-ching*. The precise meaning of *t'an* has been a subject of debate. Hu Shih, "An Appeal for a Systematic Search in Japan for Long-hidden T'ang Dynasty Source Materials of the Early History of Zen Buddhism," *Bukkyō to bunka*, p. 16, equates the term with the Sanskrit *dāna* (gift, donation). In the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, 卮51, p. 185b, however, we find the following statement: "The monk Shen-hui of the Ho-tse Temple in the Eastern capital (Loyang) would each month construct a platform place and deliver sermons to the people." Furthermore, Ch'i-sung, in the *Chia-chu fu-chiao-pien T'an-ching yao-i*, a commentary on his own essay, the *T'an-ching tsan* (contained in ch. 10 of Ch'i-sung's commentary on his own *Fu-chiao-pien*: see *Kanchū Fukyō-hen*, ch. 10 [V, 1a], defines *t'an* as the piling-up of earth to make a platform.

Prior to the *Platform Sutra* we have no instance in which a work which was merely the record of the career and sermons of a certain Master is given the name Sutra. Strictly speaking, of course, it is not one. Thus Ch'i-sung took pains to justify its classification as such: "Ta-chien chih-jen [Hui-neng]," he writes, "was a Bodhisattva monk, and his preaching of the *Platform Sutra* is basically no different from the Buddha's preaching of the sutras" (*Ibid.*, p. 47b).

² See introduction, p. 93, n. 14.

³ Located west of Ch'ü-chiang hsien in Kwangtung.

⁴ For Fa-hai, see introduction, p. 64.

⁵ His name is variously written in early texts. The *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, 卮51, p. 182c, states that Wei Ch'ü wrote a memorial inscription for the Sixth Patriarch, and gives his title as "Assistant in the Bureau of Imperial Sacrifices (Ta-ch'ang ssu-ch'eng)." The *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text), p. 63, also identifies him as the author of a memorial inscription, but gives his title as "Assistant in the Imperial Household Service Department (Tien-chung-ch'eng)." The *Kuang-tung t'ung-chih* (1822 ed., ch. 12, p. 16b), however, citing a work entitled *Ho-chih*, states that Wei Ch'ü became prefect of Shao-chou in

departments, and some thirty Confucian scholars⁶ all begged the Master to preach on the Dharma of the Great Perfection of Wisdom. The prefect then had the monk-disciple Fa-hai record his words so that they might become known to later generations and be of benefit to students of the Way, in order that they might receive the pivot of the teaching and transmit it among themselves, taking these words as their authority.⁷

2. The Master Hui-neng said: "Good friends,⁸ purify your minds and concentrate on the Dharma of the Great Perfection of Wisdom."

The Master stopped speaking and quieted his own mind. Then after a good while he said: "Good friends, listen quietly. My father was originally an official at Fan-yang.⁹ He was [later] dismissed from his post¹⁰ and banished as a commoner to Hsin-chou¹¹ in Ling-nan.¹² While I was still a child,¹³ my father died and my old mother and I, a solitary child, moved to Nan-hai.¹⁴ We suffered extreme poverty and here I sold firewood in the market place. By chance a certain man bought some firewood and then took me with him to the lodging house for officials. He took the firewood and left. Having received my

713, the year of the Sixth Patriarch's death. If this statement is to be trusted, it is possible to surmise that at the time that Wei Ch'ü allegedly invited Hui-neng to preach at the Ta-fan Temple he was a minor official, but that by the time that the *Platform Sutra* was actually compiled, he had been elevated to the post of prefect, and hence is given this title, with some exceptions, throughout the text. The memorial inscription is mentioned also in section 54 of the present translation. In the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 751, p. 235a, Wei Ch'ü is listed as an heir of the Sixth Patriarch, but no information whatsoever is given about him.

⁶ Following the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 6, the number of Confucian scholars present has been supplied.

⁷ There follow here two clauses which are merely repetitive of the sense of the above passage. They are not contained in the *Kōshōji* edition, and have been omitted in the translation.

⁸ *Shan-chih-shih*. This term is widely used in Ch'an literature, as well as in Buddhist texts in general. Its meaning varies: here it is used as a term of address. Later in the text (sec. 12) it is used in the meaning of "a good teacher."

⁹ Present-day Cho hsien in Hopeh.

¹⁰ The *Sung kao-seng chuan*, 750, p. 754c, and the *Ch'uan-fa cheng-tsung chi*, 751, p. 747a, give the date of his dismissal as during the Wu-te era (618-626). The Tsung-pao edition of the *Platform Sutra* furnishes the exact year, 620 (748, p. 362b).

¹¹ Located to the east of Hsin-hsing hsien, Kwangtung.

¹² Ling-nan indicates the areas of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and northern Indochina.

¹³ The *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 751, p. 235b, says that his father died when Hui-neng was three. The *Sōkei daishi betsuden*, 22B, 19, 5, 483c, is alone in stating that both his father and his mother died when he was three.

¹⁴ Located in P'an-yü hsien, Kwangtung.

money and turning towards the front gate, I happened to see another man¹⁵ who was reciting the Diamond Sutra. Upon hearing it my mind became clear and I was awakened.

“I asked him: ‘Where do you come from that you have brought this sutra with you?’

“He answered: ‘I have made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen, at the East Mountain, Feng-mu shan,¹⁶ in Huang-mei hsien in Ch’i-chou.¹⁷ At present there are over a thousand disciples there. While I was there I heard the Master encourage the monks and lay followers, saying that if they recited just the one volume, the Diamond Sutra, they could see into their own natures and with direct apprehension become Buddhas.’

“Hearing what he said, I realized that I was predestined to have heard him. Then I took leave of my mother¹⁸ and went to Feng-mu shan in Huang-mei and made obeisance to the Fifth Patriarch, the priest Hung-jen.

3. “The priest Hung-jen asked me: ‘Where are you from that you come to this mountain to make obeisance to me? Just what is it that you are looking for from me?’

“I replied: ‘I am from Ling-nan, a commoner from Hsin-chou. I have come this long distance only to make obeisance to you. I am seeking no particular thing, but only the Buddhadharma.’¹⁹

“The Master then reproved me, saying: ‘If you’re from Ling-nan then you’re a barbarian.²⁰ How can you become a Buddha?’

“I replied: ‘Although people from the south and people from the north differ, there is no north and south in Buddha nature. Although

¹⁵ The *Tsu-t’ang chi*, I, 89–90, identifies this man as An Tao-ch’eng. In this account there is only one person; An both buys the firewood and recites the Diamond Sutra.

¹⁶ See introduction, p. 3, n. 3.

¹⁷ Present-day Ch’i-ch’un in Hupeh.

¹⁸ Later works see to it that Hui-neng provides properly for his mother before taking leave of her. The *Tsu-t’ang chi*, I, 90, has An Tao-ch’eng give Hui-neng 100 *liang* to care for her; in the *Kōshōji*, p. 7, the sum given is 10 *liang*.

¹⁹ The text reads: *wei ch’iu Fo-fa tso*. Since we have here a series of four-character phrases, it would seem best to regard the *tso* as an extraneous character. *Kōshōji*, p. 7, however, renders the clause: *wei ch’iu tso Fo* (I seek only to become a Buddha), and since later in this section of the Tun-huang text we read: “How can you become a Buddha?” it would appear very likely that the original wording of the clause is as found in the *Kōshōji* edition.

²⁰ *Ko-lao*. Term of insult, indicating that the inhabitants of southern China are barbarians, quite close to wild animals.

my barbarian's body and your body are not the same, what difference is there in our Buddha nature?'

"The Master wished to continue his discussion with me; however, seeing that there were other people nearby, he said no more. Then he sent me to work with the assembly. Later a lay disciple had me go to the threshing room where I spent over eight months treading the pestle.

4. "Unexpectedly one day the Fifth Patriarch called his disciples to come, and when they had assembled, he said: 'Let me preach to you. For people in this world birth and death are vital matters.²¹ You disciples make offerings all day long and seek only the field of blessings,²² but you do not seek to escape from the bitter sea of birth and death. Your own self-nature obscures the gateway to blessings; how can you be saved?'²³ All of you return to your rooms and look into yourselves. Men of wisdom will of themselves grasp the original nature of their *prajñā* intuition. Each of you write a verse and bring it to me. I will read your verses, and if there is one who is awakened to the cardinal meaning, I will give him the robe and the Dharma and make him the Sixth Patriarch. Hurry, hurry!'

5. "The disciples received his instructions and returned, each to his own room. They talked it over among themselves, saying: 'There's no point in our purifying²⁴ our minds and making efforts to compose a verse to present to the priest. Shen-hsiu, the head monk, is our teacher. After he obtains the Dharma we can rely on him, so let's not compose verses.' They all then gave up trying and did not have the courage to present a verse.

"At that time there was a three-sectioned corridor in front of the Master's hall. On the walls were to be painted pictures of stories from

²¹ *Sheng-ssu shih-ta*. The same expression is found in *Shen-hui yü-lu*; see Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 149.

²² *Fu-t'ien*. The term implies that by good works in this world a person prepares the ground (*t'ien*) which will produce the fruits and flowers (*fu*) of the next world. The subject is discussed in detail in Tokiwa Daijō, *Shina Bukkyō shi no kenkyū*, II, 473-98.

²³ This passage may also be interpreted as: "Your self-nature is confused by the blessings method." *Kōshōji*, p. 8, revises the text to read: "If your own self-natures are deluded, how can blessings save you?"

²⁴ The text has *ch'eng* [to present]; *Kōshōji*, p. 9, substitutes *ch'eng* [purify], which has been followed here. The characters are homophones.

the Laṅkāvatāra Sutra,²⁵ together with a picture in commemoration of the Fifth Patriarch transmitting the robe and Dharma,²⁶ in order to disseminate them to later generations and preserve a record of them. The artist, Lu Chen,²⁷ had examined the walls and was to start work the next day.

6. "The head monk Shen-hsiu thought: 'The others won't present mind-verses because I am their teacher. If I don't offer a mind-verse, how can the Fifth Patriarch estimate the degree of understanding within my mind? If I offer my mind to the Fifth Patriarch with the intention of gaining the Dharma, it is justifiable; however, if I am seeking the patriarchship, then it cannot be justified. Then it would be like a common man usurping the saintly position. But if I don't offer my mind then I cannot learn the Dharma.'²⁸ For a long time he thought about it and was very much perplexed.

"At midnight, without letting anyone see him, he went to write his mind-verse on the central section of the south corridor wall, hoping to gain the Dharma. 'If the Fifth Patriarch sees my verse and says that it . . . and there is a weighty obstacle in my past karma, then I cannot gain the Dharma and shall have to give up.'²⁹ The honorable Patriarch's intention is difficult to fathom.'

²⁵ *Pien* and *pien-hsiang*. Reference is to paintings or sculpture which furnish a pictorial representation of the sutras and their teachings. For a detailed consideration of the various paintings of this type, see Matsumoto Eiichi, *Tonkō ga no kenkyū*, Zuzō hen, pp. 1-211. Paintings representing the Laṅkāvatāra Sutra as such are not to be found among Tun-huang materials.

²⁶ This passage is difficult to follow. "A picture of the Dharma" makes no sense; what is probably meant is a picture of the robe as symbolic of the Dharma. Reference may also be to the robe and bowl, which, as symbols of the transmission, would be equivalent to the robe and the Dharma. *Kōshōji*, p. 10, indicates that the reference is to some kind of genealogical chart, showing the succession of the Five Chinese Patriarchs through Hung-jen.

²⁷ Unknown. The Tun-huang text uses Morohashi character no. 20873 for the personal name of the artist Lu. This character may be read *lin*, *yin*, or *hsien*. *Kōshōji* and all later texts change to *Chen* (Matthews no. 301), which has been followed here.

²⁸ This statement does not fit into the context of the rest of the passage. The *Kōshōji* version, p. 10: "If I don't offer my verse, then I'll end up by not gaining the Dharma," makes better sense.

²⁹ The Tun-huang text is corrupt and scarcely readable. It also contains an obvious omission at this point. *Kōshōji*, p. 11, reads: "If the Fifth Patriarch sees the verse tomorrow and is pleased with it, then I shall come forward and say that I wrote it. If he tells me that it is not worth while, then I shall know that the homage I have received for these several years on this mountain has been in vain, and that I have no hope of learning the Tao."

“Then the head monk Shen-hsiu, at midnight, holding a candle, wrote a verse on the central section of the south corridor, without anyone else knowing about it. The verse read:

The body is the Bodhi tree,
The mind is like a clear mirror.
At all times we must strive to polish it,
And must not let the dust collect.

7. “After he had finished writing this verse, the head monk Shen-hsiu returned to his room and lay down. No one had seen him.

“At dawn the Fifth Patriarch called the painter Lu to draw illustrations from the *Laṅkāvatāra Sutra* on the south corridor wall. The Fifth Patriarch suddenly saw this verse and, having read it,³⁰ said to the painter Lu: ‘I will give you thirty thousand cash. You have come a long distance to do this arduous work, but I have decided not to have the pictures painted after all. It is said in the *Diamond Sutra*: “All forms everywhere are unreal and false.”³¹ It would be best to leave this verse here and to have the deluded ones recite it. If they practice in accordance with it they will not fall into the three evil ways.³² Those who practice by it will gain great benefit.’

“The Master then called all his disciples to come, and burned incense before the verse. The disciples came in to see and all were filled with admiration.

“The Fifth Patriarch said: ‘You should all recite this verse so that you will be able to see into your own natures.’³³ With this practice you will not fall into the three evil ways.’

“The disciples all recited it, and feeling great admiration, cried out: ‘How excellent!’

“The Fifth Patriarch then called the head monk Shen-hsiu inside the hall and asked: ‘Did you write this verse or not? If you wrote it you are qualified to attain my Dharma.’³⁴

“The head monk Shen-hsiu said: ‘I am ashamed to say that I ac-

³⁰ The text has *ch'ing-chi* [please record]. A copyist's error for *tu-ch'i* [finished reading]?

³¹ T8, p. 749a.

³² The three evil paths (*gati*): hell, hungry demons, beasts.

³³ Since later on in the text Hung-jen says that Shen-hsiu's verse does not show true understanding, it would perhaps be better to consider this last clause as a later interpolation, not as a part of the original version.

³⁴ Here again the text is contradictory; see above, n. 33.

tually did write the verse, but I do not dare to seek the patriarchship. I beg you to be so compassionate as to tell me whether I have even a small amount of wisdom and discernment of the cardinal meaning or not.'

"The Fifth Patriarch said: 'This verse you wrote shows that you still have not reached true understanding. You have merely arrived at the front of the gate but have yet to be able to enter it. If common people practice according to your verse they will not fall. But in seeking the ultimate enlightenment (*bodhi*) one will not succeed with such an understanding. You must enter the gate and see your own original nature. Go and think about it for a day or two and then make another verse and present it to me. If you have been able to enter the gate and see your own original nature, then I will give you the robe and the Dharma.' The head monk Shen-hsiu left, but after several days he was still unable to write a verse.

8. "One day an acolyte passed by the threshing room reciting this verse. As soon as I heard it I knew that the person who had written it had yet to know his own nature and to discern the cardinal meaning. I asked the boy: 'What's the name of the verse you were reciting just now?'

"The boy answered me, saying: 'Don't you know? The Master said that birth and death are vital matters, and he told his disciples each to write a verse if they wanted to inherit the robe and the Dharma, and to bring it for him to see. He who was awakened to the cardinal meaning would be given the robe and the Dharma and be made the Sixth Patriarch. There is a head monk by the name of Shen-hsiu who happened to write a verse on formlessness on the walls of the south corridor. The Fifth Patriarch had all his disciples recite the verse, [saying] that those who awakened to it would see into their own self-natures,³⁵ and that those who practiced according to it would attain emancipation.'

"I said: 'I've been treading the pestle for more than eight months, but haven't been to the hall yet. I beg you to take me to the south corridor so that I can see this verse and make obeisance to it. I also want to recite it so that I can establish causation for my next birth and be born in a Buddha-land.'

³⁵ A further contradiction; see above, nn. 33-34.

“The boy took me to the south corridor and I made obeisance before the verse. Because I was uneducated I asked someone³⁶ to read it to me. As soon as I had heard it I understood the cardinal meaning. I made a verse and asked someone who was able to write to put it on the wall of the west corridor, so that I might offer my own original mind. If you do not know the original mind, studying the Dharma is to no avail. If you know the mind and see its true nature, you then awaken to the cardinal meaning.³⁷ My verse said:

Bodhi originally has no tree,
The mirror also has no stand.
Buddha nature is always clean and pure;³⁸
Where is there room for dust?

“Another verse said:

The mind is the Bodhi tree,
The body is the mirror stand.
The mirror is originally clean and pure;
Where can it be stained by dust?³⁹

“The followers in the temple were all amazed when they heard my verse. Then I returned to the threshing room. The Fifth Patriarch realized that I had a splendid understanding of the cardinal meaning.⁴⁰ Being afraid lest the assembly know this, he said to them: ‘This is still not complete understanding.’

³⁶ The *Kōshōji* edition, p. 13, identifies this man as Chang Jih-yung, vice-governor of Chiang-chou.

³⁷ The above four clauses scarcely fit in with the sequence of the story and would not appear to be anything that Hui-neng would have said on this occasion. The *Kōshōji* text is completely different at this point; however, the two clauses: “If you do not know the original mind, studying the Dharma is to no avail,” appear later in the *Kōshōji* text, p. 15, as words addressed to Hui-neng by the Fifth Patriarch.

³⁸ It is only in the Tun-huang version and the Hsi-hsia translation of 1071 that the third line of this verse appears in this form (see Kawakami Tenzan, “Seikago-yaku Rokuso dankyō ni tsuite,” *Shina Bukkyō shigaku*, II [no. 3, September, 1938], 64). Later works change it to the famous: “From the beginning not a thing is.” See introduction, p. 94.

³⁹ This second verse is to be found only in the Tun-huang and the Hsi-hsia versions. Hu Shih, “An Appeal . . .,” pp. 20–21, believes that the presence of two verses indicates that the “unknown author of this fictionalized autobiography of Hui-neng was evidently experimenting with his verse writing and was not sure which verse was better.”

