

THE AWAKENING OF FAITH IN MAHAYANA

(Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun)

A STUDY OF THE UNFOLDING OF SINITIC MAHAYANA MOTIFS

A thesis presented

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PREFACE

China, the country traditionally ruled by the Confucian literati, has prided herself in being moderate, rational and agnostic. So prevalent is this self-image, projected by her cultural elite and enhanced by Sinology itself, that to many, China is still the paradigm of la vie de la moderation, or, in Chinese, of chung-yung (the mean).

However, historically, China did mysteriously seem to lose her sense of proportion in what may be regarded as her "medieval", or, better, Buddhist period, roughly from the fourth to the tenth centuries A.D. At that time, China showed she was capable of all the extravagance of the spirit that one, for better or for worse, still associates with the word "religious."

By the twelfth or thirteenth century, during the Sung period (960-1279 A.D.), China regained her sense of proportion and came down to earth once more. The Sung Neo-Confucian triumph was not simply due to the institutional strength of the literati alone, as has been so often argued. The same literati only a short while earlier embraced wholeheartedly the Buddhist mysteries. The Neo-Confucian triumph was due to new spiritual insights into the nature and destiny of man and the priorities of life. It is the

Neo-Confucian polemics against the Buddhist that still cloud modern Chinese views of the Buddhist tradition. The anti-clerical attitude of modern Western humanism introduced into China during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries does not help much to correct these long-cherished Neo-Confucian opinions. Even the more objective Sinologist still follow Dr. Hu Shih's interpretation that Buddhism was ultimately an alien plague or anomaly that led China astray from her "predestined" humanism.<sup>1</sup>

In many studies on Chinese Buddhism, the emphasis has been put on the so-called "Sinicization" process and on the confrontation between Chinese and Indian "essences." For example, emphasis has been placed on how "otherworldly" Indian Buddhism was transformed by the Chinese "essence" of "worldliness." The assumption that cultures may be described in terms of "essences" oversimplifies the complex human issues. Additionally, too strong a focus on the dynamics of "acculturation" can misconstrue the religious elements involved. I would prefer to look at the issue from a slightly different perspective. The question I raise is

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<sup>1</sup>Hu Shih, "The Indianization of China: A Case Study in Cultural Borrowings," Independence, Convergence and Borrowing in Institutions, Thought and Art (Cambridge: Harvard Tercentenary Publication, 1937). Kenneth Ch'en, in his book The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism (Princeton: 1973) follows explicitly Hu Shih's approach.

not how China was "Indianized", as Hu Shih would put it, but how the Chinese were converted to the Buddhist Dharma (Law) and came to recognize the truth in it.<sup>1</sup> Nor is it a question of how an Indian religion was "Sinicized" but how the Buddhist sangha (fellowship) in China underwent self-transformation, drawing upon inspirations from within the Buddhist tradition itself. For example, the turn towards the world or the rejection of otherworldliness or, better, "othershoreliness" was already in the Mahayana tradition itself as in the dictum "Samsara is nirvana, nirvana is samsara." The Buddhist tradition is never simply "otherworldly mystical" but contains within itself a wealth of teachings providing a whole range of orientations towards the world. As the Buddhist sangha matured in China, the Chinese Buddhists merely developed those elements in the Mahayana tradition closest to her "native" heart.

The phenomenon of "Sinitic Mahayana" should therefore be objectively analyzed as a cultural phenomenon and also sympathetically appreciated in its own religious terms. Just as Christianity is considered to be a creative synthesis of the Classical and the Hebraic tradition, Sinitic Mahayana should also be seen as a proud and independent

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<sup>1</sup> See Wilfred Cantwell Smith, The Meaning and End of Religion (New York: 1972). The Dharma is "Truth" and it is no more Indian than the Christian God is Jewish.

offspring of the Indian and Chinese confluence. The Hebraic concept of the Messiah and the Greek idea of the Logos merged into the Christian notion of Christ as the Word of God. Similarly, it can be shown that the mature Chinese Buddhist concept of li (principle) as it was used by the Hua-yen school, was a union of the Buddhist Dharma and the Chinese Tao. Li synthesized the original meanings of Dharma and Tao, both symbols for "Transcendence", and articulated their structural interrelationship in a manner unknown before in India or China. The Sinitic understanding of the Mahayana Dharma is comparable to the Christian Church's proclamation (kerygma) concerning God--it is a new insight into an eternal truth.

The approach outlined above would seem to be the natural and proper approach in the understanding of Chinese Buddhism. However, for some reasons, scholars have not yet followed such paths of investigation. I hope the thesis' attempt to combine the traditional sectarian Buddhological approach (which sees all Chinese Buddhist innovations to be solidly grounded in sacred Indian scriptures) and the modern critical historical analysis can reveal more faithfully the dynamics of the Buddhist faith in Chinese history.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For a review of the limitations of sectarian scholarship, see Kamata Shigeo's critical resume (in English) in his Chūgoku Bukkyō shisō shi kenkyū (Tokyo: 1969).

The larger issues mentioned in the preface here form the backdrop for the more specific study of one Chinese Buddhist text in the body of the thesis. I am interested in the "emergence of Sinitic Mahayana" ca. 600 A.D. in China and in the role the Awakening of Faith in Mahayana (Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun) played in bringing it about.<sup>1</sup>

It is not possible to repay all of one's intellectual debts in this short preface. From Dr. Wilfred C. Smith, I learned to review the Chinese Buddhist tradition in terms of a worldwide comparative and historical context. Although I have not followed his strict use of the terms "faith" and "tradition", I adhere to his general orientation. To Dr. Robert N. Bellah, I owe the hypothesis that the Chinese "medieval" experience should be seen as an integrative part of China's overall spiritual growth.<sup>2</sup> I have benefitted

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<sup>1</sup>The term "Sinitic Mahayana" is coined to designate the independent and mature Chinese understanding of the Dharma by the various Chinese Buddhist schools in the Sui-T'ang period and beyond.

<sup>2</sup>The term "medieval" is being used as a heuristic device, and for general comparative purposes. It is significant that like the West, a re-feudalized China under barbaric rule coincided with an age of faith; see Rushton Coulborn et al, Feudalism in History (Princeton: 1956). The "medieval" phase would fall within the radically otherworldly stage in Bellah's "Religious Evolution" scheme; see his essay in Beyond Belief (New York: 1970). In both Europe and China, the "otherworldly" period was followed by a classical renaissance which rejected the previous world-flight and monastic lifestyle. Seen from this angle, the Neo-Confucian rejection of Buddhism would be more than simply a natural

from the probing mind of Dr. Benjamin Schwartz. Dr. Masatoshi Nagatomi with his interest in the problem of intercultural encounters has guided and overseen this thesis in its entirety.

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Chinese rejection of things "Indian". The Sung Confucian renaissance might well be part of a historical trend begun already by Sinitic Mahayana. In fact, if Buddhism was so "essentially Indian" as Hu Shih seems to suggest, it would be difficult to account for the virtual disappearance of this "essentially Indian" phenomenon from India herself. India, in her Hindu revival, also learned to reject a "non-classical", heretical (nastika) tradition. Political "particularism" seems to be present in post-medieval (post-international) periods. The nature of the present dissertation does not allow me to go into the comparative and the methodological issues in detail. The thesis hopes to provide a corrective to Max Weber's analysis of Buddhism in his The Religion of Indian (Glencoe, Ill.: 1958) and to his thesis on China in his The Religion of China (New York: 1964).

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THE AWAKENING OF FAITH IN MAHAYANA

(Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun)

A Study of the Unfolding of Sinitic Mahayana motifs

A summary of a thesis presented by Whalen W-L Lai  
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The Awakening of Faith in Mahayana (hereafter abbreviated as AFM) is a Buddhist treatise in Chinese. It occupies an important place within the history of Chinese Buddhism. The AFM, being a concise work summarizing the essentials of Mahayana faith, has always been read with the commentary written by Fa-tsang (643-712), the patriarch of the Hua-yen school. Fa-tsang utilized the AFM to defeat the Fa-hsiang school, a branch of the Indian Yogacara school in T'ang China, and he elevated the philosophy of the AFM above both Sunyavada (viz. Madhyamika) and Yogacara. Since Madhyamika and Yogacara are the two main Indian Mahayana philosophical schools, it is intriguing to see how a Chinese Buddhist master discovered a "third" and higher tradition--the ju-lai-tsang (Tathagatagarbha) school. I think Fa-tsang's understanding signals a Sinitic Mahayana departure from the confines of the major Indian Mahayana trends and a beginning of China's own appreciation of the Dharma. The thesis investigates this phenomenon.

Fa-tsang, commenting on the AFM, regarded the Buddhist absolute, Suchness (tathata) to be "pu-pien sui-yüan" 不變隨緣, changeless yet

changeable. It is fairly obvious that he was influenced in his interpretation by the Taoist ideal of the Tao as wu wei, actively inactive. Fa-tsang also understood Suchness and its opposite, Ignorance (avidya) to be two basic principles that interact to produce samsara and nirvana. The thesis demonstrates that the yin-yang interaction scheme in the Book of Changes had influenced Fa-tsang's interpretation. Fa-tsang's high regard for the philosophy of the AFM was based on this Sinicized understanding of a "creative or dynamic Suchness" and he defeated his opponents on this ground.

Fa-tsang's understanding is based on one cryptic line in the AFM which says that, just as Ignorance can becloud Suchness, creating illusion and suffering, Suchness too can in reverse "perfume" (subtly influence) Ignorance and bring man to enlightenment. However, this line in the AFM and other passages in the AFM seem to have been influenced by Chinese Buddhist exegetical traditions. After reviewing the controversy over the "Chinese or Indian" authorship of the AFM, I conclude that the AFM as it stands in the influential "Liang" version, has indeed incorporated Sinitic elements.

The roots of these Sinitic elements are traced to the writings of the Nirvana school in south China in the fifth and sixth centuries. The Nirvana school which speculated on the Buddha-nature in man (taught by the Mahaparinirvana sutra) was itself Sinicized by (1) the choice of the word "fo-hsing", Buddha-nature or -essence, to translate the

Sanskrit original terms (Buddha-dhatu, -garbha, -gotra) which imply a more nebulous quality, a potential seed or germ, (2) the Chinese association of the Buddha-nature with the metaphysical principle, li, almost a synonym for Tao, and (3) the Chinese preference to ground the Buddha-nature in the mind, hsin. Pao-liang (443-509) had a theory of the "pure mind" as the "Suchness Buddha-nature". This theory might have anticipated the doctrine of a priori enlightenment in the AFM-- that the mind of sentient beings is immediately Suchness itself.

An essay of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (d. 549) is analyzed in the thesis to show the structural similarity between it and the AFM. Three pairs of Chinese concepts are inherited by the AFM: (1) t'i-yung, substance and function, (2) hsin-shih, mind and consciousness, and (3) shen-ming or hsin and wu-ming, the spirit or mind and ignorance. These three pairs follow the li-shih, noumenal-phenomenal, division and the Taoist paradox of inactive activity.

The Indian contributions to Fa-tsang's thoughts are reviewed. Indian Buddhism, from an early date, had the notion of an "innately pure mind" (visuddhi cittaprakrti), and later, the notion of the "womb of the Tathagata" (tathagatagarbha) that is "accidentally defiled." The tathagatagarbha is said to produce pure karma that leads to final enlightenment. Although acknowledging these Indian traditions, yet it must be said that it was Fa-tsang who "discovered" them as a discrete entity or school in a retrospection guided by Sinitic inclinations for a doctrine of a "pure mind". The Indian notion of a "pure-yet-

tainted" tathagatagarbha probably suggested to Fa-tsang the idea of a "changeless yet changeable" Suchness. However, if the Book of Changes (I Ching) influenced Fa-tsang's interpretation of the AFM, Fa-tsang also transformed the tradition of I Ching scholarship. (In the Sung dynasty, Chou Tun-i [1017-1073] learned to use the phrase "moving yet not moving, not moving yet moving" to describe shen, spirit.) Throughout the thesis, it is emphasized that Sinicization is a complicated dialectical process.

The AFM emerged in China in the third quarter of the sixth century A.D. Chinese Buddhism had just experienced a tremendous growth in the preceding fifty years. The sangha (fellowship) had truly been all-inclusive, but in so being, the Buddhist Dharma (teachings) had been somewhat diluted. Discontent and anxiety over the coming of the "age of the degenerated Dharma" arose prior to the persecution of the Buddhist in the north in 574-576 A.D. Although the thesis is largely a study of the doctrinal issues, it also suggests that the AFM could be an intellectual response to the spiritual and institutional crisis in the sixth century A.D. in China. The AFM emerged at a time when China finally was to leave behind the dark ages of social chaos (317-589) and embark upon her high medieval glory in the prosperous Sui-T'ang period (589-907). The AFM's career spanned this transition.