⁴⁰ The Tun-huang text: *Tan chi shan chih shih ta i* is corrupt at this point. Both the *tan chi* and the *chih* very likely represent a copyist’s error, and have been treated as superfluous characters. Compare W. T. Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, pp. 40–41.

9. "At midnight the Fifth Patriarch called me into the hall and expounded the Diamond Sutra to me. Hearing it but once,⁴¹ I was immediately awakened, and that night I received the Dharma. None of the others knew anything about it. Then he transmitted to me the Dharma of Sudden Enlightenment and the robe, saying: 'I make you the Sixth Patriarch. The robe is the proof and is to be handed down from generation to generation.⁴² My Dharma must be transmitted from mind to mind. You must make people awaken to themselves.'

"The Fifth Patriarch told me: 'From ancient times the transmission of the Dharma has been as tenuous as a dangling thread. If you stay here there are people who will harm you. You must leave at once.'

10. "I set out at midnight with the robe and the Dharma. The Fifth Patriarch saw me off as far as Chiu-chiang Station.⁴³ I was instantly enlightened.⁴⁴ The Fifth Patriarch instructed me: 'Leave, work hard, take the Dharma with you to the south. For three years do not spread the teaching or else calamity will befall the Dharma. Later work to convert people; you must guide deluded persons well. If you are able to awaken another's mind, he will be no different from me.'⁴⁵ After completing my leave-taking I set out for the south.

⁴¹ In place of "Hearing it but once . . .," the *Kōshōji* text, p. 15, reads: "Just when he came to the passage, 'You must not be attached [to things], yet must produce a mind which stays in no place . . .'" That Hui-neng was enlightened upon hearing this passage from the Diamond Sutra (T8, p. 749c) is a celebrated story in Ch'an Buddhism, and it is of interest that it is not included in the Tun-huang version. The identical passage from the Diamond Sutra is quoted in *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text, p. 18; Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 102; Gernet, *Entretiens du Maître de Dhyāna Chen-houei du Ho-tsö*, p. 15).

Strictly speaking, the Chinese translation does not follow the Sanskrit original which, following Conze, reads: "should produce . . . a thought which is nowhere supported" (Edward Conze, *Buddhist Wisdom Books*, p. 48).

⁴² This statement is contradicted in section 49, where Hui-neng states that the robe is not to be handed down.

⁴³ This station cannot be placed exactly. Ui, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 198, identifies it with Hsin-yang Station of the Ming period, located on the south bank of the Yangtze, near Chiu-chiang hsien, Kiangsi.

⁴⁴ This clause scarcely fits into the context of the passage. In the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 16, there is an additional episode not contained here, and it is possible that there is a textual omission to which the clause refers. The clause does not, however, appear as such in the *Kōshōji* edition.

⁴⁵ *Kōshōji*, p. 17, has been followed; the Tun-huang text reads: "His enlightenment will be no different from your own."

11. "After about two months I reached Ta-yü ling.⁴⁶ Unknown to me, several hundred men were following behind, wishing to try to kill me and to steal my robe and Dharma. By the time I had gone halfway up the mountain they had all turned back. But there was one monk of the family name of Chen, whose personal name was Hui-ming.⁴⁷ Formerly he had been a general of the third rank and he was by nature and conduct coarse and violent. Reaching the top of the mountain, he caught up with me and threatened me. I handed over the dharma-robe, but he was not willing to take it.

"[He said]: 'I have come this long distance just to seek the Dharma. I have no need for the robe.' Then, on top of the mountain, I transmitted the Dharma to Hui-ming, who when he heard it, was at once enlightened.⁴⁸ I then ordered him to return to the north and to convert people there.⁴⁹

12. "I was predestined to come to live here⁵⁰ and to preach to you officials, monks, and laymen. My teaching has been handed down from the sages of the past; it is not my own personal knowledge. If you wish to hear the teachings of the sages of the past, each of you must quiet his mind and hear me to the end. Please cast aside your own delusions; then you will be no different from the sages of the past.⁵¹ (What follows below is the Dharma).⁵²

⁴⁶ Located in Chiu-chiang hsien, Kiangsi, on the Kwangtung border.

⁴⁷ The Tun-huang text here refers to this monk by the name of Hui-hsun, but is the only text that gives this name. The *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text), p. 61, *Tsu-t'ang chi*, V, 61, and the *Kōshōji*, p. 17, all give him as Hui-ming. His biography is to be found in *Sung kao-seng chuan*, τ50, p. 756b-c, where he is identified as a native of P'o-yang in Kiangsi. Upon gaining enlightenment from the Sixth Patriarch, he changed his name, which had been Tao-ming, to Hui-ming. This account is based on the pagoda inscription by Ch'ing-chou, *T'ang Hu-chou Fo-ch'uan ssu ku ta-shih t'a-ming*, CTW, ch. 917 (XIX, 12062-63). His biography is also found in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, τ51, p. 232a, under the title: Yüan-chou Meng-shan Tao-ming ch'an-shih. Here he is given as an heir of the Fifth Patriarch, and it is stated that his name was originally Hui-ming, but that he changed it in order to avoid using the same character contained in Hui-neng's name.

⁴⁸ It is on this occasion that Hui-neng is credited in later works with having uttered the famous lines: "Not thinking of good, not thinking of evil, just at this moment, what is your original face before your mother and father were born?" See introduction, p. 110.

⁴⁹ The *Kōshōji* edition continues with two more episodes, which are not to be found in the Tun-huang edition.

⁵⁰ Ts'ao-ch'i.

⁵¹ The Tun-huang text is unreadable here; *Kōshōji*, p. 18, has been followed.

⁵² This note is in the original text.

The Master Hui-neng called, saying: ⁵³ “Good friends, enlightenment (*bodhi*) and intuitive wisdom (*prajñā*) are from the outset possessed by men of this world themselves. It is just because the mind is deluded that men cannot attain awakening to themselves. They must seek a good teacher to show them how to see into their own natures. Good friends, if you meet awakening, [Buddha]-wisdom will be achieved.

13. “Good friends, my teaching of the Dharma takes meditation (*ting*) and wisdom (*hui*) as its basis.⁵⁴ Never under any circumstances⁵⁵ say mistakenly that meditation and wisdom are different; they are a unity, not two things. Meditation itself is the substance of wisdom; wisdom itself is the function of meditation.⁵⁶ At the very moment when there is wisdom, then meditation exists in wisdom; at the very moment when there is meditation, then wisdom exists in meditation. Good friends, this means that meditation and wisdom are alike. Students, be careful not to say that meditation gives rise to wisdom, or that wisdom gives rise to meditation, or that meditation and wisdom are different from each other.⁵⁷ To hold this view implies that things have duality—if good is spoken while the mind is not good, meditation and wisdom will not be alike. If mind and speech are both good, then the internal and the

⁵³ Here the preaching begins.

⁵⁴ The identification of meditation and *prajñā* is found in almost identical form in the writings of Shen-hui. See *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text), p. 22; Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, pp. 128–29, 138; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, pp. 50, 64; also Hu Shih, “Hsin-chiao-ting te Tun-huang hsieh-pen Shen-hui ho-shang i-chu liang-chung,” *CYLYYC* XXIX (no. 2, February, 1958), 833; also in the unpublished manuscripts S2472 and S6977. It is also contained in *Fa-hsing lun* (S4669), cited in D. T. Suzuki, *Zen shisō shi kenkyū*, II, 471. A discussion of the identification of meditation and *prajñā* is found in detail in D. T. Suzuki, “Zen, a reply to Hu Shih,” *Philosophy East and West*, III (no. 1, April, 1953), 27ff. The concept is drawn from the Nirvāṇa Sutra, r12, p. 547a, which states: “When meditation and wisdom are equal, one sees all things.”

⁵⁵ *Ti-i-wu*. A very strong negative imperative in T’ang colloquial language, used to forbid one particular thing; hence there is no need later in the text for a second or third prohibition. It appears in a variety of forms. See Wang Chung-min, *et al.*, *Tun-huang pien-wen chi*, p. 468; Iriya Yoshitaka, “*Tonkō hembun shū*” *kōgo goi sakuin*, p. 9.

⁵⁶ A passage almost identical with the above is found in *Shen-hui yü-lu*: Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 129; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 50. The early use of the two technical categories, *t’i* [substance] and *yung* [function] are largely, but by no means entirely, confined to Buddhist philosophy. See Walter Liebenthal, *Book of Chao*, pp. 18–20. For a study of the history of these terms, see Shimada Kenji, “Taiyō no rekishi ni yosete,” *Tsukamoto hakushi shōju k’inen Bukkyō shigaku ronshū*, pp. 416–30.

⁵⁷ The holder of this deluded opinion is identified in the *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text), pp. 13, 31, 32, as Ch’eng ch’an-shih.

external are the same and meditation and wisdom are alike. The practice of self-awakening does not lie in verbal arguments. If you argue which comes first, meditation or wisdom, you are deluded people. You won't be able to settle the argument and instead will cling to objective things,⁵⁸ and will never escape from the four states of phenomena.⁵⁹

14. "The *samādhi* of oneness⁶⁰ is straightforward mind at all times, walking, staying, sitting, and lying. The *Ching-ming ching* says: 'Straightforward mind is the place of practice; straightforward mind is the Pure Land.'⁶¹ Do not with a dishonest mind speak of the straightforwardness of the Dharma. If while speaking of the *samādhi* of oneness, you fail to practice straightforward mind, you will not be disciples of the Buddha. Only practicing straightforward mind, and in all things having no attachments whatsoever, is called the *samādhi* of oneness. The deluded man clings to the characteristics of things, adheres to the *samādhi* of oneness, [thinks] that straightforward mind is sitting without moving and casting aside delusions without letting things arise in the mind. This he considers to be the *samādhi* of oneness. This kind of practice is the same as insentiency⁶² and the cause of an obstruction to the Tao. Tao must be something that circulates freely; why should he impede it? If the mind does not abide in things the Tao circulates freely; if the mind abides in things, it becomes entangled.⁶³

⁵⁸ *Fa-wo*. A technical term designating the false conception of an objective thing as a thing in itself.

⁵⁹ Birth, being, change, and death. This may possibly refer to four of the eight forms of misconception, beliefs in some form of ego (self, being, soul, person), mentioned in the Diamond Sutra, 18, p. 749.

⁶⁰ *I-hsing san-mei. Ekavyūha* or *ekākāra samādhi*. This term is found in the *Leng-chia shih-tzu chi*, 185, p. 1286a, which quotes a passage from the *Wen-shu-shih-li so-shou mo-ho pan-jo-po-lo-mi ching*, 18, p. 731a, in which the term is to be found. It also appears in Shen-hui's works (see Hu Shih, "Hsin-chiao-ting . . .," p. 852), the *Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun*, 132, p. 582b, and elsewhere in Buddhist literature in a variety of meanings. A discussion of the phrase as a Ch'an technical term, its history and various uses, appears in: Kobayashi Enshō, "Ichigyō zammai shikō," *Zengaku kenkyū*, no. 51 (February, 1961), pp. 176–86. Kobayashi renders the term as "concentration on the unified oneness of the universe."

⁶¹ *Ching-ming ching*. Another name for the Vimalakīrti Sutra, 114, pp. 537–57. The quotation here does not appear as such in the sutra; the first five characters are from the P'u-sa *p'in* (p. 542c); the second five from the Fo-kuo *p'in* (p. 538b).

⁶² I.e., being like trees, rocks, etc.

⁶³ The Tun-huang text of this sentence is not readable: *Kōshōji*, p. 20, has been followed.

If sitting in meditation without moving is good, why did Vimalakīrti scold Śāriputra for sitting in meditation in the forest? ⁶⁴

“Good friends, some people⁶⁵ teach men to sit viewing the mind and viewing purity, not moving and not activating the mind, and to this they devote their efforts. Deluded people do not realize that this is wrong, cling to this doctrine, and become confused. There are many such people. Those who instruct in this way are, from the outset, greatly mistaken.

15. “Good friends, how then are meditation and wisdom alike? They are like the lamp and the light it gives forth. If there is a lamp there is light; if there is no lamp there is no light. The lamp is the substance of light; the light is the function of the lamp. Thus, although they have two names, in substance they are not two. Meditation and wisdom are also like this.⁶⁶

16. Good friends, in the Dharma there is no sudden or gradual, but among people some are keen and others dull. The deluded recommend the gradual method, the enlightened practice the sudden teaching.⁶⁷ To understand the original mind of yourself is to see into your own original nature. Once enlightened, there is from the outset no distinction between these two methods; those who are not enlightened will for long kalpas be caught in the cycle of transmigration.

17. “Good friends, in this teaching of mine, from ancient times up to the present,⁶⁸ all have set up no-thought⁶⁹ as the main doctrine, non-

⁶⁴ Reference is to a passage in the Vimalakīrti Sutra, T14, p. 539c. Almost identical passages are found in *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text, pp. 14, 28; Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, pp. 97, 117; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, pp. 5, 35).

⁶⁵ The teachers of the Northern School of Ch’an.

⁶⁶ Similar passages appear in the unpublished S6977 and in Shen-hui’s works. See Hu Shih, “Hsin-chiao-ting . . .,” p. 833; the text given in D. T. Suzuki, “Jinne oshō no ‘Dango’ to kangaubeki Tonkō shutsudo-bon ni tsukite,” *Ōtani gakuhō*, XVI (no. 4, December, 1935), 27; *Kōkan Shōshitsu issho oyobi kaisetsu*, pp. 66–67.

⁶⁷ There is, of course, no need for an enlightened man to practice with the aim of gaining awakening. This may best be interpreted as a criticism of Northern Ch’an and the advocacy of the Southern method as a means to enlightenment.

⁶⁸ The Tun-huang text has the two characters *tun-chien* [sudden and gradual] inserted here. They do not appear in the parallel passage in the *Kōshōji* edition, and have been omitted in the translation.

⁶⁹ *Wu-nien*. Often rendered as the equivalent of *wu-hsin* [no mind]. A term widely used in Ch’an, it is considered one of the most important and characteristic elements in

form as the substance, and non-abiding as the basis.⁷⁰ Non-form is to be separated from form even when associated with form. No-thought is not to think even when involved in thought. Non-abiding is the original nature of man.

“Successive thoughts do not stop; prior thoughts, present thoughts, and future thoughts follow one after the other without cessation. If one instant of thought is cut off, the Dharma body separates from the physical body, and in the midst of successive thoughts there will be no place for attachment to anything. If one instant of thought clings, then successive thoughts cling; this is known as being fettered. If in all things successive thoughts do not cling, then you are unfettered. Therefore, non-abiding is made the basis.

“Good friends, being outwardly separated from all forms, this is non-form. When you are separated from form, the substance of your nature is pure. Therefore, non-form is made the substance.

“To be unstained in all environments is called no-thought. If on the basis of your own thoughts you separate from environment, then, in regard to things, thoughts are not produced. If you stop thinking of the myriad things, and cast aside all thoughts, as soon as one instant of thought is cut off, you will be reborn in another realm. Students, take care! Don’t rest in objective things and the subjective mind. [If you do so] it will be bad enough that you yourself are in error, yet how much worse that you encourage others in their mistakes. The deluded man, however, does not himself see⁷¹ and slanders the teachings of the sutras.

the teaching of the Sixth Patriarch. It is discussed in Itō Kokan, “Rokuso Enō daishi no chūshin shishō,” *Nihon Bukkyōgaku kyōkai nempō*, no. 7 (February, 1935), pp. 235–38. D. T. Suzuki has devoted a book to the general subject: *Zen Doctrine of No-mind*. Gernet (*Entretiens . . .*, pp. 12–13, n. 5) renders the term as “absence de pensée,” and discusses its origins and implications. *Wu-nien* is used in the *Ta-ch’eng ch’i-hsin lun*, 132, p. 576b, the apocryphal *Chin-kan san-mei ching*, 19, p. 369a, and in the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, where it is dealt with in detail (151, pp. 185a, 192a–b, 195b–c). It is found also throughout the works of Shen-hui: in the *T’an-yü* (Hu Shih, “Hsin-chiao-ting . . .,” p. 832) we read: “True Reality is the substance of no-thought. For this reason I have set up no-thought as the main doctrine.” In the *Hsien-tsung chi* (Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 193) we find: “Thought (*nien*) is to concentrate on True Reality.” This would imply that no-thought (*wu-nien*) is its reverse, and would correspond with the “no-thought is not to think even when involved in thought” of the following passage in the Tun-huang text.

⁷⁰ Here follow the four characters *ho ming wei hsiang* [What is form?]. They are out of context and are not contained in the parallel passage in the *Kōshōji* edition. They have been omitted in the translation.

⁷¹ The text, as given in *Kōshōji*, p. 22, has been followed. Compare Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, pp. 52–53.

Therefore, no-thought is established as a doctrine. Because man in his delusion has thoughts in relation to his environment, heterodox ideas stemming from these thoughts arise, and passions and false views are produced from them. Therefore this teaching has established no-thought as a doctrine.

“Men of the world, separate yourselves from views; do not activate thoughts. If there were no thinking, then no-thought would have no place to exist. ‘No’ is the ‘no’ of what? ‘Thought’ means ‘thinking’ of what? ‘No’ is the separation from the dualism that produces the passions. ‘Thought’ means thinking of the original nature of True Reality.⁷² True Reality is the substance of thoughts; thoughts are the function of True Reality. If you give rise to thoughts from your self-nature, then, although you see, hear, perceive, and know, you are not stained by the manifold environments, and are always free.⁷³ The Vimalakīrti Sutra says: ‘Externally, while distinguishing well all the forms of the various dharmas, internally he stands firm within the First Principle.’⁷⁴

18. “Good friends, in this teaching from the outset sitting in meditation does not concern the mind nor does it concern purity; we do not talk of steadfastness.⁷⁵ If someone speaks of ‘viewing the mind,’ [then I would say] that the ‘mind’ is of itself delusion, and as delusions are just like fantasies, there is nothing to be seen. If someone speaks of ‘viewing purity,’ [then I would say] that man’s nature is of itself pure, but because of false thoughts True Reality is obscured. If you exclude delusions then the original nature reveals its purity. If you activate your mind to view purity without realizing that your own nature is originally pure, delusions of purity will be produced. Since this delusion has no place to exist, then you know that whatever you see is nothing but delusion. Purity has no form, but, nonetheless, some people try to postulate the form of purity and consider this to be Ch’an prac-

⁷² This passage is omitted in the Tun-huang version and has been supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 22.

⁷³ A passage of very similar import appears in *Shen-hui yü-lu*. See Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 130; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 52.

⁷⁴ r14, p. 537c. The “externally” and “internally” are not in the original text of the Vimalakīrti Sutra.

⁷⁵ The Tun-huang edition reads: *pu-yen-tung* [do not speak of motion]. *Kōshōji*, p. 22, in the parallel passage has: *i pu-shih pu-tung* [this, too, is not steadfastness]. The text has been emended to *pu-yen pu-tung* [do not speak of steadfastness] here, particularly in light of the expression *pu-tung* [stand firm] in the excerpt from the Vimalakīrti Sutra quoted above.

tice. People who hold this view obstruct their own original natures and end up by being bound by purity. One who practices steadfastness does not see the faults of people everywhere.⁷⁶ This is the steadfastness of self-nature. The deluded man, however, even if he doesn't move his own body, will talk of the good and bad of others the moment he opens his mouth, and thus behave in opposition to the Tao. Therefore, both 'viewing the mind' and 'viewing purity' will cause an obstruction to Tao.

19. "Now that we know that this is so, what is it in this teaching that we call 'sitting in meditation' (*tso-ch'an*)? In this teaching 'sitting' means without any obstruction anywhere, outwardly and under all circumstances, not to activate thoughts. 'Meditation' is internally to see the original nature and not become confused.⁷⁷

"And what do we call Ch'an meditation (*ch'an-ting*)? ⁷⁸ Outwardly to exclude form is 'ch'an'; inwardly to be unconfused is meditation (*ting*). Even though there is form on the outside, when internally the nature is not confused,⁷⁹ then, from the outset,⁸⁰ you are of yourself pure and of yourself in meditation. The very contact with circumstances itself causes confusion.⁸¹ Separation from form on the outside is 'ch'an';

⁷⁶ The Tun-huang manuscript has: "see all the faults everywhere"; however, in the "Formless Verse" (sec. 36) we read:

If you are a person who truly practices the Way,
Do not look at the ignorance of the world.
For if you see the wrong of people in the world,
Being wrong yourself, *you* will be evil.

This would indicate that a negative has been dropped here. The same concept is found in a verse in the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, 151, p. 192b: "You should be engaged in your own practice. Don't see the right and wrong in others." In the *Lin-chi lu*, 147, p. 498b, the same idea is expressed: "If he be a true practitioner of the Way, he will not seek out the faults of the world."

⁷⁷ In the opening passage of an unpublished manuscript from Tun-huang entitled *Ta-ch'eng san-k'o*, in one roll, owned by Mr. Suzuki Shintarō of Itō, Shizuoka, the text is very similar to the *Platform Sutra* here. Quoted in Sekiguchi Shindai, *Daruma daishi no kenkyū*, p. 243.

⁷⁸ *Ch'an* is *dhyāna*; *ting* is its Chinese translation. The meaning is equivalent to *tso-ch'an*, above.

⁷⁹ For this passage *Kōshōji*, pp. 23–24, reads: "If outwardly you attach to form, inwardly the mind is then confused; if outwardly you exclude form, inwardly the mind is composed."

⁸⁰ *Kōshōji*, p. 24, reads here: "The original nature is in itself pure."

⁸¹ The text is difficult to follow here. Following this sentence, the Tun-huang text has six characters which are out of context and have been omitted in the translation. The parallel passage in the *Kōshōji* edition has been changed completely.

being untouched on the inside is meditation (*ting*). Being 'ch'an' externally and meditation (*ting*) internally, it is known as ch'an meditation (*ch'an-ting*). The Vimalakīrti Sutra says: 'At once, suddenly, you regain the original mind.'⁸² The *P'u-sa-chieh* says: 'From the outset your own nature is pure.'⁸³

"Good friends, see for yourselves the purity of your own natures, practice and accomplish for yourselves. Your own nature is the *Dharma-kāya* and self-practice is the practice of Buddha; by self-accomplishment you may achieve the Buddha Way for yourselves.

20. "Good friends, you must all with your own bodies receive the precepts of formlessness and recite in unison what I am about to say. It will make you see the threefold body of the Buddha in your own selves. 'I take refuge in the pure *Dharma-kāya* Buddha in my own physical body. I take refuge in the ten thousand hundred billion *Nirmāṇakāya* Buddhas in my own physical body. I take refuge in the future perfect *Sambhogakāya* Buddha in my own physical body.' (Recite the above three times).⁸⁴ The physical body is your own home; you cannot speak of turning to it. The threefold body which I just mentioned is within your own self-natures.⁸⁵ Everyone in the world possesses it, but being deluded, he cannot see it and seeks the threefold body of the Tathāgata on the outside. Thus he cannot find the threefold Buddha body in his own physical body.

"Good friends, listen!⁸⁶ I shall make you see that there is a threefold Buddha body of your own self-natures in your own physical bodies. The threefold Buddha body is produced from your own natures.

"What is the pure *Dharma-kāya* Buddha? Good friends, although the nature of people in this world is from the outset pure in itself, the ten thousand things are all within their own natures. If people think of all the evil⁸⁷ things, then they will practice evil; if they think of all the good things, then they will practice good. Thus it is clear that in this way all the dharmas are within your own natures, yet your own na-

⁸² 14, p. 541a.

⁸³ Another name for the *Fan-wang ching Lu-she-na fo-shuo p'u-sa hsin-ti chieh p'in ti-shih*, 124, pp. 997-1010. The quotation is from ch. 10, pt. 2 (p. 1003c).

⁸⁴ Note is in original text.

⁸⁵ The Tun-huang text has: "in your own dharma natures." *Kōshōji*, p. 29, omits the "dharma," and this has been followed in the translation.

⁸⁶ The four characters *ju shan-chih-shih* are superfluous, and have been omitted.

⁸⁷ The word "evil" is supplied from the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 30.

tures are always pure. The sun and the moon are always bright, yet if they are covered by clouds, although above they are bright, below they are darkened, and the sun, moon, stars, and planets cannot be seen clearly. But if suddenly the wind of wisdom should blow and roll away the clouds and mists, all forms in the universe appear at once. The purity of the nature of man in this world is like the blue sky; wisdom is like the sun, knowledge like the moon. Although knowledge and wisdom are always clear, if you cling to external environments, the floating clouds of false thoughts will create a cover, and your own natures cannot become clear. Therefore, if you meet a good teacher, open up the true Dharma, and waft aside your delusions and errors; inside and outside will become clear. Within your own natures the ten thousand things will all appear, for all things of themselves are within your own natures. Given a name, this is the pure *Dharmakāya* Buddha.⁸⁸ Taking refuge in oneself is to cast aside all actions that are not good; this is known as taking refuge.⁸⁹

“What are the ten thousand hundred billion *Nirmāṇakāya* Buddhas? If you do not think, then your nature is empty; if you do think, then you yourself will change. If you think of evil things then you will change and enter hell; if you think of good things then you will change and enter heaven. [If you think of] harm you will change and become a beast; [if you think of] compassion you will change and become a Bodhisattva. [If you think of] intuitive wisdom you will change and enter the upper realms; [if you think of] ignorance you will change and enter the lower quarters. The changes of your own natures are extreme, yet the deluded person is not himself conscious of this. [Successive thoughts give rise to evil and evil ways are always practiced].⁹⁰ But if a single thought of good evolves, intuitive wisdom is born. [This is called the *Nirmāṇakāya* Buddha of your own nature. What is the perfect *Sambhogakāya* Buddha?] ⁹¹ As one lamp serves to dispel a thousand years of darkness, so one flash of wisdom destroys ten thousand years of ignorance. Do not think of the past; always think

⁸⁸ The text here merely reads *dharmakāya*, but by context “Buddha” must be added. See *Kōshōji*, pp. 30–31.

⁸⁹ Here there are obvious omissions and confusions in the original text. In the *Kōshōji* edition, pp. 30–31, the explanation of the *Nirmāṇakāya* Buddhas given below in the text is used in description of the phrase “to take refuge in oneself.”

⁹⁰ Here again there are omissions in the Tun-huang text; this sentence has been added following *Kōshōji*, p. 31.

⁹¹ These two sentences have been supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 31.

of the future; if your future thoughts are always good, you may be called the *Sambhogakāya* Buddha. An instant of thought of evil will result in the destruction⁹² of good which has continued a thousand years; an instant of thought of good compensates for a thousand years of evil and destruction. If from the timeless beginning future thoughts have always been good,⁹³ you may be called the *Sambhogakāya* Buddha. Observed from the standpoint of the *Dharmakāya*, this is none other than the *Nirmānakāya*.⁹⁴ When successive thoughts are good, this then is the *Sambhogakāya*. Self-awakening and self-practice, this is 'to take refuge.' Skin and flesh form the physical body; the physical body is the home. This has nothing to do with taking refuge. If, however, you awaken to the threefold body, then you have understood the cardinal meaning.

21. "Now that you have already taken refuge in the threefold body of Buddha, I shall expound to you the four great vows. Good friends, recite in unison what I say: 'I vow to save all sentient beings everywhere. I vow to cut off all the passions everywhere. I vow to study all the Buddhist teachings everywhere. I vow to achieve the unsurpassed Buddha Way.' (Recite three times.)⁹⁵

"Good friends, when I say 'I vow to save all sentient beings everywhere,' it is not that I will save you, but that sentient beings, each with their own natures, must save themselves.⁹⁶ What is meant by 'saving yourselves with your own natures'? Despite heterodox views, passions, ignorance, and delusions, in your own physical bodies you have in yourselves the attributes of inherent enlightenment,⁹⁷ so that with correct views you can be saved. If you are awakened to correct views, the wisdom of *prajñā* will wipe away ignorance and delusion, and you all will

⁹² The Tun-huang text has here *hsin* [mind]. Suzuki, *Tonkō shutsudo Rokuso dankyō*, p. 19, changes the text to *wang* [destruction]. *Kōshōji*, p. 32, has *mieh* [destruction]. Suzuki's rendering has been followed.

⁹³ The Tun-huang text has been emended to follow Ui, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 130.

⁹⁴ The text here is difficult to follow and the translation uncertain.

⁹⁵ Note is in original text.

⁹⁶ Translation uncertain. The *hsin-chung* [within the mind], in the Tun-huang text, has been regarded as superfluous.

⁹⁷ *Pen-chüeh*. This term derives from the *Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun*, 132, p. 576b. It is used in contradistinction to *shih-chüeh*, the initial enlightenment, which is gained by means of practice, and which enables one to awaken to the ultimate reality. Since initial enlightenment exists because of original enlightenment, the two separate terms are used; however, once awakening is gained through practice, the two become the same. See *Kokuyaku daizōkyō*, Rombu, V, 14, n. 4.

save yourselves. If false views come, with correct views you will be saved; if delusion comes, with awakening you will be saved; if ignorance comes, with wisdom you will be saved; if evil comes, with good you will be saved; if the passions come, with *bodhi* you will be saved. Being saved in this way is known as true salvation.

“‘I vow to cut off all the passions everywhere’ is, with your own minds to cast aside the unreal and the false. ‘I vow to study all the Buddhist teachings everywhere’ is to study the unsurpassed true Dharma. ‘I vow to achieve the unsurpassed Buddha Way’ is always to act humbly, to practice reverence for all things, to separate oneself from erroneous attachments, and to awaken to the wisdom of *prajñā*. When delusions are cast aside you are self-enlightened, achieve the Buddha Way, and put into practice the power of the vows.

22. “Now that I have finished speaking of the four vows, I shall give you the formless repentance and destroy⁹⁸ the crimes of the three realms.”

The Master said: “Good friends, if in past thoughts, present thoughts, and future thoughts, if in successive thoughts, you are not stained by delusion and you at once⁹⁹ cast aside with your own natures previous bad actions, this is seeking forgiveness. If in past thoughts, future thoughts, and present thoughts, if in successive thoughts, you are not¹⁰⁰ stained by ignorance, and cast aside forever your previous arrogant minds, this is called seeking forgiveness with your own natures. If in past thoughts, present thoughts,¹⁰¹ and future thoughts, if in successive thoughts, you are not stained by jealousy and cast aside with your own natures previous feelings of jealousy, this is seeking forgiveness.¹⁰² (Recite the above three times.)¹⁰³

“Good friends, what is repentance (*ch’an-hui*)? ‘Seeking forgiveness’ (*ch’an*)¹⁰⁴ is to do nothing¹⁰⁵ throughout your life. ‘Repentance’ (*hui*)

⁹⁸ This word is supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 25.

⁹⁹ We have here a succession of seven-character clauses, the third of which is missing one character. This has been left as a lacuna. The construction and wording, however, are parallel with the last clause of the paragraph.

¹⁰⁰ The negative is supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 25.

¹⁰¹ This word is supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 25.

¹⁰² The *Kōshōji* text, p. 26, concludes with: “The above is the formless repentance.”

¹⁰³ Note in original text.

¹⁰⁴ This word supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁵ The translation follows the Tun-huang text here. The *Kōshōji* edition, p. 26, amplifies the text, and although containing no parallel passage, indicates that one is never

is to know the mistakes and evil actions you have perpetrated up to now, and never to let them be apart from the mind. It is useless to make a confession in words before the Buddhas. In my teaching, forever to engage in no action¹⁰⁶ is called repentance.

23. "Having finished repentance, I shall give you the formless precepts of the three refuges."

The Master said: "Good friends, 'take refuge in enlightenment [the Buddha], the most honored among two-legged beings; take refuge in the truth [the Dharma], the most noble [doctrine which sets people] free from the desires; take refuge in purity [the Sangha], the most honored among sentient beings.'¹⁰⁷ From now on you will call enlightenment¹⁰⁸ your master and will not rely on other teachings which are deluded and heretical. Always prove it clearly yourselves with the three treasures of your own natures.¹⁰⁹ Good friends, I urge you to take refuge in the three treasures in your own natures. The Buddha is enlightenment, the Dharma is truth, and the Sangha is purity. If in your own minds you take refuge in enlightenment [the Buddha], heterodoxies and delusions are not produced, you have no desires and are content with yourself as you are, and stand apart from the passions and physical wants. Therefore Buddha is called 'most honored among two-legged beings.' If in your own mind you rely on truth [the Dharma], then, because there is no falseness in successive thoughts, there will be no attachments. Since there will be no attachments, [the Dharma] is called 'the most noble [doctrine which sets people] free from the desires.' If in your own mind you rely on purity [the Sangha], although all the passions and false thoughts are within your own natures, your natures are not stained. Therefore, [the Sangha] is called 'most honored among sentient beings.' The ordinary man does not¹¹⁰ understand

again to "do evil" throughout one's life. This may well have been the meaning intended by the author of the present text.

¹⁰⁶ Here, again, the *Kōshōji* text indicates that one "is never again to do evil."

¹⁰⁷ The three refuges given above are to be found, also in the same form, in *Ch'ih-hsiu Pai-chang ch'ing-kuai*, 148, p. 1137c. For other interpretations of the text see Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 67, and Lu, *Ch'an and Zen Teachings*, series 3, p. 53.

¹⁰⁸ The Tun-huang text has: "You will call Buddha your Master." The translation follows *Kōshōji*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁹ The Tun-huang text is corrupt, but might be rendered: "I beg of you to illumine with compassion the three treasures of your own natures." Here, however, the *Kōshōji* version, p. 28, appears more apt and has been followed in the translation.

¹¹⁰ Negative supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 28.

and from day to day receives the precepts of the three refuges. If he says he relies on the Buddha, where is that Buddha? If he doesn't see the Buddha then he has nothing on which to rely. If he has nothing on which to rely, then what he says is deluded.¹¹¹

“Good friends, each of you must observe well for himself. Do not mistakenly use your minds! The sutras say to take refuge in the Buddha within yourselves; they do not say to rely on other Buddhas. If you do not rely upon your own natures, there is nothing else on which to rely.

24. “Now that all of you have yourselves devoutly taken refuge in the three treasures, I shall expound to you on the doctrine of the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā* (*Mo-ho-pan-lo-po-lo-mi*). Good friends, although you recite it, you do not understand its meaning, so I shall explain. Listen every one of you! *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* is an Indian Sanskrit term; in Chinese it means the Great Perfection of Wisdom, reaching the other shore. This Dharma must be practiced; it has nothing to do with recitations. If you recite it and do not practice it, it will be like an illusion or a phantom. The Dharma body of the practitioner is the equivalent of the Buddha.¹¹²

“What is *Mo-ho*? *Mo-ho* is ‘great.’ The capacity of the mind is broad and huge, like the vast sky.¹¹³ Do not sit with a mind fixed on emptiness. If you do you will fall into a neutral kind of emptiness. Emptiness includes the sun, moon, stars, and planets, the great earth, mountains and rivers, all trees and grasses, bad men and good men, bad things and good things, heaven and hell; they are all in the midst of emptiness. The emptiness of human nature is also like this.

25. “Self-nature contains the ten thousand things—this is ‘great.’ The ten thousand things are¹¹⁴ all in self-nature. Although you see all men

¹¹¹ I.e., his own statement that he “relies on the Buddha.”

¹¹² The *Kōshōji* version, p. 34, of the above passage reads: “You must practice completely with the mind; it has nothing to do with recitations. If you recite and do not practice with the mind, it will be like an illusion, a phantom, the dew, or a flash of lightning. If you recite and practice with the mind, mind and mouth will correspond. Your original nature is Buddha; apart from your nature there is no other Buddha.”

¹¹³ The *Kōshōji* text, p. 34, is greatly enlarged at this point. In explanation of the passage following it reads: “All the many Buddha-lands are the same as the empty sky. The marvelous nature of man is basically empty; there is not one single thing to obtain. The true emptiness of self-nature is also like this. Good friends, you listen to my explanation of emptiness and then you stick to emptiness.”