Probably the AFM was "originally" a meditative text, an intro-vertive treatise demonstrating the author's soul-searching synthesis

of various traditions. In its monistic pathos, the AFM spelled of a hope built possibly on despair. However, in the prosperous era of the seventh century A.D., Fa-tsang capitalized upon the optimistic aspects of the text as he "cosmicized" the tathagatagarbha and "objectified" what was originally a philosophy of "subjective idealism." The Hua-yen interpretation of the AFM represents the "immanent panentheistic" outlook of the T'ang Buddhists. That outlook contrasts well with the "transcendental dualism" or general othershoreliness of the Six Dynasties earlier. Instead of the earlier emphasis on the accumulation of merits, the patient nurturing of the latent Buddha-seed or the gradual cultivation on a long pilgrimage to the othershore, the T'ang Buddhists emphasized the notion of "Buddhahood in the here-and-now." The AFM's idea of pen-chüeh, a priori enlightenment, is indicative of this new mood. The omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of the absolute seemingly was a reality. The world was consecrated. Every phenomena, shih, appeared to be noumenal, li. The Dharma seemed to rule the world.

However, that grand vision of Fa-tsang, protégé of Empress Wu, could not last. The medieval glory that was Buddhism was on the wane. The scholastic synthesis perfected by Hua-yen collapsed, soon to be challenged by the radical Zen tradition which was impatient with reason, systems, hierarchy, and analysis.

## Notes on Style

The thesis contains words, phrases and sentences from Chinese, Sanskrit and Japanese. All such non-western terms have been underlined, including proper names of persons and places and names of philosophical schools. Those terms which are very familiar to the general reader are not underlined, for example, Buddha, Kyoto and Mahayana.

Diacritical marks have been left out from the Romanized Sanskrit, except for two long passages. The Romanization of the Chinese characters follows the Wade-Giles system. In both Chinese and Japanese, the family name comes first and no comma follows the family name.

In the bibliography, the names of non-western authors and translators are not underlined and a comma follows the family name. Information in addition to the place and date of publication is included only when confusion might arise otherwise.

The only abbreviations using initials are

- AFM Awakening of Faith in Mahayana
- JIBS Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies
- MPNS Mahaparinirvana sutra

## INTRODUCTION

### The Religious Situation in the Sixth Century A.D. In China

The history of the Buddhist tradition is ultimately the story of how men of faith responded to particular historical situations, guided, as they were, by their commitment to the Buddhist Dharma. The present thesis will be looking into one specific Buddhist response in the long and still living tradition of the Buddhist sangha. The locale and time of this response is China in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Since the thesis will analyze this response both within the context of Buddhist faith that spanned India and China as well as within the historical context of Chinese society itself, a general discussion of the religious situation of China in the sixth century A.D. seems called for. The following discussion of the history of Chinese Buddhism up to the sixth century A.D. hardly claims to be exhaustive but should provide a sufficient background for the general reader with regard to the questions raised in the thesis. A more detailed analysis of the sixth century A.D. in China will follow.

The Buddhist faith came into China around the beginning of the first century A.D., but it did not become a viable cultural force until after the collapse of the Han

Apparently, neither traditional Confucianism nor even Taoism was able to handle the problems of radical evil, irreversible fate and prolonged social chaos.<sup>1</sup> The anomie of the times was reflected in the infamous debaucheries among the elite in the southern court.<sup>2</sup> However, the teaching of Gautama Buddha, by addressing itself to the harsh realities of karmic evil and samsaric fate, provided an alternative to licentious self-abandonment, and held up a hope, a path out of life's sufferings (dukkha).

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<sup>1</sup>The issues mentioned here require a study of their own. The following are some leads. On the problem of evil, see Chan Wing-tsit, "The Neo-Confucian Solution to the Problem of Evil," Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philosophy, XXVIII (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1957). On the rising fatalism since later Han, see T'ang Chun-i, Chung-kuo che-hsüeh yüan-lun, I (Hongkong: 1966), pp. 540-582. On the general anxiety over death and the inability of ritualistic Confucianism to provide fitting expression to it, see important observations by Miyakawa Hisayuki, Rikuchō shukyō shi (revised ed., Tokyo: 1974), p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>See Liu Kuang-hui, "Liang Chin Nan-pei-ch'ao ti kung-wei," Shih-huo, II, No. 5 (1935), pp. 36-39. Sexual mores are often a gauge to measure the degree of social integration, but there were other telltale signs showing the collapse of classical rational moderation recorded in the Shih-shuo hsün-yü; see Yü Ying-shih, "Han-Chin chih chi shih chih hsün-tsu-chüeh yü hsün-ssu-ch'ao," Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao, IV, No. 1 (1959), pp. 25-144. More noteworthy signs are the romantic theory of music of Hsi K'ang, the indulgence in impulses among some Neo-Taoists, and a case of immoderate mourning "unto death."

Indian Buddhist traditions. The Sui dynasty finally reunited the country in 589 A.D. This reunification roughly coincided with the emergence of the Sinitic Mahayana schools: T'ien-t'ai, Hua-yen, Zen (Ch'an) and Pure Land. Chinese Buddhism, as Arthur Wright puts it, had embarked upon the period of "independent growth."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Arthur Wright, Buddhism in Chinese History (Stanford:1959), p. xi. His scheme is as follows:

Period of preparation	ca.65	to	317 A.D.
Period of domestication	317	to	589 A.D.
Period of independent growth	589	to	900 A.D.
Period of appropriation	900	to	1900 A.D.

The above scheme is a historian's modification of the oft-used modern Japanese scheme, with some variations, of:

Period of translation	-	to	385 A.D.
Period of study	385	to	581 A.D.
Period of construction	581	to	755 A.D.
Period of practice	755	to	1127 A.D.
Period of inheritance	1127	to	(1900)A.D.

See Tokiwa Daijō, Shina no Bukkyō (Tokyo:1935), pp. 139-228 .

I use an implicit scheme of my own based on a modification and refinement of Bellah's stages in "Religious Evolution."

200- 400 A.D.	transition from classical-imperial stage
400- 600 A.D.	early medieval: general "othershoreliness"
600 A.D.	emergence of Sinitic Mahayana
600- 800 A.D.	high medieval: panentheistic immanentalism
800- 900 A.D.	late medieval: crisis-faiths
900-1100 A.D.	transition to the early modern stage
1100-1900 A.D.	Neo-Confucian puritanism

See chapter four below for some clarification.

The transition from the period of study into the period of independent growth is perhaps the most crucial phase in Chinese Buddhist history. However, sectarian histories of the various schools have clouded that transition with myths and legends so that it is often very difficult to know how the creative spark was lit. Yet, it is these very myths and legends that reveal the nature of the Chinese breakthrough into an independent understanding of the "hidden meanings" (hsüan-i) of the Buddhist scriptures. No longer, for example, did the patriarchs look up to Indian translators for inspiration and legitimation. Rather, it was pronounced that they stood in an unbroken spiritual lineage with transhistorical Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The well-known Zen version of its own esoteric "mind to mind" transmission of the Dharma is only one--albeit a rather late--version of the Chinese claim to have the deeper insight into the Dharma.<sup>1</sup>

There appeared in China, around 550 A.D., a treatise known as Awakening of Faith in Mahayana (Chinese title, Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun, henceforth abbreviated with the English initials, AFM). The AFM was to become the instrument by which one key Sinitic Mahayana school, the Hua-yen

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<sup>1</sup>See the introduction in The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, trans. Phillip Yampolski (New York:1967).

school (based on the Hua-yen or the Avatamsaka sutra), seemed, in effect, to set itself off from "Indian Buddhism" as it is generally known to us. As will be shown in the thesis eventually, the AFM might hold the key to the intriguing transition from Indian Mahayana to Sinitic Mahayana. The AFM is traditionally ascribed to Asvaghosa, the Mahayana poet in King Kanishka's court in the first century A.D. in India. The AFM is supposed to have been translated by the Indian master, Paramartha, somewhere in south China around 550 A.D. There was a second translation 150 years later by Siksananda.<sup>1</sup> The first known specialist in the AFM is the monk T'an-ch'ien who was familiar with the work apparently prior to 577 A.D.<sup>2</sup> The AFM eventually became very popular among oriental Buddhists, attaining a position second perhaps only to the Lotus sutra (Saddharma-pundarika sutra). The AFM has been regarded as the alpha and omega of Mahayana essentials--an introductory text in the training of monks as well as the summation of the Mahayana faith. Numerous commentaries have been written on it down to the present.

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<sup>1</sup>See Hakeda's Introduction to his translation of Awakening of Faith in Mahayana (New York:1967)

<sup>2</sup>See discussion below on pp. 46-48.

Being a short and terse text, the AFM had always been read with the help of the authoritative commentary by Fa-tsang, the key patriarch of the Hua-yen school. Certain basic Hua-yen doctrines find justification in this text. Here we come to the intricate problem: in his commentary, Fa-tsang elevated the AFM above the text of the schools of Emptiness (Madhyamika) and Consciousness Only (Yogacara) as he knew them because of what he considered to be the "superior" teachings of the AFM. Fa-tsang in fact discovered for the first time what ever since has been regarded as the "third tradition" in Indian Mahayana, the so-called ju-lai-tsang-tsung (Tathagatagarbha or womb-of-the-Buddha school).<sup>1</sup> The technical issues involved here will be explained in Chapters Two and Three below. The question, simply put, is this: did Fa-tsang uncover something no one, Indian or Chinese, had noticed before? Or did he invent or create this Tathagatagarbha tradition, a category that led Sinitic Mahayana beyond the known limits of Indian Mahayana (represented by Madhyamika and Yogacara)? Or did he do

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<sup>1</sup>Taishō Daizōkyō (Taishō Tripitaka, hereafter abbreviated as T.), 44 (viz, volume XLIV), p. 243b.

both, that is, did he discover a latent "school" embedded in the overall Indian scriptural pattern and did he not bring this "school" to bold philosophical fruition with the help of Sinitic exegetical understanding?

This thesis seeks to show how almost imperceptibly and naturally, the native Chinese predispositions and conceptual framework did in fact help to produce the ideological differentiation of this amorphous "third tradition." The thesis seeks to show this by looking into the place of the AFM in the history of Chinese Buddhism, especially into the way the AFM or the commentaries on the AFM might contribute to a significant departure from "Indian Mahayana." Not unrelated to the above issue is the controversy regarding the authorship of the AFM. Questions have been raised as to whether the AFM is an authentic Indian treatise or an ingenious Chinese fabrication. Were the AFM a Chinese fabrication, this could account for its doctrinal departures from Indian Mahayana. Were the AFM a genuine Indian work, Sinitic Mahayana would be shown to be possibly fairly solidly grounded in Indian Buddhist traditions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Chapter Three will show that even if the AFM is an Indian composition, the commentary on it written by Fa-tsang has been informed by Taoist outlooks.

An exhaustive summary of the history of the controversy over the issue of authorship cannot be attempted in the thesis.<sup>1</sup> The key points of contention, however, will be touched upon and critically analyzed. My general attitude is this: in lieu of a Sanskrit original (none has been found yet) and in view of the fact that there is no mention of the AFM in any Indian or Tibetan sources, it is advisable to place the authorship of the AFM under suspicion. In view also of the fact that the so-called Paramartha - translated version of the AFM is the influential version in the history of Far East Buddhism, it is advisable to take that version as it stands and measure its impact in China or Japan. I believe there are demonstrable Sinitic influences in the Paramartha-translated version. Whether these 'Sinitic' elements are results of Chinese authorship, Chinese redaction of the text, or Chinese interpolations in the translation process is really secondary to the fact that they are

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<sup>1</sup>Summaries of the controversy are available in French, German and Chinese; see Paul Demieville, "Sur l'authenticite du Ta Tch'ing K'i Sin Louen," Bulletin de la Maison Franco-Japonaise II, No. 2 (Tokyo; 1929), Bruno Petzold, Das Dai Jo Kishin Ron und Seine Lehre von der Erleuchtung (Tokyo: 1942), Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun k'ao-cheng (Shanghai: 1923).

there and that they exert definitive influence upon subsequent Chinese understanding of the Dharma. The significance of the (Paramartha-translated) AFM lies not in who wrote it, but in what it says and how its message left an impact among the Chinese Buddhist fellowship. The present thesis proceeds on that assumption.<sup>1</sup>

The thesis is organized in the following manner: Chapter One reviews the contents of the AFM, summarizing and highlighting those elements in the AFM which seem to show Chinese influence. Chapter Two looks into the possible precedents of the ideas in the AFM in the exegetical expositions on the Mahaparinirvana sutra by members of the Nirvana school in south China during the fifth and sixth centuries. A certain continuity of concern seems to be apparent. Chapter Three looks into the commentaries on the AFM, which form an interpretative tradition in themselves. Fa-tsang's authoritative

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<sup>1</sup>The problems raised by the existence of a second translation of the AFM by Siksananda will be analyzed in Chapter Three. The Siksananda-translated AFM is historically insignificant for Chinese Buddhism; only one commentary has been written on it. To speculate at the moment on a Sanskrit Urtext of the AFM which has no known impact on India or Tibet seems futile. Generally, the term AFM in the thesis refers to the Paramartha-translated version.

interpretation of a key concept "dynamic or creative tathata" (Suchness) derived from the AFM will be given special attention. The chapter will endeavor to show how Fa-tsang developed an explanation of that concept by drawing, perhaps unconsciously, upon native Chinese thought patterns derived from Taoism and the Book of Changes (I Ching). It was through such refinement of a key concept of dubious legitimacy that Fa-tsang was able to elevate the AFM above the "Consciousness Only" (Wei-shih) tradition and to uncover the superior "Tathagatagarbha tradition" in India. Modern Japanese scholars still follow Fa-tsang's authority and distinguish this third tradition that is now often referred to as the "Mind Only" tradition from the inferior "Consciousness Only" tradition.<sup>1</sup> The last chapter puts the doctrinal discussion of the previous two chapters into a historical and cultural perspective, closing with a discussion on the implication of Hua-yen philosophy for Zen (Ch'an).