¹¹⁴ The *Kōshōji* edition, at this point, is missing one leaf, containing 462 characters

and non-men,¹¹⁵ evil and good, evil things and good things, you must not throw them aside, nor must you cling to them, nor must you be stained by them, but you must regard them as being just like the empty sky. This is what is meant by 'great.' This is the practice of *mo-ho*. The deluded person merely recites; the wise man practices¹¹⁶ with his mind. There are deluded men who make their minds empty and do not think, and to this they give the name of 'great.' This, too, is wrong. The capacity of the mind is vast and wide,¹¹⁷ but when there is no practice it is small. Do not merely speak of emptiness with the mouth and fail to practice it. A person such as this is not a disciple of mine.

26. "What is *prajñā*? *Prajñā* is wisdom (*chih-hui*). When at all times successive thoughts contain no ignorance, and you always practice wisdom, this is known as the practice of *prajñā*. If but one instant of thought contains ignorance, then *prajñā* is cut off; but if one instant of thought contains wisdom, then *prajñā* is produced. Within the mind there is always ignorance. [People] themselves say: "I practice *prajñā*," but it has neither shape nor form. This, then, is the nature of wisdom.¹¹⁸

"What is *po-lo-mi-to* (*pāramitā*)? This is the Indian Sanskrit pronunciation and means 'other-shore-reached.' When its meaning is understood you are apart from birth and destruction. When you are attached to environment, birth and destruction arise. Take waves rising on the water—they are something that occurs on 'this' shore. Being apart from environment and putting an end to birth and destruction is like going along with the flow of the water. Thus it is called 'reaching the other shore,' in other words, *pāramitā*. The deluded person recites it; the wise man practices with the mind. If you have delusion [in

Suzuki has supplemented his text from the so-called *Kan'ei* edition of 1631, a Tokugawa reprint of the *Kōshōji* edition, which includes the missing leaf.

¹¹⁵ *Amanuṣya*. Various described as beings other than those of the human race; heavenly beings, mythical animals, etc.

¹¹⁶ This word supplied from the *Kan'ei* edition. See *Kōshōji*, p. 34.

¹¹⁷ This word supplied from the *Kan'ei* edition. See *Kōshōji*, p. 34.

¹¹⁸ Beginning with "within the mind there is always ignorance," the text is corrupt and obviously has been miscopied. The *Kan'ei* edition (see *Kōshōji*, p. 36) reads: "People are deluded and do not see *prajñā*. They speak of *prajñā* with the mouth, but in their minds they are constantly ignorant. They themselves say: 'I am practicing *prajñā*,' and in consecutive thoughts they speak of emptiness, yet they do not know the true emptiness. *Prajñā* has no shape and form. This, then, is the mind of wisdom."

your mind] when you recite it, the very existence of this delusion is not a true existence. If in successive thoughts you practice it, this is called true existence. Those who awaken to this Dharma have awakened to the Dharma of *prajñā* and are practicing the *prajñā* practice. If you do not practice it you are an ordinary person; if you practice for one instant of thought, your Dharma body¹¹⁹ will be the same as the Buddha's. Good friends, the very passions are themselves enlightenment (*bodhi*).¹²⁰ When past thoughts are deluded, this is the common man; when future thoughts are awakened to, this is Buddha.¹²¹

"Good friends, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā*¹²² is the most honored, the supreme, the foremost. It does not stay, it does not leave, nor does it come, and all the Buddhas of the three worlds issue from it. With great wisdom it leads to the other shore and destroys the passions and the troubles of the five skandhas. Since it is the most honored, the supreme, the foremost, if you praise the supreme Dharma and practice according to it, you will certainly become Buddha. Not leaving, not staying, not going or coming, with the identity of wisdom and meditation, and unstained in all things, the various Buddhas of the three worlds issue forth from it,¹²³ and change the three poisons¹²⁴ into discipline, meditation, and wisdom.

27. "Good friends, this teaching of mine [derives] from the eighty-four thousand wisdoms.¹²⁵ Why is this so? Because there are eighty-four thousand passions in this world. If the passions are done away with, *prajñā* is always there, and is not apart from your own nature. If you awaken to this Dharma you will have no thoughts, no recollections, no

¹¹⁹ The *Tsung-pao* edition, ㄖ48, p. 350b, changes "Dharma body" to "your own body." The *Kan'ei* edition (*Kōshōji*, p. 36) follows the Tun-huang text.

¹²⁰ The same concept is found frequently, although often with different wording, throughout Ch'an works. It appears in the *Shih-ssu k'o-sung*, by Pao-chih ho-shang (418-514), contained in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, ㄖ51, p. 451a; in the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, ㄖ51, p. 180c; and in the *Ch'uan-hsin fa-yao*, ㄖ48, p. 361a, and elsewhere.

¹²¹ The *Kan'ei* edition (*Kōshōji*, p. 36) continues the thought: "When past thoughts adhere to the environment, they are the passions; when future thoughts are apart from the environment, they are enlightenment (*bodhi*)."

¹²² See *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text, p. 31; Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, pp. 180-81; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 99) where the following concepts are expressed in almost identical wording.

¹²³ The above passage is highly repetitive and may well represent an error on the part of the copyist. *Kōshōji*, p. 37, gives a greatly simplified version.

¹²⁴ Concupiscence, anger, and ignorance.

¹²⁵ *Kōshōji*, p. 37, reads here: "In this teaching of mine, from one [realization of] *prajñā* the eighty-four thousand wisdoms are produced."

attachments. Do not depart from deceptions and errors;¹²⁶ for they of themselves are the nature of True Reality. When all things are illumined by wisdom and there is neither grasping nor throwing away, then you can see into your own nature and gain the Buddha Way.

28. “Good friends, if you wish to enter the most profound Dharma realm of the *prajñā samādhi*, you must straightforwardly practice the *prajñāpāramitā*. With only the one volume of the Diamond Sutra you may see into your own natures and enter into the *prajñā samādhi*. You will surely understand that the merit of such a person is without bounds. In the sutras it is clearly praised and there is no need for me to elaborate. It is the Dharma of the Supreme Way that is expounded for men of great wisdom and high capacities. Should a man of small capability for knowledge hear this Dharma, faith would not be produced in his mind. Why is this so? Should a great dragon deluge the earth (Jambūdvīpa) with¹²⁷ a great rain, [then cities, towns, and villages would all be washed away]¹²⁸ like floating grass and leaves. But should this great rain fall in the great ocean, its waters would neither increase nor lessen.

“Should a person of the Mahāyāna hear the Diamond Sutra, his mind will open and he will gain awakening. Therefore we can say that in the original nature itself the wisdom of *prajñā* exists, and that by using this wisdom yourself and illuminating with it, there is no need to depend on written words.¹²⁹ It is as though the rain waters did not come from heaven,¹³⁰ but from the beginning the dragon king draws up the

¹²⁶ *Kōshōji*, p. 37, has changed the Tun-huang text “do not depart from deceptions and errors” to “do not give rise to deceptions and errors.” A thought similar to the Tun-huang version, however, is to be found in the *Cheng-tao kō*, attributed to Hsüan-chüeh (665–713), contained in *Ching-te ch’uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 460a: “Do not discard deluded thoughts, do not seek the truth; the true nature of ignorance is itself the Buddha nature.” Thus, the change made in the *Kōshōji* edition can, perhaps, be considered unjustified.

¹²⁷ Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, pp. 178–79, n. 114, changes *i* (= *yü*, on) to *fang* (to spread), to correspond with the *fang* in the next sentence, and translates (p. 75): “Suppose the great dragon causes a heavy rain to fall and the rain spreads over Jambūdvīpa.” I prefer to read the character in both instances as *yü*. Since Jambūdvīpa is the world as known to the Indians, any rain that falls would necessarily fall on Jambūdvīpa. There is no need for it to spread anywhere.

¹²⁸ A textual omission. Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 38.

¹²⁹ The above passage is quoted in the *Tsung-ching lu*, 148, p. 498c.

¹³⁰ Following *Kōshōji*, p. 38, *wu* [not] has been changed to *t’ien* [heaven]. Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 75 and 179, n. 118, sees no reason for making the change,

water from the rivers and seas and covers all beings, trees and grasses, things sentient and nonsentient, with its wetness. All these waters flow together and enter into the great sea, and the sea gathers them together and combines them into one. So it is with the *prajñā* wisdom of the original natures of sentient beings.

29. “When people of shallow capacity hear the Sudden Doctrine being preached they are like the naturally shallow-rooted plants on this earth, which, after a deluge of rain, are all beaten down and cannot continue their growth. People of shallow capacity are like such plants. Although these people have *prajñā* wisdom and are not different from men of great knowledge, why is it that even though they hear the Dharma they are not awakened? It is because the obstructions of their heterodox views are heavy and the passions deep-rooted. It is like the times when great clouds cover the sun; unless the wind blows the sun will not appear. There is no large and small in *prajñā* wisdom. Because all sentient beings have of themselves deluded minds, they seek the Buddha by external practice, and are unable to awaken to their own natures. But even these people of shallow capacity, if they hear the Sudden Doctrine, and do not place their trust in external practices, but only in their own minds always raise correct views in regard to their own original natures; even these sentient beings, filled with passions and troubles,¹³¹ will at once gain awakening. It is like the great sea which gathers all the flowing streams, and merges together the small waters and the large waters into one. This is seeing into your own nature. [Such a person] does not abide either inside or outside; he is free to come or go. Readily he casts aside the mind that clings [to things], and there is no obstruction to his passage. If in the mind this practice is carried out, then [your own nature] is no different from the *prajñā-pāramitā*.¹³²

30. “All the sutras and written words, Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna, the twelve

and translates: “It is like the rain which does not really come from nothing. Originally the Dragon King himself draws this water from the ocean . . .”

¹³¹ The parallel passage in the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 39, reads: “Passions and troubles can never stain them.”

¹³² The text contains the word “sutra” following *prajñāpāramitā*. *Kōshōji*, p. 39, and the Tsung-pao edition, 148, p. 351a, both have here “Prajñā Sutra.” Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 77, believes this refers specifically to the Diamond Sutra, as does Lu, *Ch’an and Zen Teachings*, ser. 3, p. 34. Since the text is dealing specifically with the *prajñā-pāramitā* (secs. 26–29), I follow the interpretation adopted by Ui, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 140, and delete the word “sutra” from the text.

divisions of the canon,¹³³ all have been postulated by men. Because of the nature of wisdom [within man] it has been possible, therefore, to postulate them. If we were without this wisdom,¹³⁴ all things would, from the outset, have no existence in themselves. Therefore it is clear that all things were originally given rise to by man, and that all the sutras exist because they are spoken by man. Among men there are the stupid and the wise. The stupid are insignificant, the wise, great men.¹³⁵ Should deluded people ask the wise, the wise will expound the Dharma for the stupid and enable them to understand and gain a deep awakening. If the deluded person understands and his mind is awakened, then there is no difference between him and the man of wisdom. Therefore we know that, unawakened, even a Buddha is a sentient being,¹³⁶ and that even a sentient being, if he is awakened in an instant of thought, is¹³⁷ a Buddha.¹³⁸ And thus we know that the ten thousand dharmas are all within our own minds. Why not from your own natures make the original nature of True Reality suddenly appear? The *P'u-sa-chieh ching* says: 'From the outset our own nature is pure.'¹³⁹ If we perceive the mind¹⁴⁰ and see our own natures, then of ourselves we have achieved the Buddha Way. 'At once, suddenly, we regain our original mind.'¹⁴¹

31. "Good friends, when I was at Priest Jen's place, hearing it [the Diamond Sutra]¹⁴² just once, I immediately gained the great awak-

¹³³ The twelve varieties in which Buddhism is preached. See Leon Hurvitz, "Chih-i," *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques*, XII (1962), Appendix C, pp. 337-38.

¹³⁴ *Kōshōji*, p. 39, reads here: "If there were no men in this world." The Tun-huang text scarcely makes sense at this point.

¹³⁵ "Insignificant" and "great" correspond to Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna; i.e., Hīnayāna is the teaching for men of small talent; Mahāyāna for those of great capabilities.

¹³⁶ The same concept is found in Pao-chih's *Ta-ch'eng tsan* (in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, ㄖ51, p. 449b); in the *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text, p. 18; Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 124; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 45; and in the *Ch'uan-hsin fa-yao*, ㄖ48, p. 379c. The wording differs in each instance.

¹³⁷ Following *Kōshōji*, p. 39, the negative in the original text is omitted.

¹³⁸ See sec. 35, where the same thought is expressed.

¹³⁹ The same quotation appears in sec. 19, except that the *wo* [our], not in the original sutra, is added here.

¹⁴⁰ *Shih-hsin*. This term is found in the *Ssu-shih-erh chang ching*, ㄖ17, p. 722, where we read: "The Buddha said: 'One who bids his parents farewell and retires from the world, perceives the mind, penetrates the basis, and understands the Dharma of *wu-wei* is called *śramāna*.'" The term is not to be found, however, in the version of this sutra contained in the *Pao-lin chuan*, I, 6-29.

¹⁴¹ Quotation from the Vimalakīrti Sutra. The identical quotation is to be found in sec. 19.

¹⁴² The autobiography (sec. 2) states that Hui-neng was enlightened on hearing the Diamond Sutra before going to see the Fifth Patriarch.

ening and saw suddenly that True Reality was my original nature. Therefore, I have taken this teaching¹⁴³ and, passing it on to later generations, shall make you students of the Way suddenly awakened to enlightenment, and let each of you see into your own minds,¹⁴⁴ and suddenly awaken to your own original natures. If you cannot¹⁴⁵ gain enlightenment for yourselves, you must seek a great teacher to show you the way to see into your own self-natures. What is a great teacher? He is a man who understands at once that the Dharma of the Supreme Vehicle is indeed the correct path. This is a great teacher. This is the great causal event,¹⁴⁶ the so-called conversion which will enable you to see Buddha. All the good dharmas are activated by a great teacher. Therefore, although¹⁴⁷ the Buddhas of the three worlds and all the twelve divisions of the canon are from the beginning within the nature of man, if he cannot gain awakening with his own nature, he must obtain a good teacher to show him how to see into his own self-nature. But if you awaken by yourself, do not rely on teachers outside. If you try to seek a teacher outside and hope to obtain deliverance, you will find it impossible. If you have recognized the good teacher within your own mind, you have already obtained deliverance. If you are deluded in your own mind and harbor erroneous thoughts and contrary concepts, even though you go to an outside teacher [you will not be able to obtain salvation].¹⁴⁸ If you are not able to obtain self-awakening, you must give rise to *prajñā* and illuminate with it, and then in one instant false thoughts will be destroyed. Once you have awakened to

¹⁴³ Here the Tun-huang text is difficult to read, and *Kōshōji*, p. 40, has been followed.

¹⁴⁴ *Kuan-hsin*. For this term, which may well be of Northern Ch'an origin, see *Kuan-hsin lun*. It is contained in *Shōshitsu rokumon* under the title *P'o-hsiang lun* (τ48, pp. 366c–69c). The Tun-huang manuscript version is reproduced in τ85, pp. 1270–73 (S2595), and S5532 represents an additional unpublished fragment of the same work. A collection of five different versions appears in D. T. Suzuki, *Daruma no zempō to shisō oyobi sono ta*, pp. 184–232. Kamio Kazuharu, "Kanshin ron shikō," *Shūkyō kenkyū*, new ser., IX (no. 5, September, 1932), 102, points out that in Hui-lin's *I-ch'ieh ching yin-i*, τ54, p. 932a, the statement is made that the *Kuan-hsin lun* was written by Shen-hsiu the leader of the Northern School of Ch'an. Suzuki in the above mentioned work (pp. 176–77) does not feel that the evidence is sufficient to warrant this attribution. Yabuki Keiki, *Meisha yoin kaisetsu*, pp. 543–60, and Sekiguchi Shindai, *Daruma daishi no kenkyū*, pp. 217–34, on the other hand, feel that from the contents of the work, and other factors, the attribution of the work to Northern Ch'an is justifiable.

¹⁴⁵ Negative supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 40.

¹⁴⁶ The great event of the appearance of a Buddha in this world. Drawn from the Lotus Sutra, Fang-pien *p'in*, τ8, p. 7a, where the term appears as *i-ta-shih yin-yüan*.

¹⁴⁷ The Tun-huang text has here *yün* [to say]. It has been taken to mean *sui-yün* [although].

¹⁴⁸ This clause has been supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 40.

the fact that you yourself are your own true good teacher, in one awakening you will know the Buddha. If, standing upon your own nature and mind, you illuminate with wisdom and make inside and outside clear, you will know your own original mind. If you know your original mind, this then is deliverance. Once you have attained deliverance this then is the *prajñā samādhi*. If you have awakened to the *prajñā samādhi*, this then is no-thought.¹⁴⁹ What is no-thought? The Dharma of no-thought means: even though you see all things, you do not attach to them, but, always keeping your own nature pure, cause the six thieves¹⁵⁰ to exit through the six gates.¹⁵¹ Even though you are in the midst of the six dusts,¹⁵² you do not stand apart from them, yet are not stained by them, and are free to come and go. This is the *prajñā samādhi*, and being free and having achieved release is known as the practice of no-thought. If you do not think of the myriad things, but always cause your thoughts to be cut off, you will be bound in the Dharma. This is known as a biased view. If you awaken to the Dharma of no-thought, you will penetrate into all things thoroughly, and will see the realm of the Buddha. If you awaken to the sudden doctrine of no-thought, you will have reached the status of the Buddha.

32. “Good friends, those in later generations who obtain my teaching¹⁵³ will always see that my Dharma body is not apart from where they are. Good friends, take this doctrine of the Sudden Teaching, look at it and practice it together, fix your resolve on it, and receive and guard it. Because it is tantamount to serving the Buddha, if for all your lives you receive and guard it and do not retrogress, you will enter into the ranks of the sacred. Now I should like to hand it on. But from the past the Dharma has been handed down in silence; only when the great resolve has been made and there has been no retrogression from enlightenment (*bodhi*),¹⁵⁴ then should it be passed on. When you meet people whose understanding is not the same as yours and whose resolve is not deter-

¹⁴⁹ See *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text, pp. 16–17, 23). See also sec. 13.

¹⁵⁰ *Liu-tse*. The six fields of the senses (*cauras*): seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, and discerning. The *Kōshōji*, p. 41, has *liu-shih* [six consciousnesses].

¹⁵¹ *Liu-men*. The six sense organs (*indriyas*): eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

¹⁵² *Liu-ch'en*. The six qualities produced by the objects and organs of sense (*gunas*): sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and idea.

¹⁵³ Tun-huang reads: “Those in later generations who awaken to the Dharma.” *Kōshōji*, p. 41, has been followed.

¹⁵⁴ This passage is not in the *Kōshōji* edition. “Retrogression from *bodhi*” scarcely makes sense, and may well represent a copyist’s error.

mined, never recklessly demonstrate the teaching to them. If you do so you will do them harm, and in any event it will be of no value whatsoever. If you happen to meet people who do not understand and who despise this teaching, for a hundred kalpas, ten thousand kalpas, a thousand lives, Buddhism¹⁵⁵ will be extirpated.”

33. The Master said: “Good friends, listen. I will preach to you a verse of formlessness. It will cause the destruction of the crimes of you deluded people. It is also called the verse for destroying crimes.¹⁵⁶

“The verse says:

The ignorant person practices seeking future happiness,¹⁵⁷ and does not practice the Way,

And says that to practice seeking future happiness *is* the Way.

Though he hopes that almsgiving and offerings will bring boundless happiness,

As before, in his mind the three karmas are created.¹⁵⁸

If you wish to destroy your crimes by practicing seeking future happiness, Even though in a future life you obtain this happiness, the crime will still be left.¹⁵⁹

If you can, in your mind cast aside the cause of your crimes,

Then each of you, within your own natures, will truly repent.

If you awaken to the Mahāyāna and truly repent,

Evil being removed and good achieved, you will truly attain to crimelessness.

If students of the Way observe their own selves well,¹⁶⁰

They will be the same as those already awakened.

¹⁵⁵ Ui, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 144, considers *hsing* [nature] here to be a homophone for *hsing* [family name]. Thus, *Fo-chung hsing* means merely “Buddhists.” *Kōshōji*, p. 42, and later texts all interpret this phrase as “the nature of the Buddha seed.” Ui’s interpretation has been followed.

¹⁵⁶ This phrase may well be a later interpolation.

¹⁵⁷ *Hsiu-fu*. The practice which seeks the rewards of the field of blessings. See p. 128, n. 22.

¹⁵⁸ The Tun-huang text reads for this passage: *hsin-chung san-yeh yüan-lai tsai* [as before the three karmas exist within the mind]. The *tsai*, however, is obviously in error, since it does not rhyme with the *tao* [Way], above in the verse. *Kōshōji*, p. 42, has thus been followed. See Bernhard Karlgren, *Grammata Serica Recensa*, BMFEA, XXIX (1957), 272; the T’ang rhyme is *d’âu . . . ts’âu*. The three karmas are used as a Ch’an technical term, in the sense of the three karmas of deed, word, and thought. *Kōshōji*, p. 42, changes the three karmas to the three evil ways (hell, hungry ghosts, and beasts).

¹⁵⁹ The Tun-huang version of this last line is again obviously in error, as the last character *tsao* [to make] does not rhyme with the *hai* [sea; a homophone for *hai* (repent)], below in the verse. *Kōshōji*, p. 42, has been followed.

¹⁶⁰ Compare *Kōshōji*, p. 42: “If students of the Way always observe their own self-natures.”

I¹⁶¹ am causing this Sudden Teaching to be transmitted,
And one who aspires to learn it will become one with me.
If in the future you wish to seek your original body,¹⁶²
Wash out the evil causes of the three poisons from within your minds.
Work hard to practice the Way; do not be absent-minded.
If you spend your time in vain your whole life will soon be forfeited.
If you encounter the teaching of the Mahāyāna Sudden Doctrine,
Join your palms in devotion and sincerity, and strive earnestly to reach it.”

When the Master had finished preaching, the Prefect¹⁶³ Wei, the government officials, and the monks and laymen uttered words of praise: “What a boundless teaching! This we have never heard before!”

34. The Prefect Wei bowed deeply and said: “Your exposition of the Dharma was certainly amazing. Right now I have some small doubts that I should like to ask you about, and hope that out of your great compassion you will resolve them for me.”

The Master said: “If you have doubts, then ask. There is no need to repeat yourself.”¹⁶⁴

The prefect asked: “Isn’t the Master’s Dharma the essentials of the teaching of the First Patriarch, the Indian Bodhidharma?”

The Master said: “Yes.”

[The prefect said:] “I have heard that, when Bodhidharma was converting Emperor Wu of Liang, the emperor asked Bodhidharma: ‘I have spent my whole life up to now building temples, giving alms, and making offerings. Have I gained merit or not?’ and that Bodhidharma answered saying: ‘No merit.’ Then the emperor was greatly disappointed and banished Bodhidharma across the border. I don’t understand this story and beg of you to explain it.”

The Sixth Patriarch said: “Indeed he gained no merit. Do not doubt the words of Bodhidharma. The emperor was attached to a heterodox way and did not know the true Dharma.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Here the term *ta-shih* [Great Master] is used in reference to Hui-neng and is an appellation which he would by no means apply to himself, indicating that this verse was written by his disciples or later followers of the school.

¹⁶² Compare *Kōshōji*, p. 43: “. . . seek the *Dharmakāya*.”

¹⁶³ Wei, in the earlier portions of the text, is identified as prefect. Here he is spoken to with the respectful form of address, *shih-chün*. For the sake of uniformity, his original title is retained in the translation.

¹⁶⁴ It may be assumed that out of politeness the prefect has been asking the Master numerous times for assistance in the resolution of his doubts.

¹⁶⁵ This story also appears in the *P'u-t'i-ta-mo Nan-tsung ting shih-fei lun*, Hu Shih,

The prefect asked: “Why did he have no merit?”

The Master said: “Building temples, giving alms, and making offerings are merely the practice of seeking after blessings. One cannot make merit with blessings. Merit¹⁶⁶ is in the *Dharmakāya*, not in the field of blessings. In Dharma nature itself there is merit (*kung-te*). [Seeing into your own nature is *kung*];¹⁶⁷ straightforward mind is *te*.¹⁶⁸ Inwardly, see¹⁶⁹ the Buddha nature; outwardly, practice reverence. If you make light of all men and do not cut off the ego, then you yourself will be without merit. If your own nature is false, the Dharma body is without merit.¹⁷⁰ If in successive thoughts there is virtuous practice and there is straightforward mind, merit will not be held lightly and practice will always be reverent. Your own practice with the body is *kung*; your own practice with the mind is *te*. Merit is created from the mind; blessings and merit are different. The Emperor Wu did not understand the true principle; hence the Patriarch was not in the wrong.”

35. The prefect bowed deeply and asked: “I notice that some monks and laymen always invoke the Buddha Amitābha and desire to be reborn in the West. I beg of you to explain whether one can be born there or not, and thus resolve my doubts.”

The Master said: “Prefect, listen and I shall explain things for you. At Śrāvastī the World-honored One preached of the Western Land in order to convert people, and it is clearly stated in the sutra, ‘[The Western Land] is not far.’¹⁷¹ It was only for the sake of people of inferior capacity that the Buddha spoke of farness; to speak of nearness¹⁷² is only for those of superior attainments. Although in man there are nat-

Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi, p. 160; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 83. See Introduction, p. 27.

¹⁶⁶ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 44.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ The Tun-huang text is corrupt at this point. What apparently is intended is *p'ing-teng chih-hsin* [straightforward mind], as found later in this passage. See *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, 14, p. 542c: “Straightforward mind is the place of practice.”

¹⁶⁹ Following Suzuki, *Tonkō shutsudo Rokuso dankyō*, p. 34, *nei chien* [within, see] has been added at the beginning of the clause.

¹⁷⁰ This contradicts the statement above: “Merit is in the *Dharmakāya* . . .” *Kōshōji*, p. 45, changes the passage completely: “If your own nature is false and unreal, then you yourself have no merit.”

¹⁷¹ *Kuan-wu-liang-shou ching*, 12, p. 341c.

¹⁷² The farness and nearness are in reverse order in the Tun-huang text. Change based on *Kōshōji*, p. 45.

urally two types, in the Dharma there is no inequality.¹⁷³ In delusion and awakening there is a difference, as may be seen in slowness and fastness of understanding. The deluded person concentrates on Buddha and wishes to be born in the other land; the awakened person makes pure his own mind. Therefore the Buddha said: 'In accordance with the purity of the mind the Buddha land is pure.'¹⁷⁴

"Prefect, people of the East [China], just by making the mind pure, are without crime; people of the West [The Pure Land of the West], if their minds are not pure, are guilty of a crime. The deluded person wishes to be born in the East¹⁷⁵ or West, [for the enlightened person]¹⁷⁶ any land is just the same. If only the mind has no impurity, the Western Land is not far. If the mind gives rise to impurities, even though you invoke the Buddha and seek to be reborn [in the West], it will be difficult to reach. If you eliminate the ten evils¹⁷⁷ you will proceed one hundred thousand li; if you do away with the eight improper practices¹⁷⁸ you will pass across eight thousand li.¹⁷⁹ But if you practice straightforward mind, you will arrive there in an instant.

"Prefect, practice only the ten virtues. Why should you seek rebirth [in the Western Land]? If you do not cut off the ten evils, what Buddha can you ask to come welcome you? If you awaken to the sudden Dharma of birthlessness, you will see the Western Land in an instant. If you do not awaken to the Sudden Teaching of Mahāyāna, even if

¹⁷³ A character has been dropped in the Tun-huang version. Following Ui, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 137, *t'ung* [same] has been supplied. Suzuki, *Tonkō shutsudo Rokuso dankyō*, p. 34, inserts *i* [oneness].

¹⁷⁴ Vimalakīrti Sutra, 114, p. 538c.

¹⁷⁵ There is no logical reason why the East should be brought in at this point. It may best be regarded as merely a figure of speech, a somewhat cynical comment on the adherence to a delusion in which superficial distinctions of direction are considered important.

¹⁷⁶ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 46. Compare Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, pp. 90–91, for a variant of both the text and the translation of this section.

¹⁷⁷ *Shih-o*, *Daśākūśala*: killing, stealing, adultery, lying, double-tonguedness, coarse language, filthy language, covetousness, anger, and perverted views.

¹⁷⁸ *Pa-hsieh*. The eight delusions and attachments that arise in opposition to the true form of the various dharmas: birth, destruction, oneness, differentiation, past, future, permanence, and cessation.

¹⁷⁹ The theory that the Western Paradise was located 108,000 li from China has not been found in any canonical work. The *Sukhāvativyūha Sutra*, 112, p. 346a, locates it "a hundred thousand Buddhalands to the West." There is a story, whose source I have not been able to trace, which states that from the west gate of Ch'ang-an to the east gate of Kapilavastu in 108,000 li. See *Hōbō dankyō kōkan*, III, 21b.

you concentrate on the Buddha and seek to be reborn, the road will be long. How can you hope to reach there?"

The Sixth Patriarch said: "I will move the Western Land in an instant and present it to you right before your eyes. Does the prefect wish to see it or not?"

The prefect bowed deeply: "If I can see it here, why should I be reborn there? I ask you in your compassion to make the Western Land appear for my sake. It would be wonderful."

The Master said: "There is no doubt that the Western Land can be seen here in China.¹⁸⁰ Now let us disperse." The assembly was amazed and did not know what to do.

The Master said: "You people assembled here, listen carefully. The physical body of man in this world is itself a city. The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body are the gates to the city. Outside there are five gates; inside there is the gate of consciousness. Mind is the ground; self-nature is the king. If there is self-nature, there is a king; if self-nature departs, there is no king. If there is self-nature, the body and mind exist; if self-nature departs, the body and mind¹⁸¹ are destroyed. Since Buddha is made by your own nature, do not look for him outside¹⁸² your body. If you are deluded in your own nature, Buddha is then a sentient being;¹⁸³ if you are awakened in your own nature, sentient beings are then Buddhas. Compassion is Avalokiteśvara; joyful giving is Ma-hāsthāmaprāpta; capacity for purity is Śākyamuni; straightforwardness is Maitreya. The false view of the self is Mount Sumeru; the perverted mind is the great sea and the passions are the waves. The poisoned mind is an evil dragon, troubles are fish and sea turtles, delusions are supernatural demons, the three poisons are hell; ignorance forms the realm of beasts, and the ten virtues are heaven. If there is no false view of the self, then Mount Sumeru will fall of itself. If the perverted mind is cast aside the ocean will dry up, and when the passions are gone the waves will subside. If the passions and harm are done away with then the dragons and fish will disappear. Let the Tathāgata of enlighten-

¹⁸⁰ The translation here is tentative. Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 93, 182, n. 156, following Ui, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 148, translates T'ang [the Chinese dynasty] as "passageway." This would appear to be a quite dubious rendering. Later texts omit this passage.

¹⁸¹ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 47.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ The same thought is expressed in sec. 30.

ment within your own mind-ground release the luminosity of great wisdom, shine upon the six gates, and with its purity destroy the six heavens of the world of desire (*kāmadhātu*). [If your own nature illuminates inwardly]¹⁸⁴ the three poisons will be cast aside and hell will at once be destroyed. If inside and outside are clear, this will be no different from the Western Land. If you don't carry out this practice, how will you be able to reach there?"

On hearing this sermon, the praising voices of those who sat before him rose to heaven, and all¹⁸⁵ the deluded people understood clearly. The prefect bowed deeply and said in praise: 'Excellent, excellent! We all hope that the sentient beings of the Dharma World who hear this will at once gain enlightenment.'

36. The Master said: "Good friends, if you wish to practice, it is all right to do so as laymen;¹⁸⁶ you don't have to be in a temple. If you are in a temple but do not practice, you are like the evil-minded people of the West. If you are a layman but do practice, you are practicing the good of the people of the East. Only I beg of you, practice purity yourselves; this then is the Western Land."

The prefect asked: "Master, how should we practice as laymen? I wish you would instruct us."

The Master said: "Good friends, I shall make a formless verse for you monks and laymen. When all of you recite it and practice according to it, then you will always be in the same place as I am. The verse says:

Proficiency in preaching and proficiency in the mind,¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ The Tun-huang text is corrupt; *Kōshōji*, p. 48, has been followed.

¹⁸⁵ *Ying-shih*. T'ang colloquial term, meaning "all." Compare Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 95.

¹⁸⁶ Wei Ch'ü and other members of the audience, it should be noted, were laymen.

¹⁸⁷ *Shuo-t'ung* and *hsin-t'ung*. The terms *tsung-t'ung* [proficiency in the doctrine] and *shuo-t'ung* [proficiency in preaching] appear in the Lañkāvatāra Sutra, 16, p. 499b; in the *Cheng-tao kō*, 148, p. 396a (in a slightly different form); in the *Shen-hui yü-lu*, Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 147, Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 77; and in the *Tsu-t'ang chi*, V, 75. Gernet renders the terms "compréhension doctrinale" and "compréhension discursive." In none of the examples that Gernet cites (see his *Entretiens . . .*, p. 77, n. 9) does the term *hsin-t'ung* [proficiency in the mind] appear, and Gernet, considering it to be meaningless, believes it to be an error in the Tun-huang text of the *Platform Sutra*. In all editions of this work, however, including the Hsi-hsia version (see the text of the fragment housed at Ryūkoku University, contained in Nishida Tatsuo, "Seikago to Seika moji," *Chūō Ajia kodai bunken*, p. 458), the

Are like the sun and empty space.¹⁸⁸
 Handing down this sudden teaching alone,
 Enter into the world and destroy erroneous doctrines.
 Although in the teaching there is no sudden and gradual,
 In delusion and awakening there is slowness and speed.¹⁸⁹
 In studying the teaching of the sudden doctrine,¹⁹⁰
 Ignorant persons cannot understand completely.
 Although¹⁹¹ explanations are made in ten thousand ways,
 If you combine them with the principle, they become one.
 Within the dark home of the passions,
 The sun of wisdom must at all times shine.
 Erroneous [thoughts] come because of the passions;
 When correct [thoughts] come the passions are cast aside.
 Use neither the erroneous nor the correct,
 And with purity you will attain to complete nirvāṇa.¹⁹²
 Although enlightenment [*bodhi*] is originally pure,¹⁹³
 Creating the mind that seeks it is then delusion.
 The pure nature exists in the midst of delusions,
 With correct [thoughts] alone remove the three obstacles.¹⁹⁴
 If people in this world practice the Way,
 There is nothing whatsoever to hinder them.
 If they always make clear the guilt within themselves,
 Then they will accord with the Way.
 All living things of themselves possess the Way;
 If you part from the Way and seek it elsewhere,

term *hsin-t'ung* is retained. Furthermore, in the *Pao-lin chuan*, III, 504, in the conversation between Bodhidharma and Yang Hsüan-chih, the compiler of the *Lo-yang chia-lan chi*, 卍1, pp. 999–1022, we find the term *Fo-hsin-tsung* [the basis of the Buddha mind]. Here “mind” and “basis” are roughly equivalent in meaning, the Buddha mind being the basis of Ch’an teaching. If this assumption is correct, it might justify leaving the text of the Tun-huang version uncorrected at this point.

¹⁸⁸ These two lines appear in the *P'u-t'i-ta-mo Nan-tsung shih-fei lun*, Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 158; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 81, as: “Proficiency in preaching, proficiency in the doctrine, are like the moon and empty space.”

¹⁸⁹ Compare *Shen-hui yü-lü* (Suzuki text), p. 40: “In the resolve to turn to Buddhism there is the sudden and the gradual; in delusion and awakening there is slowness and speed.”

¹⁹⁰ *Kōshōji*, p. 48, changes this phrase to: “In this teaching of seeing into one’s own true nature.”