The main contention of the thesis may be summarized as this: there are unique Chinese Buddhist exegetical

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<sup>1</sup>The often uncritical acceptance of Fa-tsang's authority by some Japanese Buddhologists obscures the historical Chinese dissociation of "Mind Only" from "Consciousness Only" philosophy.

concerns and ways of thinking that are somehow incorporated into the AFM supposedly translated by Paramartha. It is these "Sinitic" elements, legitimized by the AFM attributed to Asvaghosa, which Fa-tsang expanded upon to bring mature Sinitic Mahayana closer to the native Taoist tradition of the I Ching than to Indian Mahayana as it is generally known. In so doing, Fa-tsang helped to liberate Sinitic appreciation of the Dharma as li (principle) from the tutelage of the Indian Buddhist worldview.

Ideas are fairly autonomous. Once expressed, they seem to have a life of their own. Thus, the AFM can be considered entirely in terms of a history of ideas. The main body of the thesis (Chapters Two and Three) will be devoted to such ideological issues. However, ideas are often intellectual responses to concrete cultural situations. The social context of thought should also be examined. In this introduction, an attempt to place the AFM in a cultural context is made, especially with reference to the institutional and spiritual crisis in the second half of the sixth century A.D. in China. To understand the nature of that crisis, the inner dialectical tension of the Mahayana institution has to be acknowledged. A brief review of the origin and development of the sangha in China is included below.

Since 317 A.D., China was politically divided into a barbarian north and a Chinese south. In the north, the T'o-pa group of nomads founded the Wei dynasty in 386 A.D. and brought the north into some unity by 439 A.D. The south saw a weaker series of dynasties, Sung, Ch'i, Liang and Ch'en founded respectively in 420, 479, 502 and 557 A.D. The style of Buddhist piety was similarly divided into north and south. The barbaric north followed what has been termed "State Buddhism," in which the king was often regarded as a living Tathagata (Buddha). The Chinese south continued the style of the Neo-Taoist-Buddhist encounter of the fourth century A.D. to produce the so-called "Gentry Buddhism." It is said that the north emphasized religious practices: meditation and devotion. The south was more intellectually inclined and theorized upon the doctrine of Buddha-nature. The Chinese Buddhist schools that emerged towards the end of this period of disunity are said to have synthesized the northern tradition of "practice" and the southern tradition of "theory." This synthesis was helped in part by the persecution of the Buddhists in the north in 574 A.D. when eminent northern monks had to take refuge in the south.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The above is a traditional summary of the period; see Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China (Princeton: 1964), pp. 121-209.

Southern Buddhists supplied the intellectual acumen for later Chinese Buddhist schools and their achievement definitely had its charm and appeal. However, if one takes an overall view of the institutional strength of the sangha, the north provided a better chance for the realization of the Mahayana social ideal.<sup>1</sup> The south harbored a certain disdain for organization, or monastic precepts — a legacy of the freethinking Neo-Taoist dislike of rites. The following story from the biography of Tao-sheng is indicative of the iconoclasm.

The king [Sung T'ai-tsu] was feasting with the monks seated on the ground. As the party went on for some time, there was some hesitation among the monks [who wondered whether the noon-hour had passed. According to monastic precepts, meals are prohibited after that hour.] The king said, "Maybe noon is approaching." Tao-sheng said, "The sun adorns the sky, being always at the zenith of heaven; it can (therefore) never pass beyond that mid-point." So saying, he went on eating and the others joined in. The people of the time admired him for his wit.<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising to read then that later Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty had to personally remind the monks

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<sup>1</sup> Despite the fact that Fa-kuo stooped to the king in the north while Hui-yüan of Lu-shan did not, the north realized the social ideal better. See the following pages below.

<sup>2</sup> Kao-seng-chuan, T. 50, pp. 366c.

not to consume meat and wine,<sup>1</sup> or that he had to confront monks who protested about the comfort of their residence.<sup>2</sup>

The scholarly monks of the south generally lacked interest in ascetical meditative practices. Supported by powerful gentry families, the monks gathered around the southern capital, mingled with the literati and failed to hold up an alternative lifestyle to challenge the dominant lifestyle of the upper classes. Compared with the northern Buddhists, the elite southern gentry Buddhists did little to transform the greater society.<sup>3</sup> However, under stress, the humanistic south proved to be equally susceptible to being bewitched by mystagogues. Chi-kung, a monk who strayed away from the "spiritual asylum" of the cloisters, mesmerized the capital for decades.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hung-ming-chi, T. 52, pp. 294c-301a.

<sup>2</sup>Cited by T'ang Yung-t'ung, Han Wei Liang-Chin Nan-pei-ch'ao Fo-chiao-shih (Shanghai:1938), pp. 479. This book by T'ang will be abbreviated as T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih. All translations from this book are done by me.

<sup>3</sup>For more detailed analysis, see Miyakawa Hisayuki, Rikuchō shi kenkyū ... : Shukyō hen (Kyoto:1964). The author finds that in the Sung-Ch'i period, a more personal faith evolved, reaching a peak in the Liang period. Disturbances towards the end of the Liang dynasty encouraged fanatic faith in mystagogues. The representative southern Buddhist piety may be that of Yen Chih-t'ui, see Yen-shih chia-hsün (The Family Instructions for the Yen Clan), trans. Teng Ssu-yü (Leiden: 1968), chap. on Buddhism.

<sup>4</sup>Kao-seng-chuan, T. 50, pp. 394a-395b. See T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 821-824.

In contrast, the north showed a much wider range of Buddhist lifestyles. On the one hand, there were the "liberal" monks, hierocrats, who would compromise with secular power, stooping only to conquer. Thus, the leading monk Fa-kuo under the founding Wei ruler stooped to the king, acknowledging the ruler to be the Tathagata. Fa-kuo thereby wrestled from the crown important concessions which were instrumental in broadening the basis of the Mahayana community. Thus also Tan-yao, the architect of the Buddhist revival after the 446 A.D. persecution, promoted the building of temples and cave projects in the name of the King and to the benefit of the Dharma. The liberalizing tendencies of these hierocrats helped to realize the Mahayana ideal of a great community that embraced king as well as peasant, monk as well as laymen, and to bring the number of sangha-members up to the impossible number of three million just prior to the 574 A.D. persecution.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The following statistics give an idea of the picture:

476 A.D.	79,258 members	6,578 temples
512-515 A.D.	-	13,727 "
534 A.D.	2,000,000 "	30,886 "
550-574 A.D.	3,000,000 "	40,000 "

See Jacques Gernet, Les aspects économiques du bouddhisme dans la société du Ve au Xe siècle (Saigon: 1956), p. 4 for clarification of the sources used in the tabulation.

On the other hand, the north was equally conscientious in another area: the "conservative" spiritual masters repeatedly challenged and recalled the community to the "purer" ideals of Buddhism. The following story illustrates their uncompromising attitude. The Platform Sutra of Hui-neng has it that Bodhidharma, the meditative (Zen) patriarch, told Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty that all the outward show of temple-building (which the liberal T'an-yao would have promoted) was of no avail for the attainment of Buddhahood or enlightenment. Only endless meditation in some cave held the key to true self-realization.

It was this dialectical tension between "liberals" and "conservatives" which engineered a much more dynamic Mahayana tradition in the north.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, the north resembled more what western historians of the

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the statistics for the north on the last page with the statistics for the four southern dynasties:

420-479 A.D.	36,000 members	1,913 temples
479-502 A.D.	31,500 "	2,015 "
502-557 A.D.	82,700 "	2,846 "
557-587 A.D.	32,000 "	1,232 "

J. Gernet, op.cit., p. 4

medieval period saw as the dynamic pattern of monastic reforms in the Latin Church in medieval Europe, while the south resembled more the stagnant Greek Church in the East.<sup>1</sup> It is the north that supplied nearly all the founding patriarchs of the Chinese Buddhist schools. Since the sangha development in northern Wei was far more (ten times more numerically) than the southern counterpart, and since the first mention of the AFM came out of the northern Buddhist circle, I will outline an interpretation of the Buddhist tradition in the north, showing how it might have led up to the AFM. I base my interpretation on the classical treatise on Buddhism by Wei-shou.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>According to Ernest Troeltsch in his The Social Teachings of the Christian Church (New York:1931) the Latin Church produced the Reformation because of a tradition of monastic reforms in the Catholic tradition. These reforms were initiated by "strict" monks leaving the established centers and founding new organizations of spiritual purity...until prosperity and fame almost necessarily corrupted the movement. Then another cycle of reform and secularization would begin. In the Eastern Orthodox church, the monks were more integrated into the priestly order and monasteries were found around cities and not in outlying "desolate" spots. In this sense, the southern Buddhist tradition resembled the Orthodox pattern.

<sup>2</sup>Wei-shou on Buddhism and Taoism (hereafter abbreviated as Wei-shou) trans. Leon Hurvitz (Kyoto: 1956) with notes based on Tsukamoto Zenryū's Shina Bukkyō shi kenkyū: Hokuji hen (Tokyo: 1942).

From the founding days, the Wei rulers had patronized the Buddhist faith. The founding emperor T'ai-tsu encountered passive monks around the Yeh area where Fo-t'u-teng and Tao-an had worked. He was impressed by these exemplars of the Buddhist path. Fa-kuo, whom the emperor appointed to lead the community, condescended to bow to the emperor qua Tathagata. The "universalistic" Buddhist ideology probably helped the tribal leader qua emperor to ideologically unite a segmented multi-racial society. The relationship between the crown and the sangha was not as Caesaropapist as it might appear, since the emperor recognized his discipleship to the monk in the ecclesiastical sphere.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have viewed the two northern persecutions of the Buddhists in 446 A.D. and 574 A.D., as proofs that the sangha was under strict imperial control. The right interpretation might be the reverse: the crown's inability to rationally supervise this "kingdom within a kingdom" was the reason for its repeated dependence on naked power, always the last political resort. Thus the role of Fa-kuo should be

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<sup>1</sup>See Wei-shou, pp. 51-53. Tsukamoto, op.cit., pp. 57-96.

re-evaluated.<sup>1</sup> By personal charisma, Fa-kuo, actually secured a certain autonomy for the sangha. Imperial patronage and special exemptions always benefit the sangha more than private citizen support. A powerful gentry family in the south could support 200 monks, but a barbarian ruler like Yao Hsing in the early fifth century A.D. could finance the whole translation project for Kumarajiva. The strength of the northern sangha was due to such sincere and sometimes ruinous state support.<sup>2</sup>

Under T'ai-wu, the militant ruler who unified the north, Buddhism suffered the first political set-back.

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<sup>1</sup>Fa-kuo is usually criticized for violating the vinaya or monastic precepts. However, he was only following, in one sense, Tao-an's advice that "Without the dependence on the law of the land, the matters of the Dharma cannot be established,"—see T. 54, p. 366c.

<sup>2</sup>Scholars including Tsukamoto (op.cit., pp. 97-130) tended to read political motives involved into the state sponsorship of Buddhism. Without denying the political function of a religious ideology, I would stress that politics was not always the key concern in the actions of medieval rulers. Yao Hsing, the barbarian ruler, would send large troops mainly to capture saints like Tao-an, Kumarajiva and, less successfully, Dharmaksema for their spiritual "worth."

T'ai-wu apparently defrocked able-bodied monks in order to draft them into the army in 439 A.D. prior to a campaign against the prosperous Liang-chou frontier stronghold in the north-west.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese were beginning to accomodate the T'o-pa conquerors into their culture. T'ai-wu was courted by a Taoist K'ou Ch'ien-chih who saw in the emperor the "True Ruler of the Great Peace" prophesied by the T'ai-p'ing ching. An anti-Buddhist Confucian Ts'ui Hao supported this Taoist's claim. An incident in another military campaign in 445-6 A.D. provided Ts'ui Hao the chance to urge the destruction of the Buddhist institution. In the old city of Ch'ang-an, the imperial troops accidentally discovered a temple armed with bows and arrows, spears and shields. Under investigation, the temple was shown to hoard much wealth and practice debauchery.<sup>2</sup> This incident has been repeatedly cited by scholars to show the corruption of the sangha. The facts might be these: Temple estates, like any other manorial estates in the unstable medieval times,

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<sup>1</sup>Wei-shou, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Wei-shou, pp. 64-65; Tsukamoto, op.cit. pp. 97-130.

required arms to defend their property. Temple wealth was the result of the usury system, the generous lay donations and the unintended consequence of what Weberians would see as the rational organization of an ascetic corporation.<sup>1</sup> As to the "debauchery," the Confucian charge of "licentious rites" had been traditionally applied to any mingling of the sexes in any officially-unsanctioned cults. With some imagination, the conservative Confucian could see debauchery where none existed.<sup>2</sup>

When the persecution was lifted in 452 A.D., a tremendous revival was spearheaded by monks from the conquered Liang-chou area. Liang-chou had been an early Mahayana center since the fourth century A.D. and exemplified apparently a very active form of Buddhist

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<sup>1</sup>On the Buddhist temples' contribution in leading China beyond the Han agrarian economy, see J. Gernet, op. cit., and Yang Lien-sheng, "Buddhist Monasteries and Four Money-raising Institutions in Chinese History," Studies in Chinese Institutional History (Cambridge, Mass.: 1963), pp. 198-215.

<sup>2</sup>The term "licentious rites" was originally used with reference to fertility cults in classical China but has been generally extended to cover any unorthodox cults. The temple in the above incident was charged with having "hidden rooms" (for the purpose of "illicit" relationships). These rooms might just be typical temple cloisters for women worshippers.

piety when contrasted with Yeh. A line in Wei-shou's treatise reads "(In Tun-huang and Liang-chou), the monks and the laity mingled well together."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this organic tie between the clerics and the laymen was a Mahayana ideal promoted by the kind of Buddhist practice envisioned in the scriptures translated by the "resident" monk of Liang-chou, Dharmaksema. Unlike the more philosophical works translated by Kumarajiva in Ch'ang-an, Dharmaksema introduced a more practical, popular and liturgical set of Mahayana scriptures to the people at Liang-chou. Dharmaksema translated the Sutra of the Excellent Light (Survarnaprabhasa), a rare statement of Mahayana political ideals and a classical source for religious formulae ("magic") that would defend the state. He translated the jataka tales, lay and monk vinaya rules, etc., as well as the Mahaparinirvana sutra which contains passages legitimizing the killing of those evil people (icchantikas) who defame Mahayana.<sup>2</sup> Could not these works emphasizing an active participation in the world

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<sup>1</sup>This line has been cut up differently by Leon Hurvitz; see Wei-shou, p. 61. I have followed T'ang Yung-t'ung's reading in his Fo-chiao-shih, p. 489.

<sup>2</sup>See Hurvitz's notes in Wei-shou, pp. 58-9.

for the sake of the Dharma explain a curious "first" in Chinese Buddhist history, namely, that 3,000 monks took to defending the city of Liang-chou when T'ai-wu sought to take it?<sup>1</sup> Following a barbaric practice, T'ai-wu enslaved the population and brought it back to the capital P'ing-ch'eng. The political losers, however, became the cultural victors, for the Dharma was said to prosper as it went east. The aristocracy courted the Liang-chou monks and privately housed them.<sup>2</sup> After the persecution, it was these active Mahayana monks of Liang-chou who initiated the grand revival.

The architect of the revival was T'an-yao. On one hand, he appeased the kings with flattering cave-carving projects at Ta-t'ung and Yün-kang.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, he seized the opportunity in 476 A.D. to petition for the establishment of sangha-households and buddha-households.

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<sup>1</sup>The monks were said to be coerced into battle, but T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 489 cites another revolt led by a monk when the Wei army left.

<sup>2</sup>Wei-shou, p. 61.

<sup>3</sup>Wei-shou, p. 72. Buddha-statues were apparently modelled on past and present emperors. See Tsukamoto, op.cit., pp. 131-164.

T'an-yao petitioned that the households of P'ing-ch'i and those of the people who could yearly convey sixty "hu" of grain and present them to the clerical officials constitute Samgha-households and their grain to be designated Samgha-grain, to be used in lean years to relieve the famine-stricken people. He also requested that those of the people who committed grave crimes, as well as public slaves, be constitute Buddha-households, to serve the temples as sweepers and sprinklers, and also manage the fields and transport the grain. Kao-tsu granted all these requests. Thereafter, Samgha-households and Samgha-grain and temple-households were to be found everywhere in the prefectures and garrisons.<sup>1</sup>

The phenomenal growth of the members of the sangha to two million in 534 A.D. and three million on the eve of the persecution in 574 A.D. is, in my opinion, largely due to this experiment. For spiritual as well as material reasons, many would join the new sangha-community.

Naturally, the three million seng (the term usually means individual "monks") could not have been tonsured celibates. A majority of them were lay converts to the seng-chia (sangha) who took on the designation of seng in the liberal meaning of the term, i.e., as members of the greater seng-chia (sangha). At no other time in Chinese history, not even in T'ang, did the number of

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<sup>1</sup>Wei-shou, p. 73. "Samgha" is "sangha". See Tsukamoto, op.cit., pp. 165-214.

seng reach the three million mark. In one sense, the sixth century A.D. in north China is the time for the boldest experiment in Mahayana community, a "liberal" innovation on the part of the Liang-chou monks.

Naturally, the peasant woman would not be able to follow the kind of ascetic and meditative practices of the true seng (monk) celibate. A follower of T'an-yao then fabricated a sutra directed precisely at the need of the laity.<sup>1</sup> The sutra was the T'i-wei Po-li ching, named after the lay pair T'i-wei (Trapusa) and Po-li (Bhallika) whom Gautama Buddha was supposed to have taught seven days after his enlightenment. The sutra became the basis for what is known as "jen-t'ien-chiao," Man-Heaven Teachings, which refers to the cult of pious laymen who, through good works, attained rebirth in the heavens. Incidentally, "jen-t'ien" reminds one of the Han idea of Heaven-Man (t'ien-jen) Unity and in fact, the jen-t'ien-chiao reproduced that Han concern for the Heaven-Man micro-macrocosmic correspondences based on the five elements. The pancasila , five precepts in

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<sup>1</sup>See Hurvitz's notes in Wei-shou, p. 35. and Tsukamoto, op.cit. pp. 293-354.

Buddhism, were aligned with the Confucian five virtues and endless sets of "fives" according to the Yin-yang and Five Elements philosophy of Han China. I would regard the jen-t'ien-chiao to be the most liberalized lay Mahayana faith possible since it virtually "Confucianized" the Buddha-Dharma and made the Buddhist path, marga, the Confucian tao of man.<sup>1</sup> The "liberal" experiment here based on a clearly fabricated sutra survived beyond this period but the T'i-wei Po-li ching is, significantly, lost. The sophisticated Sinitic Mahayana schools discarded this "diluted" simple gospel. The later learned masters declared the sutra a fabrication. They were generally what I call "conservative reformers" who sought to introduce a more balanced and more "orthodox" understanding of the Dharma at a time when, as we shall see, that "liberalizing" trend generated ironically the persecution of 574 A.D.

Other culturo-political changes were afoot. The T'o-pa nomads were slowly being Sinicized and made to

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<sup>1</sup>Perhaps the key difference is that the pancasila can be easily practiced by all whereas the Confucian virtues included an unspoken presupposition--that the person must be literate enough to know the details of li or rites. "Li does not apply to the level of plebeians as punishment does not reach up to the gens."

adopt Chinese ways.<sup>1</sup> Kao-tsu who approved the sangha-household program was an enlightened monarch, fully versed in Chinese history and literature. His posthumous title, Hsiao-wen-t'i, "the filial and cultured ruler," tells of the Confucian literati's high regard for this "fellow-gentleman." Kao-tsu, however, was caught in the tragedy of the T'o-pa's cultural transformation. He approved the Buddhist sangha-household program just as he initiated the Confucian "equal field" system. He patronized Buddhism--more in the style of a gentry Buddhist monarch than of the autocratic Tathagata-king--but was keenly aware that politics at P'ing-ch'eng, the old capital near the steppes, had been hampered by the proliferation of clerics in that city. In 494 A.D., Kao-tsu transferred the capital from the north to the old Chinese city of Loyang. It was a move welcomed by the Chinese gentry that staffed much of his bureaucratic government but a move that antagonized the proud nomads who refused to drop their nomadic heritage and cultural identity. The crown prince himself loathed reading the "stuffy" Confucian classics and loved horse-riding in the open fields. Kao-tsu put his beloved son

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<sup>1</sup>See Wolfgang Eberhard, Das Tobas Reich Nord Chinas (Leiden: 1949) and his more general thesis in Conquerors and Rulers (Leiden: 1952).

gain has won their hearts and they cannot help themselves. If such dwellers [monks] have lost the truth, the builders [doners] only injure their own merit. These are the chaff of the Sakya clan, the altar rats of the Law, whom monastic precepts would not tolerate nor royal law permit.<sup>1</sup>

The indictment here is the familiar indictment of many prophets or moralists against the "secular city," a complaint against the irony that an othershorely faith, that "originally" desired to leave behind family, cities, politics, material goods, had come full circle to embrace the urban centers and the capitals. In reality, Loyang piety was nothing more than the recapitulation of something that began quite early in the Indian Buddhist tradition and blossomed under King Asoka's patronage of the faith.

[The unlearned folk] added to the religion [of the monks] a ritualistic and ceremonial side unknown to the monks' avasas which had scant relation to doctrine and cult, but was undoubtedly congenial to the folk mind. To this ritualistic and ceremonial Buddhism they gave a spectacular embodiment in the stupa worship.<sup>2</sup>

The Indian scene (third century, B.C.) described above was before the rise of Mahayana (first century, B.C.),

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wei-shou, p. 96. This is my translation.

<sup>2</sup> Sukumar Dutt, The Buddha and Five After-centuries, (London: 1957), p. 165.

but the Chinese in the sixth century A.D. could draw on a wealth of established Mahayana liturgical traditions and artistic expressions made available to Liang-chou since the early fourth century A.D. In the glory of its temples, Loyang outranked any Asokan capital. There is little wonder that Bodhidharma was recorded by the Lo-yang chieh-lan chi (Record of Loyang Temples) to have been spell-bound by the splendid temples. He had seen none like them in all his travels.<sup>1</sup>

The Record of the Loyang Temples is the key source for understanding the new religious mood. Fantastic temple legends were recorded. There were wine, song, myths, pageantry, miracles, battles...all the ingredients of medieval drama and piety. Buried treasures were found, a fox-woman appeared, statues would sweat or walk, or bow or cry 'thief', pigs could talk, the dead would be resurrected, and trees would breed.<sup>2</sup> There were reports of dream-journeys, supernatural communications and witness to visions. It seems that the more unstable the society

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<sup>1</sup>See T. 51, No. 2092, p. 1000b. This is the first historical account of Bodhidharma we have and he was depicted as a "Persian monk."

<sup>2</sup>Hattori Katsuhiko, Hokugi Rakuyō no shakai to bunka, II, (Kyoto: 1968), pp. 72-140.

two mystagogues. Fu-ta-shih, a bizarre figure who regarded himself to be Maitreya, the future Buddha, led a large following towards a dramatic display of self-immolation in expectation of an impending doom.<sup>1</sup> Lay followers of Amida in the north took to religious suicide to enter the Pure Land. The more cultured monks like I-ching had later to remind such people that "the burning of the body is unlawful," that "bystanders are guilty" and that "such actions were not practiced by the virtues (sic) of old."<sup>2</sup> Moderation, however, found few adherents.