¹⁹¹ Here *hsü* [must] is used as a homophone for *sui* [although]. See Chang Hsiang, *Shih-tz'u-ch'ü-yü-tz'u hui-shih*, p. 36. This usage is found frequently in Tun-huang *pien-wen*. See also Iriya Yoshitaka, “*Tonkō hembun shū*” *kōgo goi sakūin*, p. 19.

¹⁹² *Wu-ch'u*; *aśeṣa*. The extinction of both birth and death, where nothing more remains to be discarded.

¹⁹³ *Kōshōji*, p. 49, reads: “Although enlightenment is from the outset within your own nature.”

¹⁹⁴ *San-chang*. The three *vighna*. There are several groups. The *Hōbō dankyō kōkan*, III, 16a, identifies them as the passions, deeds done, and retributions. They are described in the Nirvāṇa Sutra, 卍12, p. 428c.

Seek it you may, but you will not find it,
 And in the end, indeed, you will be disappointed.
 If you aspire to attain the Way,
 Practice correctly; this is the Way.
 If in yourselves you do not have the correct mind,
 You will be walking in darkness and will not see the Way.
 If you are a person who truly practices the Way,
 Do not look at the ignorance of the world,
 For if you see the wrong of people in the world,
 Being wrong yourself, *you* will be evil.
 The wrong in others is not your own crime,¹⁹⁵
 Your own wrong is of itself your crime.
 Only remove the wrong in your own mind,
 Crush the passions and destroy them.
 If you wish to convert an ignorant person,
 Then you must have expedients.
 Do not allow him to have doubts,¹⁹⁶
 Then enlightenment (*bodhi*)¹⁹⁷ will appear.
 From the outset the Dharma has been in the world;
 Being in the world, it transcends the world.
 Hence do not seek the transcendental world outside,
 By discarding the present world itself.
 Erroneous views are of this world,¹⁹⁸
 Correct views transcend this world.
 If you smash completely the erroneous and the correct,
 [Then the nature of enlightenment (*bodhi*) will be revealed as it is].¹⁹⁹
 Just this is the Sudden Teaching;
 Another name for it is the Mahāyāna.
 Having been deluded throughout a multitude of kalpas,
 One gains awakening within an instant.²⁰⁰

37. The Master said: "Good friends, if all of you recite this verse and practice in accordance with it, even if you are a thousand li away from me, you will always be in my presence. If you do not practice it, even

¹⁹⁵ The Tun-huang text is in the affirmative: "The wrong of others is your own crime." *Kōshōji*, p. 49, has been followed.

¹⁹⁶ The Tun-huang text reads here: "Do not destroy his doubts for him," which is out of context. *Kōshōji*, p. 49, has been followed.

¹⁹⁷ *Kōshōji*, p. 49, substitutes "self-nature" for "enlightenment (*bodhi*)."

¹⁹⁸ The Tun-huang text reads: "Erroneous views transcend this world." *Kōshōji*, p. 50, has been followed.

¹⁹⁹ A clause has been dropped in the Tun-huang edition. Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 50.

²⁰⁰ Compare *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 120; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 40): "In delusion the kalpas accumulate, but awakening is gained in an instant."

if we are face to face, we will always be a thousand li apart. Each of you yourselves must practice. The Dharma doesn't wait for you.

"Let us disperse for a while. I am going back to Mount Ts'ao-ch'i. If any of you have great doubt, come to that mountain and I shall resolve that doubt for you and show you the Buddha world as well."

All the officials, monks, and laymen who were sitting together bowed low before the Master, and there was none who did not sigh: "Wonderful, great awakening! These are things we have never heard before. Who would have expected²⁰¹ Ling-nan to be so fortunate as to have had a Buddha born there!" The entire assembly dispersed.

38. The Master went to Mount Ts'ao-ch'i and for over forty years converted the people in Shao-chou and Kuang-chou. If one were to talk about the number of his disciples, to say several thousand people, both monks and laymen, would not do it justice. If one were to talk about the pivot of his teaching, it lies in the transmission of the *Platform Sutra*, and this serves as the authority. Unless a person has received the *Platform Sutra*, he has not received the sanction. The place, date, and the name of the recipient must be made known, and these are attached to it when it is transmitted. Someone who does not have the *Platform Sutra* and the sanction is not a disciple of the Southern School.²⁰² Someone who has not yet obtained sanction, even though he preaches the doctrine of sudden enlightenment, does not know the basic teachings, and in the end will not be able to avoid disputes. Those who have the Dharma should practice it wholeheartedly, for disputations show a contentious mind and are a betrayal of the Way.

39. People in the world all say: "In the south Neng, in the north Hsiu,"²⁰³ but they do not know the basic reason. The Ch'an Master Hsiu practiced as head priest of the Yü-ch'üan Temple in Tang-yang hsien in Ching-nan fu;²⁰⁴ the Master Hui-neng lived at Mount Ts'ao-ch'i, thirty-five li east of the capital of Shao-chou. The Dharma is one teaching, but people are from the north and south, so Southern and

²⁰¹ Reading *chih* [wisdom] as *chih* [to know]. Compare Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 103.

²⁰² Here and in the following section are the first mentions of the Southern School as such.

²⁰³ See introduction, p. 29.

²⁰⁴ Present-day Tang-yang hsien, Hupeh.

Northern Schools have been established. What is meant by 'gradual' and 'sudden?' The Dharma itself is the same, but in seeing it there is a slow way and a fast way. Seen slowly, it is the gradual; seen fast it is the sudden [teaching]. Dharma is without sudden or gradual, but some people are keen and others dull; hence the names 'sudden' and 'gradual.'"

40. The teacher Shen-hsiu one day²⁰⁵ heard someone talking about the swiftness of Hui-neng's Dharma and his direct pointing at the Way. Hsiu then called his disciple, the monk Chih-ch'eng,²⁰⁶ and said: "You're bright and of wide knowledge. Go for me to Mount Ts'ao-ch'i, and when you get to Hui-neng's place, make obeisance to him and just listen. Don't tell him I've sent you, but just listen to the essentials of his teaching, memorize them, and come back and tell me. Then I'll be able to tell which of our understandings is the swifter. And at all costs come back quickly or else I will be angry."

Chih-ch'eng was delighted to carry out this mission, and after about half a month reached Mount Ts'ao-ch'i. He saw the priest Hui-neng, made obeisance to him, and listened without saying from where he had come. Chih-ch'eng heard the Dharma and was at once enlightened, and awakened to his original mind. Arising, he bowed low and said: "Master, I come from Yü-ch'üan Temple, but under my teacher Hsiu I have been unable to gain awakening. But now, on hearing your sermon, I have awakened to my original mind. I wish that, in your compassion, you would give me instruction."

Hui-neng said: "If you come from that place then you are probably a spy."

[Chih-ch'eng answered: "No, I'm not."

The Master said: "Why not?"]²⁰⁷

Chih-ch'eng said: "When as yet you hadn't preached your sermon to me I was a spy, but now that you have preached I am not."²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵ Reading *ch'ang* [once] for *ch'ang* [always].

²⁰⁶ His biography is unknown. He is described in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 237b, as a disciple of the Sixth Patriarch, and is identified as a native of T'ai-ho in Chi-chou. Originally a disciple of Shen-hsiu, he was later converted to Southern Ch'an. We have no way of knowing whether such a man actually existed, and since this section of the *Platform Sutra* is obviously a later addition, designed to damn Northern Ch'an, there is much room for doubt as to its historical authenticity.

²⁰⁷ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 52.

²⁰⁸ The Tun-huang text is corrupt; *Kōshōji*, p. 52, has been followed.

The Sixth Patriarch said: “‘The very passions are enlightenment’ is also like this.”

41. The Master said to Chih-ch’eng: “I hear that your teacher instructs people only by handing down precepts, meditation, and wisdom.²⁰⁹ What are the precepts, meditation, and wisdom that he teaches?”

Chih-ch’eng answered: “The priest Hsiu explains them in this way: Not to commit the various evils is the precepts; to practice all the many good things is wisdom; to purify one’s own mind is meditation. These he calls precepts, meditation, and wisdom, and this is the kind of explanation that he gives. What is your own view, Master?”

The Master Hui-neng answered: “This explanation is wonderful, but my view is different.”

Chih-ch’eng asked. “How does it differ?”

Hui-neng answered: “There is slow seeing and swift seeing.”

Chih-ch’eng asked the Master to give his explanation of the precepts, wisdom, and meditation.

The master said: “Listen to my explanation and you will know my view. The mind-ground,²¹⁰ not in error, is the precept of self-nature; the mind-ground, undisturbed, is the meditation of self-nature; the mind-ground, not ignorant, is the wisdom of self-nature.”

Master Hui-neng said: “Your precepts, meditation, and wisdom are to encourage people of shallow capacities, mine are for men of superior attainments. [Because] the awakening of self-nature [is the pivot of my teaching],²¹¹ I don’t even set up precepts, meditation, and wisdom.”

Chih-ch’eng said: “Please explain what you mean by ‘not set up.’”

²⁰⁹ In the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, 151, p. 185b, in the section on Wu-hsiang, Shen-hui of the Ho-tse Temple is described as mounting a platform each month to deliver a sermon in which he speaks of concentration, wisdom, and meditation. See Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 64, n. 9.

²¹⁰ *Hsin-ti*. It is defined in the *Tsu-t’ang chi* under the biography of Nan-yüeh Huai-jiang (I, 144): “Ma-tsu made obeisance to the Master [Huai-jiang] and asked: ‘What should I do with my mind to attain the state of formless *samādhi*?’ The Master answered: ‘You should understand the doctrine of the mind-ground, which teaches that this mind-ground is as if planted with seeds. When I expound the essentials of the Dharma to you, it will be like rain falling upon that ground. Because the circumstances of your make-up join with the rain, therefore you are able to see the Way.’” See the last verse in sec. 49.

²¹¹ The Tun-huang text reads: “If you are able to awaken to self-nature, precepts, meditation, and wisdom are not set up.” In this instance, however, Hui-neng is describing his own system as contrasted with that of Shen-hsiu. The translation has thus been supplemented to bring out this point.

The Master said: "Self-nature is without error, disturbance, and ignorance. Every thought puts forth the radiance of *prajñā* wisdom, and when one is always separated from the form of things, what is there that can be set up? Self-awakening to self-nature, and sudden practice with sudden awakening—there is nothing gradual in them, so that nothing at all is set up."²¹²

Chih-ch'eng bowed deeply and did not leave Mount Ts'ao-ch'i. He became a disciple and never departed from the Master's side.

42. There was another priest by the name of Fa-ta,²¹³ who had been reciting the Lotus Sutra continuously for seven years, but his mind was still deluded and he did not know where the true Dharma lay. [Going to Mount Ts'ao-ch'i, he bowed and asked]:²¹⁴ "I have doubts about the sutra, and because the Master's wisdom is great, I beg of him to resolve my doubts."

The Master said: "Fa-ta, you are very proficient in the Dharma²¹⁵ but your mind is not proficient. You may have no doubts in so far as the sutras are concerned, [but your mind itself doubts].²¹⁶ You are searching for the true Dharma with falsehood in your mind. If your own mind were correct and fixed, you would be a man who has taken the sutra to himself.²¹⁷ "I have never in my life known written words, but if you bring a copy of the Lotus Sutra and read it to me, upon hearing it, I will understand it at once."

Fa-ta brought the Lotus Sutra and read it through to the Master. Hearing it, the Sixth Patriarch understood the Buddha's meaning, and then discoursed on the Lotus Sutra for the sake of Fa-ta.

The Sixth Patriarch said: "Fa-ta, the Lotus Sutra does not say anything more than is needed. Throughout all its seven *chüan*²¹⁸ it gives

²¹² The Tun-huang text is corrupt; *Kōshōji*, p. 54, has been followed.

²¹³ This is the oldest known reference to this man. A more elaborate but highly unreliable account of his career appears in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, τ51, pp. 237c–38b. Fa-ta must be included among the numerous Ch'an priests and monks who appear in the records but of whom nothing definite is known.

²¹⁴ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 55.

²¹⁵ Here Hui-neng is playing upon Fa-ta's name.

²¹⁶ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 55.

²¹⁷ *Ch'ih-ching*. This term appears in the Lotus Sutra, τ9, p. 31b, in the sense of one who receives, holds, and takes to himself the teachings of the Lotus doctrine.

²¹⁸ According to the investigations of the Tun-huang Documents Research Section of the Research Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto University, among the documents in the Stein Collection, there are in all some 1,050 copies of the Lotus Sutra. Of these, a little less than eighty percent represent the seven-*chüan* text, some twenty percent the

parables and tales about causation.²¹⁹ The Tathāgata's preaching of the Three Vehicles was only because of the dullness of people in the world. The words of the sutra clearly state that there is only one vehicle of Buddhism, and that there is no other vehicle."

The Master said: "Fa-ta, listen to the one Buddha vehicle and do not seek two vehicles, or your nature will be deluded. Where in the sutra do we find this one Buddha vehicle? Let me explain to you. The sutra says: 'The various Buddhas and the World-honored One appeared in this world because of the one great causal event.'²²⁰ (The above sixteen characters are the true Dharma).²²¹ How do you come to understand this Dharma? How do you practice this Dharma? Listen, and I shall explain to you.

"The mind has nothing to do with thinking, because its fundamental source is empty.²²² To discard false views, this is the one great causal event. If within and without you are not deluded then you are apart from duality. If on the outside you are deluded you cling to form; if on the inside you are deluded you cling to emptiness. If within form you are apart from form and within emptiness you are separated from emptiness, then within and without you are not deluded.²²³ If you awaken to this Dharma, in one instant of thought your mind will open and you will go forth in the world. What is it that the mind opens? It opens Buddha's wisdom and the Buddha means enlightenment. Separately considered there are four gates: the opening of the wisdom of enlightenment, the instruction of the wisdom of enlightenment, the

eight-*chüan* text, while only a very few copies of the ten-*chüan* text are to be found. It is presumed that a similar proportion exists among the documents in the Pelliot Collection. In the parallel passage in the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 55, the Lotus Sutra in ten *chüan* is mentioned; in the *Daijōji* edition, p. 44, the seven-*chüan* text is cited. In the "Song of Twelve Hours" found in the Pelliot Collection (P2054, 2714, 3087), the following passage appears: "Śākyamuni was skilled in expediences, and spoke the Lotus Sutra in eight rolls." See Jen Erh-pei, *Tun-huang chü hsiao lu*, p. 153.

²¹⁹ This may well refer to the "one great causal event" mentioned later in the text.

²²⁰ Lotus Sutra, 19, p. 7a.

²²¹ Note is in the original text.

²²² The first part of this passage is difficult to follow and the translation uncertain. The phrase *k'ung-chi pen-yüan*, found in the Tun-huang text, makes little sense. However, in the *P'u-t'i hsün-lun*, 132, p. 573b, translated by Amoghavajra between 746 and 774, we find the phrase *hsün-yüan k'ung-chi* [the mind as the source (of the ten thousand things) is empty], and it may possibly be that this was intended here. The term *hsün-yüan* is also to be found in the *Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsün lun*, 132, p. 576b, where we read: "It is called ultimate enlightenment because one has awakened to the source of the mind."

²²³ This clause is unreadable in the Tun-huang text; *Kōshōji*, p. 56, has been followed.

awakening of the wisdom of enlightenment, and the entering into the wisdom of enlightenment. This is called opening, instructing, awakening, and entering.²²⁴ Entering from one place,²²⁵ this is the wisdom of enlightenment, and [with this] you see into your own nature, and succeed in transcending the world.”

The Master said: “Fa-ta, it is my constant wish that all the people in the world will always themselves open the wisdom of the Buddha in their own mind-grounds. Do not cultivate the ‘wisdom’ of sentient beings. The people of the world have errors in their minds, create evil with stupidity and delusion, and thus cultivate the ‘wisdom’ of sentient beings. If people in the world are correct in their minds, they will give rise to wisdom and illuminate it, and open up for themselves the wisdom of the Buddha. Do not open up the ‘wisdom’ of sentient beings! Open up the wisdom of the Buddha and then transcend the world.”

The Master said: “Fa-ta, this is the one-vehicle Dharma of the Lotus Sutra. Later on in the sutra²²⁶ the Buddha’s teaching is divided into three [vehicles] in order to benefit the deluded. Depend only on the one Buddha vehicle.”

The Master said: “If you practice with the mind you turn the Lotus; if you do not practice with the mind, you are turned by the Lotus.²²⁷ If your mind is correct you will turn the Lotus; if your mind is incorrect you will be turned by the Lotus. If the wisdom of the Buddha is

²²⁴ In the Lotus Sutra, १9, p. 7a, we find the following passage: “Śāriputra, why did the various Buddhas and the World-honored One, just because of the one great causal event, appear in the world? The various Buddhas and the World-honored One appeared in the world because they wanted to *open* the Buddha’s wisdom for sentient beings and enable them to become pure. Because they wanted to *instruct* sentient beings in the wisdom of Buddha, they appeared in the world. Because they wanted to bring the *awakening* of Buddha’s wisdom to sentient beings, they appeared in the world. Because they wanted to have sentient beings *enter* into the way of Buddha’s wisdom, they appeared in the world.” The four stages mentioned here correspond to the four gates described in the Tun-huang text.

²²⁵ Unclear. This may refer to “where the true Dharma lies” at the beginning of this section.

²²⁶ As described in sec. 2, the Fang-pien *p’in*, of the sutra, १9, pp. 5–10. *Hsiang-hsia* is a T’ang colloquial expression meaning “afterwards,” “behind”; here it merely means, “later on in the sutra.”

²²⁷ *Chuan Fa-hua . . . Fa-hua chan*. Actually *chuan* [to turn] here means *chuan-tu* [to cite or to read]. It also contains the meaning of “roll” or “turn,” as in unrolling or unfolding a sutra roll, as well as “to control” or “to have command of.” See Iriya Yoshitaka, *Kanzan*, pp. 143–44. In the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, १51, p. 192a, we find the same concept: “No-thought, this is turning the Lotus; having thoughts, this is to be turned by the Lotus.”

opened, you will turn the Lotus; if the 'wisdom' of sentient beings is opened, you will be turned by the Lotus."

The Master said: "If you practice the Dharma with great effort, this then is turning the sutra."