Kao-tsu introduced southern gentry Buddhist learning to the north. Under translators Bodhiruci and Ratnamati, northern Buddhists also began to excel in philosophical comprehension. The rise of such abstract thinkers and public lecturers was not always welcomed by the "conservatives" who insisted on religious practice. The Record of the Loyang Temples narrates the story of a monk who

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<sup>1</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 822-823.

<sup>2</sup>These are chapter titles nos. 38 to 40 in I-ching, A Record of the Buddhist Religion, trans. Takakusu Junjirō (Oxford: 1896).

went down to hell in a dream and returned to report the plight of such philosophers . Whereas the meditationist and the sutra-chanters were saved, the public lecturer was, like the sponsor of temple buildings, condemned to punishment in hell.<sup>1</sup> This rumor was enough to turn the tide of Loyang piety towards meditation and chanting-- or so the story goes. At a time when heavens and hells were living realities, anxious men looked for any new means to gain one and avoid the other.

When the Wei rulers patronized the Buddhist faith in their founding days, the spartan tribal leader found certain natural sympathy in the ascetic monk. A curious interdependence existed between the soldier who led the "active lifestyle" and the monk who pursued the "contemplative lifestyle."<sup>2</sup> In a rather chaotic (anomic) time, one represented physical prowess or might as the other represented spiritual strength through humility. Earthly power and celestial authority reinforced one another. However, by the sixth century A.D., that honeymoon between the crown and the resident saint was nearing its end.

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<sup>1</sup>Cited by T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 777f.

<sup>2</sup>The terms "active" and contemplative" have been used by Aquinas. The juxtaposition of the two is seen in the crusader, the militant monk, the pious despot or the political hierocrat in medieval societies.

The temples had become too prosperous, worldly and powerful. The privileges were abused by the sangha and too much copper needed by the government for coinage and war was used up by the making of Buddha-statues. The Confucian bureaucracy was being perfected and its rationality displaced and challenged the old charisma of spiritual power. Temples outranked monastic cells and the once-public temples often became private, built by the wealthy in honour of certain close kin. The monks increasingly became dependents of these established institutions. Southern philosophical Buddhism enlightened minds but dimmed the earlier fascination with yogins. The many later leaders of the sangha seemed to be less brilliant. Perhaps quantity detracted the brilliance that once belonged in simpler days to a towering figure like T'an-yao. The new clerical leaders appeared too often to be officers of the state, temple residents, court monks, instead of true hierocrats. At one time, people looked up in awe to the living saints. However, with the introduction of Mahayana art objects like cosmic Buddhas and Bodhisattvas carved into stone, cliffs, or out of wood, people found a more powerful object of reverence.

The monks, dwarfed by these Buddhas, themselves were committed to the Mahayana devotionism.<sup>1</sup>

For a while, Loyang piety seemed to be able to hold the many contradictory (socio-religious) elements together. However, the reality of conflict was below the surface. The wealth of the nation channeled into the temples could and did support a "catholic" enterprise uniting the upper and the lower classes in a Mahayana community. However, the elite monks, in their commitment to the glorification of the celestial Buddhas, easily lost sight of the people. The temple projects drained the economic resources and in the end it was the peasant masses who bore the burden.

A very ominous sign was the career of the monk Seng-hsien who later became the leader of the sangha.

Yet the Wei-na General Seng-hsien and Seng-p'in on the one hand violate an established decree, on the other turned their backs to the clerical laws. Selfish in thought, reckless in feeling, they memorialize for compulsory services, causing crying anguish to fill the roadways. Those who have abandoned their children, killed, strangled themselves and drowned are more than fifty persons.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mahayana itself was given an impetus by Greek art.

<sup>2</sup>Wei-shou, p. 87f.

It was very likely that Seng-hsien was illegally channeling the sangha-grain to the capital perhaps to build the gorgeous temple, Hsien-chu ssu. Given the existence of such figures in the monk hierachy, it was not surprising that there was a series of peasant revolts from the early sixth century on, many of which revolted under Mahayana banners and were led sometimes by "unregistered" monks.<sup>1</sup> The lower clerics probably aligned themselves to the people's cause against the elite monks' abuse of the Mahayana ideal. The authors of some fabricated sutras in this period also criticized the prevalent situation. The Jen-wang ching, (Sutra of the Virtuous King) said

If any of my disciples, monks or nuns, took office and acted as governmental agents, they would not be my disciples...As long as such people exist, the Buddha-Dharma cannot last long.<sup>2</sup>

Another work, however, seems to defend the autonomy of the sangha against governmental incursion to come.

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<sup>1</sup>See Tsukamoto, Shina Bukkyō shi Kenkyū: Hokugi hen, chapter on Buddhist rebels, pp. 241-292.

<sup>2</sup>Cited by Tsukamoto, op.cit., p. 210.

In the coming age, the secular officials will not believe in karmic retribution. They will rob the sangha-property, tax the sangha's animals and crops down to the last farthing, order about the servants of the "three jewels" and ride upon the cows and horses of the refuges.<sup>1</sup>

Still another work, coming from the north like the last one, predicted a general chaos of greed, corruption, moral decline within and without the sangha.<sup>2</sup>

Loyang was sacked by the nomadic T'o-pa faction in 528 A.D. and the eastern half of Wei fell to this group in 534-5 A.D. Buddhist prosperity was still very evident. In 556 A.D., the western half of Wei, representing the Sinicized T'o-pa faction, was renamed Chou after the Chinese Chou dynasty in classical times. In 574 A.D., Emperor Wu of the Chou dynasty declared Confucianism to be the one and only proper state ideology and initiated the persecution against the Buddhists.

Mahayana faced one of its most radical and ironic challenges from within its fold during this turbulent period. Just prior to the persecution of 574 A.D., a

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<sup>1</sup>Cited by T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 599.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

monk, Wei Yüan-sung, proposed to the Chou ruler a program that would secularize the sangha and literally dismember the institution but in the name of Mahayana itself. The state will become the ecumenical body with the king acting as the living Tathagata (an old and familiar theme) and the people as the fellowship. Already we have seen earlier that the "liberal" program of T'an-yao had in effect created a "loose" or "open" definition of seng (sangha-member). Wei Yüan-sung seemed only to be following in the steps of that program. If indeed "samsara is nirvana" to the enlightened minds, then this world would be the arena for Mahayana householder—bodhisattvas. If the Buddhist pancasila are nothing more than the classical Confucian five virtues, then the rule of the Buddhist Dharma would coincide with a Confucian rule of Heaven. Wei-Yüan-sung apparently carried the jen-t'ien-chiao one step further.

In this all embracing temple, there will be no difference between monk and laity, or between those who are proficient with and those ignorant of the Law. Let the temples of the walls and moats be turned into the temples of the stupas and let the Chou ruler be the Tathagata. The cities and towns will be the quarters of the monks, harmonious husbands and wives will be the holy congregation, the virtuous ones shall be the officials of the order, the elders shall be the respected abbots, the benevolent

and wise shall be the administrators while  
the brave shall serve as masters of the Law.<sup>1</sup>

In proposing this ideal, Wei Yüan-sung might voice the dreams of some lay Buddhists who were critical of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the conspicuous consumption of the elite monks. A man from lowly backgrounds, Wei conceivably desired some drastic change.<sup>2</sup>

Something else was in the air. The Buddhists had accepted the doctrine that the Dharma (teaching) would decline in time. The accepted opinion then was that the "age of the degenerate Dharma" would commence around 552 A.D.<sup>3</sup> The religious fervour in the sixth century A.D. in China cannot be understood without recognizing

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<sup>1</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 539.

<sup>2</sup>The most complete treatment of the various factors involved in the persecution of 574 A.D. is Nomura Yōshō, Shūbu hōnan no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1968).

<sup>3</sup>The calculation is based on the assumption that the age will begin 1,500 years after Buddha's parinirvana. Because of the Buddhist controversy with the Taoists concerning the historical priority of Buddha and Lao-tzu, the Chinese Buddhists regarded the parinirvana to be an event in the tenth century B.C. (instead of the historical fifth century B.C.); see Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China, pp. 297-298. (The age of the degenerate Dharma will last 10,000 years.)

the prevalent eschatological mood. Wei Yüan-sung's radical program might itself be directed at the impending age. He was aware, as others were, of the failure of the traditional patronage of the faith as practiced by the pious Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty that had fallen in the south. The Chou ruler in the end dispensed with the Mahayana vocabulary in his thorough-going Confucian indictment against the sangha. When the persecution came in 574 A.D., it was more than a human event. For the Buddhists, the last age had dawned.

It was out of such dire hours that the future Chinese Buddhist schools arose. The responses to the crisis varied. There were those who obeyed the imperial order and returned to the world. Some of them perhaps were not unsympathetic with the destruction of the "physical sangha" and embraced the Mahayana ideal of spiritual commitment to the world.<sup>1</sup> Others took to a more inward piety of Amida-worship, recognizing the sinfulness of their existence in the last age. Still others looked forward to the coming of Maitreya, and some even took up arms to help to bring that about. There were

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<sup>1</sup>When the persecution ended, there were instituted "Bodhisattva monks", that is, monks in government. The ideal of innerworldly monks promoted by Wei Yüan-sung was not abandoned. Hsüan-tsang was also later invited by the T'ang emperor to take up secular offices.

defenders of the Dharma, martyrs who sacrificed their bodies as a means to uphold the waning teachings.<sup>1</sup>

Most extraordinary was the Three Period sect that produced a very popular movement. It was known for its indiscriminate devotion to one and all Buddhas, its eschatological fellowship, its endless donation to the "Inexhaustable Treasure," its intolerance and its ingenious organization of vinaya-following monks leading active lay followers.<sup>2</sup> There were those who withdrew from the world and rediscovered the centrality of meditation in the Buddhist faith. There were, of course, the keen thinkers who reviewed the Buddhist tradition to create

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<sup>1</sup>It is usually said that T'ang Buddhism was more "world-affirming" because T'ang was a more prosperous age. Chapter Four below will look into this issue. However, the generalization should be qualified. Loyang piety in the northern Wei period was more "naive" in desiring concrete rewards and therefore less "introvertive" when compared with later T'ang Buddhist piety. Hells were real and frightening to the people in Loyang, but "good works" through donations to the sangha could ease the passage to the othershore. Mature Pure Land faith in the T'ang period was more "sober," "sombre," and more "inward." Eventually, under Zen influence, the popular concept of Heavens and Hells is that they are "of the mind." By the T'ang period, Amida also displaced Maitreya in popularity, producing a more "ahistorical," and therefore less "political, communal" piety.

<sup>2</sup>See Yabuki Keiki, Sangaikyō no kenkyū (Kyoto: 1927). The Three Period sect was the most active and radical sect ever produced. It resembled in many ways the sects in Kamakura Japan, but it was harshly suppressed by the state and denounced by the more "moderate" Sinitic Mahayana schools.

an ideological unity when that unity was not available in the social realm.

A person who was able to combine many of the above responses was Chih-i, the real patriarch of the first Sinitic Mahayana school to emerge, the T'ien-t'ai school. Almost singlehandedly he redefined the Buddhist tradition, building his own religious platform, ordination practices, a new reading of the vinaya rules, a model of Mahayana meditation and an understanding of the "hidden meaning" (hsüan-i) of the Lotus sutra. The charismatic break with tradition is evident in the myth that Hui-ssu, Chih-i's teacher, obtained enlightenment without a teacher i.e. 無師自悟 by himself, through direct inspiration from transhistorical figures like Nagarjuna. The spiritual encounter of Hui-ssu and Chih-i was later depicted as having taken place, not in history, but in the mystical eternal timelessness at the Vulture Peak where, according to the Lotus sutra, the immortal Gautama preached forever the Dharma.

It is not possible to recount all the types of Chinese response to the spiritual crisis around the

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<sup>1</sup>In other words, Hui-ssu and Chih-i both received the Dharma direct from the transhistorical Gautama himself. See Leon Hurvitz, "Chih-i," Melanges Chinois et Bouddhiques XII (Brussels: 1960-1962).

third quarter of the sixth century A.D., but I would suggest that the AFM should perhaps be counted as one such response. The following account reveals in a small drama the milieu from which this text first emerged:

The persecution of the Buddhists began in 574 A.D. in the Chou kingdom, and in 576 A.D., it spread with the victorious Chou army to the eastern half of northern China, the conquered kingdom of Ch'i. Hui-yüan (of Ching-yin temple,<sup>1</sup> not to be confused with Hui-yüan of Lu-shan in the fifth century), the leading monk in Ch'i, stood up to defend the Dharma. He admitted that the physical sangha might have its abuses, but the sangha-jewel itself was sacred and inviolable. Were the king to move against the refuge, he would suffer for his evil karma in the Avici hell. Emperor Wu of Chou was angered, but this Confucianized barbarian answered just as adamantly that he would suffer hell for a policy aimed at the good of his children, the people. Hui-yuan and other eminent monks had to migrate to the south to escape from the holocaust.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Unless specified, in the discussions to follow, "Hui-yüan" refers to this figure in the sixth century A.D.

<sup>2</sup>Hsü Kao-seng-chuan, T. 50, p. 490bc.

A learned monk, T'an-ch'ien, came south in 577 A.D. and he, belonging to the same school as Hui-yüan, was said to be versed in the AFM. This is the first historical record mentioning the AFM, showing that the AFM was known in the north prior to 577 A.D. T'an-ch'ien was a famous meditative master and teacher who instructed many, including Hui-yüan.<sup>1</sup> Hui-yüan commented upon the AFM in his magnum opus, Ta-ch'eng-i-chang (On the Meaning of "Mahayana")--one of the surviving Chinese Buddhist treatises from this period speculating on the significance of the term "Mahayana."<sup>2</sup> T'an-yen, another student of T'an-ch'ien, wrote probably the first and partially surviving commentary on the AFM. It appears that the specialists on the AFM came out of the lineage of T'an-ch'ien. The following diagram shows a part of the "southern branch" of the T'i-lun school<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>See his detailed biography in Hsü Kao-seng-chuan, T.50, pp. 571b-574b.

<sup>2</sup>Interest in the meaning of the term "Mahayana" as a synonym for the absolute--instead of a school, a historical phenomenon like Hinayana--seems to crystallize in this period. The AFM also speculated on the three "Great" meanings of "Mahayana". See Öchō Enichi, Chūgoku Bukkyō no kenkyū, pp. 290-325. The Ta-ch'eng-i-chang is lengthy and is collected in T. 44, No. 1851.

<sup>3</sup>See p. 56 below for clarifications of the "T'i-lun" and its school.

Ratnamati (translator)

Hui-kuang (468-537 A.D.)

Fa-shang (495-580 A.D.)

Hui-yüan (523-592 A.D.)

comments on the AFM  
in his Ta-ch'eng-i-  
chang.

T'an-tsun (471-576 A.D.)  
according to Mochizuki,  
the author of the AFM.

T'an-ch'ien (542-607 A.D.)  
according to Mochizuki,  
the redactor of the AFM.

T'an-yen (516-588 A.D.)  
the first commentator  
on the AFM.

Scholars specializing  
in the AFM.

Mochizuki Shinkō, the Japanese scholar who favoured the theory of the Chinese authorship of the AFM, pursued the "AFM lineage" looking for the possible author of the AFM. Since Hui-yüan and T'an-ch'ien seem to have inherited the AFM from a higher source, the most economic choice of an author would be T'an-tsun who died on the eve of the persecution. Mochizuki's hypothesis still seems to be the most "logical" one to me.<sup>1</sup>

T'an-ch'ien was listed in the Kao-seng-chuan as a meditative master. He was conscious of the coming of the age of the degenerate Dharma, and wrote an essay 亡是非論 "Terminating opposing views", utilizing the Taoist

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<sup>1</sup> See Mochizuki Shinkō, Daijō kishin ron no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1921), pp. 47-64. Mochizuki was guided in his thesis by his arch-opponent in the debate, Tokiwa Daijō; see Tokiwa's Shina Bukkyō no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1941), II, pp. 44-49 and pp. 105-111. Because of Tokiwa's criticism, Mochizuki modified his hypothesis and added that T'an-ch'ien was the "redactor" of an earlier AFM text; see discussions later on this issue.

style of argument of Chuang-tzu.<sup>1</sup> He was also a noted lecturer who instructed many. His association with the AFM is perhaps indicative of the "original" intention of the AFM philosophy. At present, the following interpretation is suggested:

The AFM is basically a short terse meditative text, the result of keen, even passionless, intellectual integration of various motifs in Mahayana. Despite its fluent style, it is a work directed towards a fairly well-educated audience. It is not a work intended for a peasant woman. There is a notable absence of magic and little emphasis on devotional faith. As such, the AFM is conceivably one of the current Chinese drives towards an integration of Mahayana ideals, a formation of a balanced program of theory and practice--perhaps even a spiritual defiance of the general despair.<sup>2</sup>

In the next chapter, the place of the AFM in Chinese Buddhist history will be discussed.

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<sup>1</sup>See Yūki Reimon, "Zui seikyō zenjō dōjō Shaku Dōsen no kenkyū," Tōyō shisō ronshū (Tokyo: 1966), pp. 708-721.

<sup>2</sup>The discussion above assumes that the AFM was to a significant extent written in China. However, even if the text was not authored in China, its career in China may be explained in terms of the relevance of its message for that particular time.

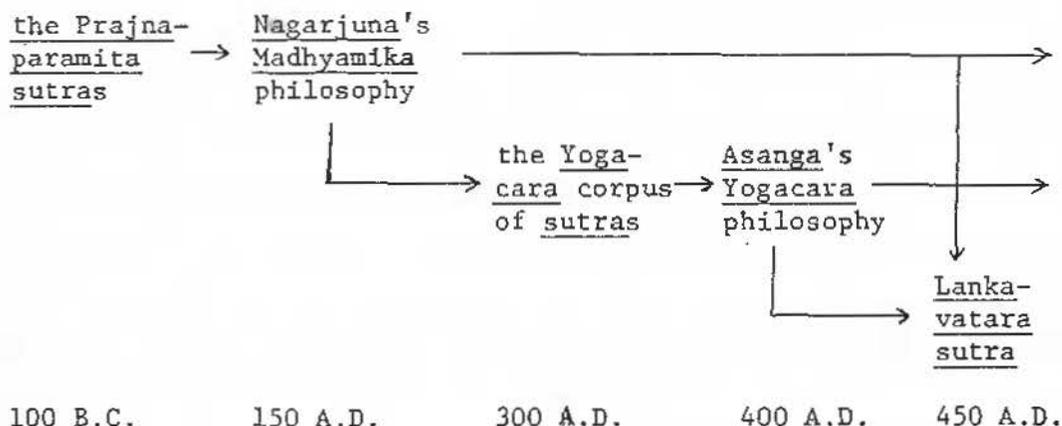
## CHAPTER ONE

### The Awakening of Faith in Mahayana: A Basic Summary

The AFM made its appearance in China around 550-575 A.D., a most appropriate hour. Although the AFM was to create certain tensions among Chinese Buddhists, it also held the key to the eventual Sinitic Mahayana integration. The present chapter commences with a general discussion on the place of the AFM in the history of Buddhist thought.

Whether the AFM was authored in India or in China is debatable but few would disagree that ideologically it belonged to a late (fifth century A.D.) Mahayana tradition. The AFM is the ideological heir to the Lankavatara sutra, seeking likewise to synthesize the Madhyamika and the Yogacara philosophies.

#### Diagram showing the two philosophical branches in Indian Mahayana



The Madhyamika philosophy drew its inspiration from a set of early Mahayana sutras, the earliest stratum of which might go back as early as the second century B.C. The sutras are the Prajna-paramita sutras, "sutras of transcendental wisdom." They detailed the six paramitas ("going-beyond"), the prerequisites for the Bodhisattva career and showed prajna, ultimate wisdom, to be sunyata, "emptiness." The notion of "emptiness" was expressed in such statements as: "All forms are empty, and all emptiness is form," or "nirvana is samsara, and samsara is nirvana."<sup>1</sup>

It is generally held by modern academics that these sutras were critiques of the conservative Nikaya-Buddhists' ideal of arhantship and the scholastic presumptions of the abhidharma system. Over against the arhant's concern for his lone pilgrimage to the other shore, nirvana, the sutras emphasized the Bodhisattvic insight that nirvana was none other than samsara. The Bodhisattva indwells the world in order to ferry sentient beings to enlightenment. Over against the detailed analysis of reality into atom-like particles called dharms, the sutras returned to Gautama's idea of the insubstantiality or emptiness of all phenomena in their interdependent co-arising or existence.

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<sup>1</sup>See Edward Conze, Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies (Columbia, [University of] North Carolina: 1968).

Expertly the sutras utilized the paradoxes of negation. Even the most sacred of Mahayana motifs was negated. The statement "A Bodhisattva ferries sentient beings across to the other shore" itself was negated: there was no such independently existing being called a "Bodhisattva," no consciously directed act like "ferrying across," no "sentient beings" as distinct from oneself and no spatial otherworld called nirvana aside from samsara. These negative statements expressed the fact that the truly egoless Bodhisattva, in his spiritual equanimity and compassion for one and all, never grasps onto nor discriminates between self and other, between this world and the other. To realize the phenomenon of emptiness or emptiness of all phenomena is the highest wisdom, prajna.

Around 150 A.D., the "emptiness" (sunyata) philosophy of the Prajna-paramita sutras was systematically defended by the thinker Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna's philosophy came to be known as the philosophy of Madhyamika (Middle Path) or of Sunyavada (Emptiness). Nagarjuna was able to show that all conceptualization of reality involves internal contradictions or antinomies. All discursive reasoning can be shown to move only at the level of mundane truth. Ultimate truth is ineffable and thus, can only be pointed to by means of mundane or relative truth. This Madhyamika

or Sunyavada philosophy undermines all certainties in conceptual thinking and lands the reader in a kind of radical openness to reality that is "devoid of any self-nature." It instills that Bodhisattvic frame of mind which does not cling onto anything--nirvana included--and is receptive to the all.<sup>1</sup>

The Prajna-paramita sutras were introduced to the Chinese in the third century A.D. and entranced the Neo-Taoist gentlemen. Nagarjuna's philosophy was introduced in the early part of the fourth century by the translator Kumarajiva. Henceforth, the Sunyavada tradition found a lasting foothold among the Chinese Buddhist thinkers.

Concurrently, in India, a second philosophical Mahayana tradition took shape. Around 300 A.D., a set of sutras representing the eventual Yogacara philosophical position emerged. One representative sutra is the Samdhi-nirmocana sutra, in which the doctrine of the alayavijnana (storehouse consciousness) was presented. Eventually around 400 A.D., the brothers Asanga and Vasubandhu systematized the Yogacara or Vijnanavada philosophy. Vasubandhu called its tenet Vijnaptimatra, "Conscious-Only" or "Mere Ideation." All phenomena are considered

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<sup>1</sup>See T. Stcherbatsky, The Conception of the Buddhist Nirvana (Leningrad: 1927).

"empty" and "unreal" because they are ultimately "of the mind only." Western scholars have sometimes referred to this school as the Buddhist Idealist school.

Philosophical idealism can be traced to the earliest phases of the Buddhist tradition. The first verse of the Dhammapada places strong emphasis on the mind as the root of good and evil. Vijnana "consciousness" was one of the five heaps, skandhas, that made up all existence and figured as the third member in the twelve-fold chain of causation, nidana. The abhidharmists were interested in the workings of the mind, and among the sectarian Buddhists, the idealistic trend can be traced to the Vibhajyada and the Sautranika. One possible root for the concept of a "storehouse-consciousness" is, as suggested by some scholars, the early notion of a subsisting "root-consciousness," mula-vijnana. This "root-consciousness" is "deeper" than the traditional six consciousnesses i.e. the five senses and the mental center. In the mature Yogacara philosophy, to the six consciousnesses were added eventually the seventh ego-consciousness and the eighth storehouse consciousness (alayavijnana). The eighth consciousness acts as a repository for all the "seeds" deposited in it from past "karmic" sources, "good seeds," leading to

nirvana as well as undesirable seeds leading to perpetual involvement in samsara. By propounding a doctrine of a kind of "core-self," the Yogacara philosophy may be regarded in part as an accomodation to the Hindu doctrine of the atman (eternal self) and in part as providing a more analytical appreciation of Madhyamika insights.<sup>1</sup>

The Madhyamika and the Yogacara represent the two main Buddhist philosophical traditions in India. There are subschools within each and lively interactions between the two. There are sutras that emerged after the brothers Asanga and Vasubandhu and these sutras apparently attempted to bring the two traditions together. One of these so-called late Mahayana sutras is the Lankavatara sutra. The AFM is another late Mahayana work.

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<sup>1</sup>One should remember that the philosophical traditions of Madhyamika and Yogacara were, in all probability, most representative of the secondary reflections of scholarly monks in India. This is not to say that elite ideas did not influence the people's faith or vice versa. The Mahayana tradition itself could not have existed without the early stupa worship and the largely lay devotion to the Buddha, yet the Mahayana tradition could not have attained doctrinal self-consciousness either without the reflections of keen minds that produced the "anti-philosophy" of the Prajna-paramita sutras.