Fa-ta, upon hearing this, at once gained great enlightenment and broke into tears. "Master," he said, "indeed up to now I have not turned the Lotus, but for seven years I have been turned by it. From now on I shall turn the Lotus, and in consecutive thoughts practice the practice of the Buddha."

The Master said: "The very practice of Buddha, this is Buddha."

Among those in his audience at that time there was none who was not enlightened.

43. At one time a monk named Chih-ch'ang²²⁸ came to Mount Ts'ao-ch'i and, making obeisance before Hui-neng, asked about the meaning of the Dharma of the Four Vehicles. Chih-ch'ang asked Hui-neng: "The Buddha spoke of three vehicles, but you speak of a Supreme Vehicle.²²⁹ I don't understand and wish that you would instruct me."

The Master Hui-neng said: "Look at your own body and mind and do not cling to outer forms. From the outset there were no four vehicles, but the human mind itself has four grades,²³⁰ therefore the Dharma has four vehicles. Seeing, hearing, reciting—this is the small vehicle.²³¹ Awakening to the Dharma and understanding its principle—this is the middle vehicle. Practicing according to the Dharma—this is the great vehicle. Passing through the ten thousand things completely, being fully equipped with the ten thousand practices, not separating from all things, but only from the characteristics of things, and in all actions obtaining nothing—this is the Supreme Vehicle. 'Vehicle'

²²⁸ Chih-ch'ang is mentioned in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 239a-b, where he is identified as a native of Kuei-hsi in Pen-chou. Originally a disciple of Shen-hsiu, he is said to have come to Hui-neng because he was unable to gain enlightenment under his first teacher. No further biographical information is available.

²²⁹ *Tsui-shang-ch'eng*. This term is found in the Diamond Sutra, 19, p. 755a. It is also used by Shen-hui (*Shen-hui yü-lu*, Hu Shih, *Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi*, p. 112; Gernet, *Entretiens . . .*, p. 28) in the same sense as in the paragraph below.

²³⁰ The Tun-huang text is corrupt; *Kōshōji*, p. 57, has been followed. The four grades correspond to those who have the capacity for the attainment of each of the four vehicles described below in the text.

²³¹ Or the stage of Śrāvaka; similarly the middle vehicle is the stage of the Pratyekabuddha; the great vehicle, the stage of the Bodhisattva.

means practice;²³² it is nothing that can be discussed, but is something that you yourself must do. So don't ask me."

44. There was another monk by the name of Shen-hui who was a native of Nan-yang.²³³ He came to Mount Ts'ao-ch'i, made obeisance, and asked: "Master, when you are sitting in meditation, do you see or not?"

The Master got up and hit Shen-hui three times. Then he asked: "Shen-hui, when I hit you, did it hurt or didn't it?"

Shen-hui answered: "It hurt and it also didn't hurt."

The Sixth Patriarch said: "I see and I also do not see."

Then Shen-hui again asked: "Master, why do you see and not see?"

The Master answered: "My seeing is always to see my own errors; that's why I call it seeing. My non-seeing is not to see the evils of people in the world. That's why I see and also do not see.²³⁴ What about your hurting and also not hurting?"

Shen-hui said: "If it did not hurt, I would be the same as an insentient tree or rock. If it did hurt, I would be the same as a common person, and resentments would arise."²³⁵

The Master said: "The seeing and non-seeing you asked about just now is dualistic; hurting and not hurting²³⁶ are birth and destruction. You don't even see your own nature; how dare you come and toy with me!" Shen-hui bowed down and did not speak.

The Master said: "Your mind is deluded and you cannot see, so you go and ask a teacher to show you the way. You must awaken with your own mind and see for yourself, and you must practice with the Dharma. Because you yourself are deluded and you do not see your own mind, you come asking me whether I see or not. Even if I see for myself,²³⁷ I cannot take the place of your delusion; even if you see for yourself, you cannot take the place of my delusion.²³⁸ Why don't you practice for yourself and then ask me whether I see or not?"

²³² The characters *tsui-shang* [supreme] in the Tun-huang text are out of context and have been omitted in the translation.

²³³ Located south of Loyang in Honan. Shen-hui is also known as Nan-yang ho-shang.

²³⁴ Following *Kōshōji*, p. 58. The Tun-huang text says literally: "Your seeing is also non-seeing."

²³⁵ *Kōshōji*, p. 58, gives this answer of Shen-hui's as a continuation of Hui-neng's speech: "If it did not hurt you . . .".

²³⁶ Supplied from *Kōshōji*, p. 58.

²³⁷ Following *Kōshōji*, p. 59.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

Shen-hui bowed deeply and became a disciple. He did not leave Mount Ts'ao-ch'i and always attended on the Master.

45. The Master then called his disciples Fa-hai, Chih-ch'eng, Fa-ta, Chih-ch'ang, Chih-t'ung,²³⁹ Chih-ch'e,²⁴⁰ Chih-tao,²⁴¹ Fa-chen,²⁴² Fa-ju,²⁴³ and Shen-hui, and said: "You ten disciples, come close. You are different from other people; after I die each of you will become a teacher somewhere. I am explaining the Dharma to you so that the basic teaching will not become lost.

"I shall give you the teaching in the three categories²⁴⁴ and the thirty-six confrontations²⁴⁵ of activity. As things rise and sink, you must separate from dualism.²⁴⁶ When you explain all things, do not stand apart

²³⁹ It is only in the Tun-huang edition that the first character of Chih-t'ung's name is written with Matthews' no. 971. *Kōshōji*, p. 59, and later works render the *chih* with Matthews' no. 933; thus either the Tun-huang edition is in error, or one character has been used as a homophone for the other. Chih-t'ung appears in *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, ㄖ51, p. 238b-c, where he is given as a native of An-feng in Shou-chou. No further biographical information is supplied. He is described as one who read the Laṅkāvatāra Sutra, but because he did not understand the meaning of the "three bodies and the four wisdoms," came to Hui-neng to inquire concerning them. As Ui points out (*Zenshū shi kenkyū*, II, 256), the "four wisdoms" are spoken of at a later date in Ch'an Buddhism, so that Chih-t'ung's questions and Hui-neng's answers to them may be presumed to be later additions to the text.

²⁴⁰ In the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, ㄖ51, pp. 238c-39a, he is described as a native of Chiang-hsi, of the family name of Chang and personal name of Hsing-chang. The story is told that, belonging originally to Shen-hsiu's group, he came to Hui-neng with the intention of stabbing him, but instead was converted by the Master and sent on his way. Returning a second time, he gained enlightenment as a result of instruction in the Nirvāṇa Sutra. This story has no historical validity whatsoever, and was no doubt made up in an effort to discredit the Northern School.

²⁴¹ From Kuang-chou, he was a native of Nan-hai. He had been reading the Nirvāṇa Sutra for over ten years, without understanding it, until he came to Hui-neng and gained enlightenment. See *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, ㄖ51, pp. 239b-c, 240a.

²⁴² Unknown.

²⁴³ Unknown.

²⁴⁴ The three categories comprise the five aggregates, twelve entrances, and eighteen realms of sense, as identified below in the text. They are described in the Tun-huang manuscript, *Ta-ch'eng san-k'o* (quoted in Sekiguchi, *Daruma daishi no kenkyū*, p. 243). That these three categories were fairly commonly used at this time is evidenced by a passage in the *Tsu-t'ang chi*, biography of Pao-tz'u ho-shang (IV, 12): "As for brilliant words and marvelous meanings, they are all described in the [twelve divisions of the] teachings; now give me your instruction without concerning yourself with the three categories."

²⁴⁵ Their explanation follows below in the text. No example of their use in any work other than the *Platform Sutra* has been found. The only other reference to them that I have been able to locate is in the *Tsu-t'ang chi*, V, 75, where they are mentioned without enumeration or elaboration.

²⁴⁶ Translation tentative. Compare Chan, *The Platform Scripture*, p. 121.

from nature and form.²⁴⁷ Should someone ask you about the Dharma, what you say should all be symmetrical and you must draw parallels for everything. Since they originate each from the other, if in the end dualisms are all completely cast aside, there will be no place for them to exist. The teaching of the three categories is that of the aggregates,²⁴⁸ the realms of sense,²⁴⁹ and the entrances.²⁵⁰ There are five aggregates, eighteen realms of sense, and twelve entrances. What are the five aggregates? They are form, reception, conception, functioning, and ideation. What are the eighteen realms of sense? They are the six dusts, the six gates, and the six consciousnesses. What are the twelve entrances? Externally they are the six dusts; internally they are the six gates. What are the six dusts? They are sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and idea. What are the six gates? They are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Dharma-nature gives rise to the six consciousnesses—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking—as well as the six gates and the six dusts. All things are included in your own natures; this is known as the storehouse consciousness.²⁵¹ Thinking, consciousness is turned, the six consciousnesses produced, and the six dusts are seen emerging from the six gates.²⁵² The three sixes make eighteen. From the errors of your self-nature the eighteen errors arise. If your self-nature is correct, then the eighteen correct things arise.²⁵³ If it contains evil activities, then you are a sentient being; if it contains good activities, then you are a Buddha. From what do activities stem? They stem from the confrontations that face your own nature.²⁵⁴

46. “The confrontations of the natural phenomena of the external environment are five: heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, darkness and light, Yin and Yang, and water and fire. There are twelve confrontations in language and the characteristics of things:²⁵⁵ active

²⁴⁷ I.e., the nature of something and its phenomenal form.

²⁴⁸ The five *skandhas*, accumulations, substances, components of an intelligent being.

²⁴⁹ The eighteen *dhātu*, or realms of sense: the six organs, their objects or conditions, and their perceptions.

²⁵⁰ The twelve *āyatana*. The six organs and their objects or conditions.

²⁵¹ *Ālayavijñāna*.

²⁵² The text here is corrupt and the translation tentative.

²⁵³ The Tun-huang text is again unreadable. Suzuki's collation (*Tonkō shutsudo Rokuso dankyō*, p. 49) has been followed.

²⁵⁴ Translation tentative.

²⁵⁵ Here again the Tun-huang text is unreadable. The parallel passage in the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 60, has been considerably revised. The translation follows Suzuki's collation,

and material and inactive and non-material, with characteristics and without characteristics, within the flow of birth and death and without that flow, matter and emptiness (*śūnyatā*), motion and stillness, purity and uncleanness, profane and sacred, monk and layman, old and young, large and small, long and short, and high and low. In the activities to which your self-nature gives rise there are nineteen confrontations: the incorrect and the correct, ignorance and wisdom, stupidity and knowledge, confusion and *samādhi*, following the precepts and not following them, straight and crooked, real and unreal, steep and level, passions and enlightenment, compassion and doing harm, joy and anger, giving and begrudging, progressing and retrogressing, birth and destruction, permanence and impermanence, the *Dharma-kāya* and the physical body, the *Nirmāṇa-kāya* and the *Sambhoga-kāya*, substance and function, nature and characteristics, and sentience and insentience.²⁵⁶ In language and the characteristics of things there are twelve confrontations, in the external environment there are five confrontations of natural phenomena, [and in the functions given rise to by your self-nature there are nineteen confrontations],²⁵⁷ making all together thirty-six confrontations. If you can employ the law of the thirty-six confrontations, it will apply to all the sutras, and, leaving and entering, you will stand apart from dualism. Why is it that your self-nature gives rise to activities? When you speak to others about these thirty-six confrontations, on the outside, while within form, separate from form; on the inside, while within emptiness, separate from emptiness. If you cling to emptiness then you will only be increasing your ignorance. If you cling to form, you will only increase

which is based on the *Kōshōji* revisions. In the following list of twelve confrontations, *Kōshōji* includes “existence and non-existence” and “language and Dharma.” It omits “high and low” and “short and long.”

²⁵⁶ There are actually twenty confrontations listed in the Tun-huang version. *Kōshōji*, p. 60, places “short and long” at the head of the list of nineteen confrontations, whereas the Tun-huang text includes it among the twelve above. *Kōshōji* omits “substance and function,” “nature and characteristics,” and “sentience and insentience.” It adds “compassion and doing injury.” The order in which the confrontations are listed differs considerably in the two texts.

²⁵⁷ Here again the Tun-huang text is quite confused and the translation highly tentative. *Kōshōji*, p. 61, has merely: “These are the nineteen confrontations. The Master said: ‘If you employ the law of the thirty-six confrontations . . .’” The Tun-huang text has, following the statement concerning the five confrontations, the clause *san-shen yu san-tui* [in the three bodies are three confrontations], which is completely out of context and has been omitted from the translation. The collation proposed by Suzuki (*Tonkō shuetsudo Rokuso dankyō*, p. 50) has been followed.

your false views, slander the Dharma, and be quick to say that one should not use written words. Once you say one should not use written words, then people should not speak, because speech itself is written words. Even²⁵⁸ if you explain emptiness from the standpoint of your own nature, this in effect, becomes language [?]. Since the original nature is not empty, you are deluded and deceive yourself, just because you have cast aside speech [?]. Darkness is not darkness by itself; because there is light there is darkness. That darkness is not darkness by itself is because light changes, becoming darkness, and with darkness light is revealed. They originate each from the other. The thirty-six confrontations are also like this.”

47. The Master said: “You ten disciples, when later you transmit the Dharma, hand down the teaching of the one roll of the *Platform Sutra*; then you will not lose the basic teaching. Those who do not receive the *Platform Sutra* do not have the essentials of my teaching. As of now you have received them; hand them down and spread them among later generations. If others are able to encounter the *Platform Sutra*, it will be as if they received the teaching personally from me.”

²⁵⁸ The text of the Tun-huang version in the remaining discussion of the thirty-six confrontations has a great number of omissions and errors, and is difficult to follow. The translation, thus, is tentative. *Kōshōji*, pp. 61–62, renders this section in much greater detail: “The Master continued: ‘Once you say, “do not set up words,” the very words “do not set up” are themselves words. Hearing [the words] spoken by man, you say that words slander others and that this is clinging to words. It is bad enough to be deluded oneself, let alone to slander the sutras. Do not blaspheme against the sutras, or else you will commit numberless crimes and create obstructions. Those who on the outside cling to form and seek the truth by creating dharmas, or build large places for practice, and speak of the presence or absence of errors [on the part of others], will for numberless kalpas be unable to see into their own natures. Rather than encouraging practice according to the Dharma, merely listen to it and practice yourself. Do not think of the hundred things and impede the nature of the Way. If you hear [the Dharma] and do not practice, you will do harm to others and cause erroneous thoughts to be born. Just practicing with the Dharma is the almsgiving of the Dharma of the form of non-abiding. If you awaken, preach with this, base your activities upon this, practice with this, work according to this, and then the essentials of the teachings will not be lost. Should someone ask you its meaning, if they ask of existence, answer with non-existence; if someone asks of non-existence, answer with existence. If someone asks you of the profane, answer with the sacred; if someone asks you of the sacred, answer with the profane. From the correlation of the confrontations produce the true essential. To one question give one answer; as for other questions, treat them in the same way, and you will not lose the principle. If someone should ask you “What is darkness?” say in answer: “Light is a primary cause; darkness a secondary cause. When light disappears we have darkness, darkness is manifested by light, and with darkness light appears. They originate each from the other.” Produce the essential meaning! Other questions are all like this!’ ”

These ten monks received the teaching, made copies of the *Platform Sutra*, handed them down, and spread them among later generations. Those who received them have without fail seen into their own true natures.

48. The Master passed away on the third day of the eighth month of the second year of Hsien-t'ien (= August 28, 713).²⁵⁹ On the eighth day of the seventh month he called his disciples together and bade them farewell. In the first year of Hsien-t'ien the Master had constructed a pagoda at the Kuo-en Temple²⁶⁰ in Hsin-chou, and now in the seventh month of the second year of Hsien-t'ien he was taking his leave.

The Master said: "Come close. In the eighth month I intend to leave this world. If any of you have doubts, ask about them quickly, and I shall resolve them for you. I must bring your delusions to an end and make it possible for you to gain peace. After I have gone there will be no one to teach you."

Fa-hai and the other monks heard him to the end and wept tears of sorrow. Only Shen-hui was not impressed, nor did he weep. The Sixth Patriarch said: "Shen-hui, you are a young monk, yet you have attained the [status of awakening] in which good and not good are identical, and you are not moved by judgments of praise and blame. You others have not yet understood: what have you been practicing at this temple these several years? You're crying now, but who is there who's really worried that I don't know the place to which I'm going?²⁶¹ If I didn't know where I was going then I wouldn't be leaving you. You're crying just because you don't know where I'm going. If you knew where I was going you wouldn't be crying. The nature itself is without birth and without destruction, without going and without coming. All of you sit down. I shall give you a verse, the verse of the true-false moving-quiet. All of you recite it, and if you understand its meaning,

²⁵⁹ Most sources agree on the date of the Master's death. For variations, see Introduction, p. 77.

²⁶⁰ The *Sōkei daishi betsuden*, zz2B, 19, 5, 486b, states that Hui-neng's old home in Hsin-chou was turned into a temple and given the name Kuo-en. The *Sung kao-seng chuan*, 150, p. 755a, furnishes similar information.

²⁶¹ *Kōshōji*, p. 63, reads: "Whom are you worrying about? If you're worrying about my not knowing the place to which I'm going, [then let me tell you] that I *do* know the place."

you will be the same as I. If you practice with it, you will not lose the essence of the teaching.”

The assembly of monks bowed down and begged: “Master, leave us your verse; we shall receive and retain it with reverent hearts.” The verse said:

Nowhere is there anything true;
Don't try to see the True in any way.
If you try to see the True,
Your seeing will be in no way true.
If you yourself would gain the True,
Separate from the false; there the mind is true.
If the mind itself does not separate from the false,
There is no True. What place is there for it to be?
Sentient beings can move,
Non-sentient things are without motion;
If you undertake the practices of non-motion,
You will be identical with the non-motion of the non-sentient.
If the true non-motion is observed,
It is but non-motion postulated on motion.
Non-motion is no more than no motion itself;
Non-sentient beings contain no Buddha seed.
Distinguishing well the forms [of the various dharmas],
Remain firm within the First Principle.²⁶²
If you awaken and come to this view,
This then is the functioning of True Reality.
Let me tell all you students of the Way
That you must exert your utmost efforts.
Do not, in the teaching of the Mahāyāna,
Cling to the knowledge of birth and death.
When in the future you encounter a person you are destined to meet,²⁶³
Then discuss together the words of the Buddha.
If he is really not such a person,
Then, with palms joined, have him strive for the good.
From the outset this teaching has never engaged in disputes;
Disputations will betray the intention of the Way.²⁶⁴
If you cling to delusions and argue about the teaching,
Your own natures will enter into the cycle of birth and death.

²⁶² A paraphrase of the passage from the Vimalakīrti Sutra quoted in sec. 17.

²⁶³ *Hsiang-ying*. A technical term, indicating a predestined encounter with someone who is fully responsive to the teaching.

²⁶⁴ The Tun-huang edition reads: “Not engaging in dispute will betray the intention of the Way.” This is out of context, and the translation has been changed to conform with *Kōshōji*, p. 65.

49. Once the assembled monks heard this verse they understood the Master's meaning. They did not dare to argue and they knew that they must practice according to the Dharma. In unison they all bowed deeply, knowing that the Master would not stay in the world forever.

The head monk Fa-hai came forward and said: "Master, after you leave, who will inherit your robe and Dharma?"

The Master said: "The Dharma has already been entrusted; that you may not ask. Some twenty years²⁶⁵ after I have died evil dharmas will run rampant and becloud the essentials of my teaching. Then someone will come forward and, at the risk of his life, fix the correct and false in Buddhism,²⁶⁶ and raise up the essentials of the teaching. This will be my true Dharma.

"The robe may not be handed down. In case you do not trust in me, I shall recite the verses of the preceding five patriarchs, composed when they transmitted the robe and the Dharma. If you depend on the meaning of the verse of the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, then there is no need to hand down the robe. Hear me as I recite them to you. The verses say:

Verse of the First Patriarch, the Priest Bodhidharma

I originally came to China,
To transmit the teaching and save deluded beings.
One flower opens five petals,²⁶⁷
And the fruit ripens of itself.

Verse of the Second Patriarch, the Priest Hui-k'o

Because originally there is earth,
From this earth seeds bring forth flowers.

²⁶⁵ This prediction refers to Shen-hui's attack on the Northern School of Ch'an in 732 at Hua-t'ai in Honan. The *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Suzuki text, p. 62), in the biography of Hui-neng, sets the prediction at forty years. It is found as twenty in the *Kōshōji* edition, p. 65, but later editions of the *Platform Sutra* have dropped the prediction altogether. We have already seen the same prediction set at seventy years in both the *Sōkei daishi betsuden* and the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*.

²⁶⁶ The wording of this passage brings to mind the work of Shen-hui, *P'u-t'i-ta-mo Nan-tsung ting shih-fei lun*. Together with the prediction above, it forms strong evidence to support Hu Shih's contention that the *Platform Sutra* was written by a disciple or a later member of Shen-hui's school. See Hu Shih, "Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in China, Its History and Method," *Philosophy East and West*, III (no. 1, April, 1953), 11, n. 9.

²⁶⁷ This phrase is traditionally interpreted to refer to the Five Patriarchs after Bodhidharma. Another interpretation is that it predicts the later division of Ch'an into five branches: Lin-chi, Ts'ao-tung, Yün-men, Fa-yen, and Wei-yang.

If from the outset there were no earth,²⁶⁸
From where would the flowers grow? ²⁶⁹

Verse of the Third Patriarch, the Priest Seng-ts'an

Although flower seeds rely upon the earth,
It is on the earth that seeds produce flowers.
If flower seeds had no nature of growth,
On the earth nothing would be produced.²⁷⁰

Verse of the Fourth Patriarch, the Priest Tao-hsin

Flower seeds have the nature of growth;
From the earth seeds produce flowers.
If former causality is not harmonized,
Nothing at all will sprout.²⁷¹

Verse of the Fifth Patriarch, the Priest Hung-jen

Sentient beings come and lay down the seeds,
And non-sentient flowers grow.
If there is insentiency and there are no seeds,
The mind-ground, as well, produces nothing.²⁷²

²⁶⁸ The *Pao-lin chuan*, III, 542, *Tsu-t'ang chi*, I, 79, and *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 220c, all give this line as: "If from the outset there were no seeds." *Kōshōji* and later editions of the *Platform Sutra* give only the verse of Bodhidharma, omitting those of the other Patriarchs.

²⁶⁹ The *Pao-lin chuan*, III, 542, and *Tsu-t'ang chi*, I, 79, have here: "The flowers would not be able to sprout."

²⁷⁰ Other works show considerable variation in this verse: *Pao-lin chuan*, III, 559, gives for the first line: "Flower seeds are not of the earth"; other works are identical with the Tun-huang edition. Beginning with the *Pao-lin chuan*, all other works give the second line as: "From the earth seeds and flowers sprout." The third line, also beginning with the *Pao-lin chuan*, is changed entirely to read: "If there were not men to plant the seeds." The fourth line is rendered, in the *Pao-lin chuan* and *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 221c, as: "All the flowers would not grow in the earth." *Tsu-t'ang chi*, I, 81, reads: "Flower seeds all will not sprout."

²⁷¹ Again we find great variations in other versions of this verse. The first line is the same in all texts. The *Tsu-t'ang chi*, I, 82, renders the verse:

Flower seeds have the nature of growth,
From the earth flower nature is produced.
If the great condition [?] is in harmony with the nature,
To grow is either not to grow or to grow.

The *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 222b, renders the verse:

Flower seeds have the nature of growth,
From the earth flowers grow.
If the great condition [?] is in harmony with faith,
To grow is either to grow or not to grow.

The volumes of the *Pao-lin chuan*, relating to Tao-hsin and later Patriarchs, are, of course, missing.

²⁷² The *Tsu-t'ang chi*, I, 85, and *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 151, p. 233b, give this verse as:

Verse of the Sixth Patriarch, the Priest Hui-neng

The mind-ground contains the seed of living things,
 When the rain of the Dharma falls the flowers are brought forth.
 When yourself you have awakened to the living seeds of the flower [?],²⁷³
 The fruit of enlightenment matures of itself.²⁷⁴

50. The Master Hui-neng said: "All of you listen to the two verses I have made; their import is taken from the verses of the Priest Bodhidharma. If you deluded ones practice according to these verses, you will without fail see into your own true natures. The first verse says:

If evil flowers bloom in the mind-ground,
 Five blossoms flower from the stem.
 Together they will create the karma of ignorance;
 Now the mind-ground is blown by the winds of karma.

The second verse says:

If correct flowers bloom in the mind-ground,
 Five blossoms flower from the stem.
 Together practice the *prajñā* wisdom;
 In the future this will be the enlightenment of the Buddha.

After the Sixth Patriarch had finished expounding these verses, he had the group disperse. His disciples went out, and, thinking things over, they knew that the Master was not long for this world.²⁷⁵

Sentient beings come and lay down the seeds,
 From the earth fruit is produced.
 When there is no sentiency there are no seeds;
 Without nature nothing is produced.

²⁷³ The text is unreadable and the translation uncertain.

²⁷⁴ Later versions of this verse also contain variations. *Tsu-t'ang chi*, I, 97, renders it:

The mind-ground contains the various seeds,
 With the all-pervading rain each and everyone sprouts.
 Once one has suddenly awakened to the sentiency of the flower,
 The fruit of enlightenment matures of itself.

Kōshōji, p. 66, renders the first two lines:

The mind-ground contains the seed nature;
 When the rain of the Dharma falls the flowers are brought forth.

The last two lines are identical with those in the *Tsu-t'ang chi*. A concept similar to that expressed in this verse appears in the biography of Hui-neng in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, r51, p. 236b: "The sermon that I have just preached is like the rain that waters the great earth, and your Buddha natures are like the many seeds that sprout when they encounter the wetness."

²⁷⁵ This section is not found in the *Kōshōji* edition.

51. And now on the third day of the eighth month, after eating, the Master said: “All of you take your positions and be seated. I am going to leave you now.”

Fa-hai asked: “From the very beginning up to now, how many generations have there been in the transmission of the doctrine of the Sudden Enlightenment teaching?”

The Master said: “The first transmission was from the Seven Buddhas [of the past], and Śākyamuni was the seventh. Eighth was Kāśyapa, ninth Ānanda, tenth Madhyāntika, eleventh Śaṅavāsa, twelfth Upagupta, thirteenth Dhṛtaka,²⁷⁶ fourteenth Buddhānandi, fifteenth Buddhāmitra, sixteenth Pārśva, seventeenth Puṇyayaśas, eighteenth Aśvaghōṣa, nineteenth Kapimāla, twentieth Nāgārjuna, twenty-first Kāṇadeva, twenty-second Rāhulata, twenty-third Saṅghānandi, twenty-fourth Gayaśāta, twenty-fifth Kumārata, twenty-sixth Jayata, twenty-seventh Vasubandhu, twenty-eighth Manorhita, twenty-ninth Haklenayaśas, thirtieth Simha bhikṣu, thirty-first Śaṅavāsa, thirty-second Upagupta, thirty-third Saṅgharakṣa,²⁷⁷ thirty-fourth Śubhāmitra,²⁷⁸ thirty-fifth Bodhidharma, prince from southern India, thirty-sixth, the Chinese priest Hui-k’o, thirty-seventh Seng-ts’an, thirty-eighth Tao-hsin, thirty-ninth Hung-jen, and as of now I am the fortieth to have received the Law.”

The Master said: “From today on transmit the teaching among yourselves, but be sure that you have the sanction, and do not let the essentials of the teaching become lost.”

52. Fa-hai spoke again, asking: “Master, you are going now. What Dharma are you leaving behind, and how will you make it possible for those who come later to see the Buddha?”

The Sixth Patriarch replied: “Listen! If only they know sentient beings, deluded people of later generations will be able to see the Buddha. If they do not know sentient beings, even though they seek the Buddha, they will not be able to see him in ten thousand kalpas. I shall now let you see the sentient being in your own mind and let you

²⁷⁶ Following Dhṛtaka, Miccaca, found in other lists, has been omitted in error. See Table 1.

²⁷⁷ The positions of the thirty-third and thirty-fourth Patriarchs have been inverted. See Table 1.

²⁷⁸ Following Shen-hui’s error, “Śubhāmitra” has been written for “Vasumitra.” See introduction, p. 30.

see the Buddha nature in your own mind.²⁷⁹ Also I shall leave you a verse on 'Seeing the true Buddha and gaining emancipation.' If you are deluded you will not see the Buddha; if you are awakened you will see him. Fa-hai, please listen. Hand the teaching down to successive generations, and do not allow it to be cut off."

The Sixth Patriarch said: "Hear me as I explain to you. If men in later generations wish to seek the Buddha, they have only to know that the Buddha mind is within sentient beings; then they will be able to know the Buddha. Because the Buddha mind²⁸⁰ is possessed by sentient beings, apart from sentient beings there is no Buddha mind.²⁸¹

Deluded, a Buddha is a sentient being;
Awakened, a sentient being is a Buddha.²⁸²
Ignorant, a Buddha is a sentient being;
With wisdom, a sentient being is a Buddha.
If the mind is warped, a Buddha is a sentient being;
If the mind is impartial, a sentient being is a Buddha.
When once a warped mind is produced,
Buddha is concealed within the sentient being.
If for one instant of thought we become impartial,
Then sentient beings are themselves Buddha.
In our mind itself a Buddha exists,
Our own Buddha is the true Buddha.
If we do not have in ourselves the Buddha mind,
Then where are we to seek Buddha?"

53. The Master said: "My disciples, farewell. I am going to leave you a verse entitled the 'Self-nature true Buddha emancipation' verse. Should deluded men in later generations grasp the purport of this verse, they will see the true Buddha of their own minds and of their own self-natures. With this verse I shall part from you. The verse says:

True reality and a pure nature—this is the true Buddha;
Evil views and the three poisons—this is the true demon.
For the person with evil views, the demon is in his home;
For the person with correct views, the Buddha will call at his home.
If from the evil views within the nature the three poisons are produced,

²⁷⁹ The Tun-huang text reads: "I shall let you know sentient beings and see Buddha." The translation has been altered to follow *Kōshōji*, p. 68.

²⁸⁰ The Tun-huang text is unreadable here. From context "Buddha mind" has been supplied.

²⁸¹ *Kōshōji* renders the following verse in prose.

²⁸² See secs. 30 and 35, where the same concept is given.

This means that a demon king has come to reside in the home.
If correct views of themselves cast aside the mind of the three poisons,²⁸³
The demon changes and becomes a Buddha, one that is true, not false.
The *Nirmāṇakāya*, the *Sambhogakāya*, the *Dharmakāya*,
These three bodies are from the outset one body.
If within your own nature²⁸⁴ you seek to see for yourself,
This then is the cause of becoming Buddha and gaining enlightenment
(*bodhi*).
Since from the outset the *Nirmāṇakāya* produces the pure nature,
This pure nature is always contained within the *Nirmāṇakāya*.
If your nature activates the *Nirmāṇakāya* to practice the correct way,
In the future perfection is achieved, a perfection true and without limit.
The licentious nature is itself the cause of purity,
Outside of licentiousness there is no pure nature.
If only within your self-nature you yourself separate from the five desires,
The instant you see into your own nature—this is the True [Buddha].
If in this life you awaken to the teaching of the Sudden Doctrine.
Awakening, you will see the World-honored One before your eyes.
If you wish to practice and say you seek the Buddha,
Who knows where you will find the True [One]?
If within your own body you yourself have the True,
Where the True is, there is the means of becoming Buddha.
If you do not seek the True yourself and seek the Buddha outside,
All your seeking will be that of a highly ignorant man.
The teaching of the Sudden Doctrine has come from the West [?].²⁸⁵
To save people of the world you must practice yourself.
Now I say to all Ch'an students in this world,
If you do not rely on this Way you are leading vacant lives."

The Master, having finished his verse, then said to his disciples:
"Good-by, all of you. I shall depart from you now. After I am gone,
do not weep worldly tears, nor accept condolences, money, and silks
from people, nor wear mourning garments. If you did so it would
not accord with the sacred Dharma, nor would you be true disciples of
mine. Be the same as you would if I were here, and sit all together in
meditation. If you are only peacefully calm and quiet, without motion,
without stillness, without birth, without destruction, without coming,
without going, without judgments of right and wrong, without staying
and without going—this then is the Great Way. After I have gone
just practice according to the Dharma in the same way that you did on

²⁸³ The Tun-huang text is again unreadable. *Kōshōji*, p. 69, has been followed.

²⁸⁴ The Tun-huang text reads "body"; *Kōshōji*, p. 69, has been followed.

²⁸⁵ The wording here is very peculiar and the translation tentative.

the days that I was with you. Even though I were still to be in this world, if you went against the teachings, there would be no use in my having stayed here.”

After finishing speaking these words, the Master, at midnight, quietly passed away. He was seventy-six years of age.

54. On the day the Master died a strange fragrance, which did not fade for several days, filled the temple. Mountains crumbled, the earth trembled, and the forest trees turned white. The sun and moon ceased to shine and the wind and clouds lost their colors.

He died on the third day of the eighth month, and in the eleventh month his sacred coffin was received and interred on Mount Ts'ao-ch'i. From within his resting place a bright light appeared and rose straight toward the heavens, and two days passed before it finally dispersed. The prefect of Shao-chou, Wei Ch'ü, erected a memorial stone,²⁸⁶ and to this day offerings have been made before it.

55. This *Platform Sutra* was compiled by the head monk Fa-hai, who on his death entrusted it to his fellow student Tao-ts'an.²⁸⁷ After Tao-ts'an died it was assigned to his disciple Wu-chen.²⁸⁸ Wu-chen resides at the Fa-hsing Temple at Mount Ts'ao-ch'i in Ling-nan, and as of now he is transmitting this Dharma.

56. When [in the future] this Dharma is to be handed down, it must be attained by a man of superior wisdom, one with a mind of faith in the Buddhadharma, and one who embraces the great compassion. Such a person must be qualified to possess this *Sutra*, to make it a mark of the transmission, and to see that in this day it is not cut off.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁶ Both the *Shen-hui yü-lu* (Hu Shih, "Hsin-chiao-ting . . .," p. 847; Suzuki text, p. 63) and the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, 751, p. 182c, state that Wei Ch'ü erected a stele and later wrote the inscription. The latter work further states that in 719 Wei Ch'ü's inscription was effaced, and one written by Sung Ting inscribed in its place. The *Sōkei daishi beisuden*, 222B, 19, 5, 486d, and Shen-hui (Hu Shih, "Hsin-chiao-ting . . .," p. 847) state that the inscription was changed and a new one by Wu P'ing-i substituted. No texts of these inscriptions have been handed down.

²⁸⁷ Unidentified.

²⁸⁸ Unidentified. See Introduction, p. 91, n. 4.

²⁸⁹ This and the following section are not included in the *Kōshōji* edition. The Tun-huang text is scarcely readable here, and the translation must remain highly tentative.

57. This priest [Fa-hai] was originally a native of Ch'ü-chiang hsien in Shao-chou. After the Tathāgata entered Nirvāṇa, the teaching of the Dharma flowed to the Eastern Land. Among all, non-abiding was transmitted; even our minds do not abide. This true Bodhisattva spoke the true doctrine and practiced [in accord with] the real parables.²⁹⁰ To the one who vows to save all, practices continuously, does not retrogress in the face of disaster, perseveres under any suffering, and thus possesses the deepest of blessings and virtue, to such a man should this Dharma be handed down. If a person's talents are inadequate and his capacities do not suffice, he must seek²⁹¹ this Dharma. This *Platform Sutra* must not be haphazardly assigned to a person who betrays the precepts and has no virtue.

A pronouncement to all fellow students: strive to understand the secret meaning.

*Southern School Sudden Doctrine Platform Sutra
of the Supreme Mahāyāna Vehicle, one roll.*

²⁹⁰ Eight characters which are untranslatable follow here.

²⁹¹ The text appears to have dropped a negative here.