Whereas Kumarajiva, regarded as having transmitted the Madhyamika philosophy of Nagarjuna to the Chinese, became the main reference point for Chinese philosophers of "emptiness" (technically of the San-lun or "Three treatise" school), the transmission of the Yogacara tradition was more variegated and full of conflicting interpretations. The Samdhinirmocana sutra translated by Bodhiruci was available to the Chinese in the sixth century A.D. Bodhiruci also introduced the philosophy of Asanga and Vasubandhu. The Lankavatara sutra<sup>1</sup> was known to the Chinese in the north, and a sect or school devoted to this sutra existed about the same time. This so-called Lankavatara (sutra) sect may have merged later into the mature Zen tradition. The contribution of the Lankavatara sutra to a new idealistic philosophy of the mind will be discussed later independent of the treatment below concerning the three major Yogacara traditions in China.

There were three lines of transmission of the Yogacara tradition into China:

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<sup>1</sup>An early translation of the Lankavatara sutra was made in the southern Sung dynasty in the fifth century A.D. Bodhiruci translated the version with ten chapters.

1. The T'i-lun school in Loyang initiated by Bodhiruci and Ratnamati who translated in 508-512 A.D. Vasubandhu's commentary on the Dasabhumika sutra (Shih-t'i-ching-lun, from which the abbreviated name T'i-lun came). The Dasabhumika sutra (Treatise on the "Ten Bodhisattvic Stages") is a section of the Avatamsaka (Hua-yen) scriptural corpus.
2. The She-lun school founded by Paramartha who translated in 563 A.D. in south China the Mahayana-samparigraha (She-ta-ch'eng-lun, Compendium of Mahayana Doctrines, from which the abbreviated name She-lun came).

The She-ta-ch'eng-lun, being an original work by Asanga and annotated by his brother Vasubandhu, is by far a more systematic introduction to the Yogacara philosophy than the Shih-t'i-ching-lun, a Yogacara commentary on a sutra. However, the T'i-lun school was founded and prospered earlier and produced more renowned masters like Hui-yüan and T'an-ch'ien. The She-lun school was prevented from flourishing by the jealousy of the members of the Nirvana

school that monopolized the southern capital<sup>1</sup> and did not really flower until the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. T'an-ch'ien of the T'i-lun school came south in 577 A.D., discovered the She-tâ-ch'eng-lun and overjoyed, brought it back to the north in 581 A.D. His lectures on the Yogacara philosophy upon his return to the south in 587 A.D. stimulated the She-lun tradition. However, by most standards, the third transmission of the Yogacara tradition was the truly mature, full-scaled introduction

*of the Yogacara philosophy*

3. The Fa-hsiang ("Dharma-characteristics") school<sup>2</sup>

introduced to T'ang China by the famous pilgrim Hsüan-tsang ("Tripitaka") who returned from

India in 645 A.D. Hsüan-tsang brought back the

vijnaptimatrasiddhi (Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun) of

monks at court petitioned Emperor Wu of the T'ang to ignore the cumbersome analytical philosophy of Paramartha in the south; see T'ang, p. 855; T. 50 pp. 429c-431a.

a mistake to refer to this school in the Chinese as Dharma-laksana, since the term "fa-hsiang" is a Chinese creation by this school to designate the choice of the term "fa-hsiang" by the school very likely due to an intentional rejection of the equivalent emphasis on Dharma-essence (Dharmata) among Chinese Buddhists.

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<sup>1</sup>The monks at court petitioned Emperor Wu of the Ch'en dynasty to ignore the cumbersome analytical philosophy, promagated by Paramartha in the south; see T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 855; T. 50 pp. 429c-431a.

<sup>2</sup>It is a mistake to refer to this school in the Sanskrit title of Dharma-laksana, since the term "fa-hsiang" was a Chinese creation by this school to designate itself. The choice of the term "fa-hsiang" by the school itself was very likely due to an intentional rejection of the then-prevalent emphasis on Dharma-essence (Dharmata, fa-hsing) among Chinese Buddhists.

the master Dharmapala,<sup>1</sup> (530-561 A.D.), a treatise that "establishes the doctrine of Consciousness only."

This third school has been referred to also as the Wei-shih (Consciousness only)<sup>2</sup> school, and its philosophical discipline has been called hsing-hsiang hsüeh (study of essence and form).<sup>3</sup> Since these various designations carried ideological implications and may confuse the discussion, I will generally refer to the third school as the "new school," a more neutral term used in the seventh century A.D. by the Chinese Buddhists to distinguish Fa-hsiang

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<sup>1</sup>Dharmapala was an Indian master in the Yogacara tradition who probably developed the original Yogacara philosophy of Asanga and Vasubandhu in new directions. One of the key innovations, apparently, by Dharmapala was to regard Dharmata as something totally distinct from the phenomenal appearances of the Dharma-characteristics.

<sup>2</sup>I will generally avoid referring to this "new school" as the Wei-shih (Consciousness only) school because Wei-shih is also the generic term that can cover the Yogacara tradition as a whole. However, "Consciousness only" will be contrasted later with "Mind only" in a specific context.

<sup>3</sup>The "new school" was known to have an analysis of reality into a hundred dharmas. This interest in dharmas was a continuation of the early abhidharmic tradition, except that in the new school the dharmas were all related to the consciousness or mind. Because of the emphasis on analyzing these various 'forms' (hsiang) and their relation with 'essence' (hsing), the "new school" was said to teach hsing-hsiang-hsüeh.

from the earlier traditions of transmissions. Hsüan-tsang's able disciple, Ku'ei-chi (632-682 A.D.), is considered to be the true first patriarch and defender of this school. I will still refer to the "new school" as the "new school" of Hsüan-tsang.<sup>1</sup>

The "new school" introduced by Hsüan-tsang had at first a large following but after a few generations, it died off and was not revived until the 19th century A.D. when its philosophical subtleties were reintroduced into China from Japan. The premature death of the "new school" was due to a dramatic reversal in history, in which the AFM played a decisive role. T'ang Yung-t'ung in his Fo-chiao-shih closes his study of Chinese Buddhism in the age of disunity with an observation that actually points to this future event:

Generally speaking, the T'i-lun school was the predecessor to the Hua-yen school. Hua-yen was the ideological heir of T'i-lun [both being based ultimately on the Hua-yen scriptural corpus]. T'i-lun is called the "old school." Now it was said that when Fa-tsang (643-712 A.D.) [the Hua-yen patriarch] arrived at Ch'ang-an, [the capital,]

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<sup>1</sup> Hsüan-tsang was considered to be the "translator-transmitter" and for that reason was not counted as a patriarch of the school. See following discussions on the unclear or confused role of Hsüan-tsang in the conflict between the "old school" and the "new."

he joined the translation project [established by] <sup>1</sup> Hsüan-tsang [of the "new school"]. However, because of differences in interpretation, Fa-tsang left the project. If this account is true, then Fa-tsang's departure from the translation project signalled the conflict between the "old school" [T'i-lun] and the "new school" [of Hsüan-tsang].<sup>2</sup>

What precipitated the difference of opinion was the issue whether Suchness, tathata, the absolute, could generate relative phenomena.<sup>3</sup> Indian Buddhists and logicians would generally give a negative answer to this question but the Chinese eventually replied in the affirmative.<sup>4</sup> This conflict was depicted, according to Maeda Eun, in the K'ai-yüan-chih-chiao-lu.<sup>5</sup> In the K'ai-yüan-chih-chiao-lu, the setting was given in India and Hsüan-tsang was said to be defending Fa-tsang's position.

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<sup>1</sup>The tradition which said that Fa-tsang worked under Hsüan-tsang is not trustworthy, since Fa-tsang was only 21 when Hsüan-tsang died. I make a slight correction in the passage here.

<sup>2</sup>T'ang, op.cit., p. 878. Explanations have been added.

<sup>3</sup>For details see Chapter Three below. Suchness is "reality as it truly is."

<sup>4</sup>There is no Indian philosophical school which would accept this logically impossible stand that the absolute produces its opposite. See Karl Potter, Presuppositions in Indian Philosophies (New York: 1963), p. 154.

<sup>5</sup>Maeda Eun zenshū (Tokyo: 1931), IV, p. 142.

When the learned [Hsüan-tsang] "Tripitaka" was invited to lecture in the western land [India], every time he came to such doctrine as "chen-ju (Suchness, tathata)' sui-yüan (真如隨緣 following pratytya, condition, auxiliary cause) and being perfumed" (vasana) [that is, that the absolute Suchness, in participating in the conditioned co-arising of phenomenal reality, lets itself be transformed into producing the world of relativity], his [Indian] audience was astonished and critical.<sup>1</sup>

This phrase chen-ju sui-yüan was a key concept in Fa-tsang's commentary on the AFM. The event depicted in the above passage had no historical basis but was ideologically very probable. The Hsü Kao-seng-chuan gives the following account. Hsüan-tsang, who undertook the pilgrimage partly to resolve the discrepancies in the then-current Yogacara traditions in China, was said to be surprised by the fact that the AFM was not known to the Indians. Thereupon, he translated the Paramartha Chinese version of the AFM into Sanskrit, and the Dharma flowed westward.<sup>2</sup> From this account, we can see that a sector of the Chinese Buddhists in T'ang was aware of the extraordinary nature of the AFM and its alien character in the Indian Buddhist context.

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<sup>1</sup>The passage cited by Maeda in the old kanbun (Chinese writing) style suggests that he did have a Chinese source, but the Kai-yüan-chih-chiao-lu only mentions Hsüan-tsang's translation of the AFM into Sanskrit; T. 55, p.561c .

<sup>2</sup>Hsü Kao-seng-chuan, T. 50, 458b.

In fact, in the middle of the seventh century A.D., soon after the return of Hsüan-tsang from India and about eighty years after the death of Paramartha (d. 659 A.D.), the rumour was already circulating that the AFM was not an authentic Indian treatise by Asvaghosa but a fabrication by someone in the T'i-lun school in the north during the sixth century A.D.<sup>1</sup> The T'i-lun school being the "old school" defended by Fa-tsang, seems indeed to be a likely candidate to produce the AFM. Mochizuki Shinkō, the most ardent spokesman for the thesis of Chinese authorship of the AFM, actually drew upon this rumour in the seventh century A.D. when he formulated his hypothesis concerning AFM's authorship.<sup>2</sup>

In 1921, a rediscovery in the Korean collection of sutras of a long-lost second translation of the AFM done supposedly by Siksananda around 700 A.D. added fuel to the controversy on the authorship of the AFM. The existence of two separate Chinese translations of a same text logically point to the existence of an Indian original of the AFM.

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<sup>1</sup>See Tokiwa Daijō, Shina Bukkyō no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1943), II, pp. 33-36.

<sup>2</sup>At this point, it might be well to note that critical doubt concerning the authenticity of a text is no monopoly of the modern scholar.

Defenders of the thesis that the AFM has an authentic Sanskrit basis underline the above point. Their opponents who favour the theory of Chinese authorship of the AFM argue that perhaps the Siksananda version was based on the Sanskrit text produced by Hsüan-tsang when Hsüan-tsang translated the AFM from the Chinese into Sanskrit.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, it can be argued that the Siksananda version tried to moderate the radical teachings of the Paramartha version.<sup>2</sup> In Chapter Three below, we will touch upon this issue in passing and from one specific angle. At present, we will focus on the influential Paramartha version and study its contents.

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<sup>1</sup>Hsü Kao-seng-chuan, T. 50, 455b shows that it is not a physical impossibility for Hsüan-tsang to render Chinese into Sanskrit. He is said to have translated the Tao-te-ching into Sanskrit, at the urging of the king.

<sup>2</sup>See Paul Demieville, Sur l'authenticite du Ta Tch'ing K'i Sin Louen, pp. 54-61. This famous French scholar favours the theory of Indian authorship.

### Contents of the AFM Treatise

The AFM is an extremely terse text "designed to embrace, in a general way, the limitless meaning of the vast and profound teachings of the Tathagata."<sup>1</sup> It stands in sharp contrast with a decidedly Sanskrit work of the same calibre: Asanga's Mahayana-samparigraha,<sup>2</sup> which was also a summation of Mahayana essentials from a Yogacara perspective. The AFM is atypically reticent about mentioning sutras by name, uninterested in historical precedents and is direct and dogmatic more than discursive and logical in its arguments.<sup>3</sup> It is divided into clear sections: a

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<sup>1</sup>The Awakening of Faith, trans. Yoshito Hakeda (hereafter, Hakeda, trans. AFM), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>The Samparigraha is literally a "compendium" of Mahayana teachings, Yogacara in inspiration and ending with Amidaism--just like the AFM. However, unlike the AFM, it contains gathas followed by annotated explanations, is interested in the roots of the concept of the alaya-vijnana, and is very logical in its arguments. See T. 31, No. 1595 and Ui Hakuju, Shōdaijōron kenkyū 攝大乘論研究 (Tokyo: 1935).

<sup>3</sup>The AFM does have short sections of questions and answers as well as asides on the meaning of words used. There is no detailed debate with hypothetical Hinayana opponents.

"preface/giving the reasons for writing,"<sup>1</sup> a basic outline, the main body that interprets themes outlined and, after discussing the various faiths and practices, a closing encouragement.<sup>2</sup>

The more famous structure in the AFM, however, is based on the numerical resumé of the thesis: "One Mind, Two Aspects, Three 'Greats', Four Faiths and Five Practices." Although the use of numerical sequence was not alien to India, especially in the matrika tradition of the abhidharma-ists,<sup>3</sup> there are reasons to believe that this "One to Five" scheme was from a Chinese categorizing mind. The following is a summary of this "One to Five" scheme.

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<sup>1</sup>This might be a minor point, but the Paramartha-translated AFM used yin-yüan 因緣 to mean "reason for writing." Yin-yüan is literally hetu-pratyaya in Sanskrit. Hetu-pratyaya is never used in that sense in India. The Chinese understood yin-yüan to mean "theory of origination" or "reason for being" and applied it to "prefaces" and "temple histories." The Siksananda translation avoided the term yin-yüan, skipped one passage and used the more proper tso-yin 作因 "reason for composition" instead. See Daijō kishinron, ed. Akashi Etatsu (Kyoto: 1956), pp.2-3.

<sup>2</sup>This structure might again be indebted to Chinese analysis of the structure of sutras since Tao-an's time; see Bukkyō daijiten, ed. Mochizuki Shinkō (hereafter, Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten), (Tokyo: 1909-1916), p.1646b.

<sup>3</sup>Hui-yüan in his Ta-ch'eng-i-chang also followed a numerical sequence. It might be that the T'i-lun school had this practice.

1. The Issue of the One Mind

The AFM is known for its monism, that is, its persistent drive to establish the essential unity of all realities. From the start, it establishes the "fact" that:

The principle (of Mahayana) is "the Mind of sentient beings." This Mind includes in itself all the states of being of the phenomenal and the transcendental world.<sup>1</sup>

Further on in the text, the AFM quotes from the Chinese translation of the Hua-yen (Avatamsaka) sutra the line "The three worlds are unreal, the creation of the One Mind."<sup>2</sup> This One Mind of sentient beings which is in tune with the absolute is considered to be all-encompassing and even all-creating. This idea that the mind is the basis of phenomenal and transcendental realities is not new, because the Indian Yogacara tradition also accepts the alayavijnana as the basis of all realities. However, the AFM clearly distinguishes the alayavijnana from the One Mind. The alayavijnana is the abode of unenlightenment as well as enlightenment and is usually individualized in the phenomenal world. The One Mind, or the Tathagatagarbha Mind, is clearly a transcendental reality where unenlightenment is not conceivable.

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<sup>1</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

## 2. The Issue of the Two Aspects

The One absolute Mind, however, has two aspects: the Suchness aspect and the samsara aspect. How the absolute Mind, one with Suchness, can paradoxically also have an aspect of samsara is not explained, but it is said:

Each of these two [aspects] encompasses all realities. Each encompasses the whole in such a way that the two aspects are not separable from one another.<sup>1</sup>

The logic seems to be based on the advaya (not-two) nondualistic philosophy of Madhyamika and the Prajna-paramita corpus: "Samsara is nirvana and nirvana is samsara."<sup>2</sup> That logic, however, has never been applied to the Indian Yogacara's conception of the dual aspects of the alayavijnana. It is considered to be an innovation of the AFM to consider the unity of these two aspects within the absolute Mind.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>My translation, see Hakeda, trans. AFM, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>This is precisely the reason Hakeda gives in his notes on p. 32 of op.cit. However, this logic that klesa (defilement) is bodhi (enlightenment) is perhaps too freely used by the AFM.

<sup>3</sup>The Lankavatara sutra does not so consider the two sides within the alayavijnana. The "pure" and the "impure" aspects, one leading to nirvana and the other to samsara, are discrete and separate elements. Even the Ratnogotra vibhaga does not identify "nirmala tathata" and "samala tathata" (Suchness without and with impurities). This pair comes closest to the AFM idea of two aspects, see discussions in Chapter Two below.

### 3. The Issue of the Three "Greats"

The term "Great" refers to the prefix Maha in the term "Mahayana" (Great vehicle), a term used as a synonym for the absolute in the AFM. The three "Greats" are given in Chinese as t'i-hsiang-yung, essence, form, and function.<sup>1</sup> The term t'i-yung, essence and function, is a uniquely Chinese pair of concepts. The AFM usage of the terms retains very well the relational meaning of this Chinese pair of concepts. To render the triad back into Sanskrit as svabhava-laksana-kriya simply cannot reproduce the meanings intended by the Chinese terms.<sup>2</sup> The Chinese terms are used by the AFM to explicate the Three Bodies (Trikaya) theory, and the pair of terms t'i-yung is implied in explaining the relationship of the absolute to the relative. The Three Bodies theory and the Chinese understanding of it are explained below to show the unique AFM solution to a then-current problem in China.

The Trikaya theory addresses itself to the problem of the relationship between the formless absolute and the manifestation of this absolute in historical or trans-historical personal forms. It has been sometimes compared

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<sup>1</sup> See Shimada Kenji, "Tai-yō no rekishi ni yosete," Bukkyō shigaku (Kyoto: 1961), pp. 416-430.

<sup>2</sup> See Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 28.

with the notion of the Trinity in the Christian tradition. The unity of the Buddha and the eternal Dharma (cosmic law) was recognized at an early date. When Mahayana glorified the Buddha, the tendency to expound the essential unity of the Dharma and the Buddha grew. Nagarjuna in the second century A.D. referred to a pair: (1) Dharmakaya, the law-body representing the impersonal absolute reality and (2) the Rupakaya or the form-body which is the historical manifestation of the Buddha. Eventually a "three bodies" theory was developed by Asanga, consisting of the transcendental impersonal cosmic reality, the Dharmakaya, (which is perhaps comparable to the Logos in the West) and the Nirmanakaya or manifestation body which is the Dharma in its earthly form of an historical Buddha. In-between is the Sambhogakaya, a transhistorical body of "bliss" or "recompense." The Sambhogakaya represents the Buddhas or Bodhisattvas in a kind of "luminous personality." The Buddha who taught the audiences in Mahayana sutras is generally regarded to be in this transmundane body or form. (The Sambhogakaya is perhaps more comparable to the "transfigured or Risen Christ" in Byzantine art than to the third person of the Christian Trinity, i.e., the Holy Spirit.) The Buddha in this transhistorical body of bliss has transcended death and is in a mode of eternal "bliss,"

enjoying the "rewards" or "recompense" of his Bodhisattvic trials on earth.

The Chinese in the fifth century were acquainted with the theory of Dharmakaya and Rupakaya. Kumarajiva tried to explain it, not entirely successfully, to Hui-yüan of Lu-shan.<sup>1</sup> The general tendency then in China was to graft this bipartite theory onto the notion of the Two Truths, so that the Dharmakaya would be regarded as the "true" body in nirvana and the Rupakaya the "provisional" or upaya body in samsara. The former is "substance," t'i, the latter is "trace" or "function," yung. The southerners, because of their gnostic delight in the formless, were apparently not particularly sensitive to the important role of the manifested body. Thus, Tao-sheng wrote a treatise titled, "The Buddha has no rupakaya," which, if taken literally, would eliminate much of the personalistic elements of the Buddhist faith.<sup>2</sup> The northerners, because of a stronger Pure Land piety and devotion to Amida Buddha (who was regarded finally by Shan-tao as of

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<sup>1</sup>See exchange between the two persons in Eon Kenkyu, ed. Kimura Eiichi, I. (Tokyo: 1960) pp. 3-58.

<sup>2</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shi, pp. 643-647. Tao-sheng thought that pure land was only a provisional means.

the Sambhogakaya), were seemingly more sensitive to the intrinsic value of the personal and transmundane form.

According to Mochizuki, there is a possibility that the AFM synthesized the different interpretations of the concept of the Trikaya in northern and southern China in the sixth century A.D. The northern school, T'i-lun, analyzed the concept of the Trikaya in the following way:

<u>Dharmakaya</u> (first body)	<u>Sambhogakaya</u> (second body)	<u>Rupakaya</u> (third body)
These two aspects are considered to be the "real" aspects.		This is the "provisional" aspect.
<u>Dharmakaya</u> is <u>tathata</u> (Suchness) and <u>Sambhogakaya</u> is the liberated <u>tathagatagarbha</u> (womb of the <u>Tathagata</u> ).		The "form-body" is visible for <sub>1</sub> others to see.

The northern school therefore divided the "real" aspect into two (the first two bodies) and united the "provisional" (upaya) aspects (one aspect visible to the commoners and the other aspect to the arhants) into one (third body). The southern school, She-lun, on the other hand, united the real aspect into one and divided the response body into two:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Mochizuki, op. cit., pp. 19-27 and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's summary in op. cit. collected in Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun chen-wei pien (Wu-ch'eng: 1924), pp. 32-33. The diagram is derived from Mochizuki's discussions.

<sup>2</sup>In the north, the Sambhogakaya was more highly evaluated. This coincided with the northern appreciation of Amida. In the south, the Sambhogakaya was regarded as "provisional" and this coincided with the style of Tao-sheng and southern lovers of the "formless."

Dharmakaya

consisting of the revealed Buddha-nature and the still-hidden Tathagatagarbha; these two, representing Suchness and Suchness-wisdom, are indivisible as one Dharmakaya.

Response (yin) body

made up of the Sambhogakaya visible to Bodhisattvas, and the Nirmanakaya visible to Arhants and commoners.

Both the northern school of T'i-lun and the southern school of She-lun apparently grafted the Trikaya onto a bipartite (real/provisional) division.

The AFM apparently perfected the most balanced interpretation of the Trikaya, combining elements from both the northern and the southern schools. Chinese Buddhists henceforth had recourse to the following schematic interpretation of the Trikaya, formulated from the AFM.

The Three "Greats" of

<u>t'i</u> (essence)	<u>hsiang</u> (form)	<u>yung</u> (function)	
the all-pervasive Suchness known only to Buddhas; <u>Dharmakaya</u> .	the <u>tathagatagarbha</u> , form of <u>Dharmakaya</u> -wisdom, replete with power and wisdom; <u>prajnakaya</u> .	the <u>Sambhogakaya</u> , visible to <u>Bodhisattvas</u> .	the <u>Nirmanakaya</u> , visible to <u>Arhants</u> and commoners.

Inseparable as the First Body. The Second, Third Bodies.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The place of the tathagatagarbha in the above scheme should be kept in mind. A full discussion of the tathagatagarbha will come in Chapters Two and Three below.

<sup>2</sup>The diagrams on this page are derived from Mochizuki and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, loc. cit.

#### 4. The Issue of the Four Faiths

The issue of "Faith" should naturally be at the heart of the treatise, but the concept of the "Four Faiths" seems to be an innovation.<sup>1</sup> The "Four Faiths" refer to the Buddhist tradition of taking refuge in the three jewels--the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha--plus a fourth seldom if ever encountered in any Buddhist tradition: faith in Suchness.

The first faith is the faith in the ultimate source. Because of this faith, a man comes to meditate with joy on the principle of suchness.<sup>2</sup>

A possible source for the idea of a "basic" ground for the three jewels might be the Ratnagotravibhaga.<sup>3</sup>

As is evident in the above quote, the "basic faith" is a "meditative faith" and not the usual lay devotional faith. Generally speaking, faith (sraddha) in Buddhist practice means "preliminary trust" usually in the teachings of the Buddha. The sea of Dharma is entered through faith but it is crossed through wisdom (prajna). Spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten lists under "four faiths" (shī shinjin) only the AFM usage and a later Chinese and a Japanese formulation; see op. cit., II, p. 1791.

<sup>2</sup> Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> The three jewels are said to be rooted in the tathata; see Takasaki Jikidō, A Study of the Ratnagotravibhaga (Rome: 1966), p. 186.

understanding is a prerequisite to enlightenment. The AFM does ask sentient beings to take heart in the fact that their minds are in communion with Suchness, that is, to have faith in this mystery beyond human comprehension.<sup>1</sup> Faith, however, is not entirely a "subjective" human act because Suchness through the active agent of the tathagatagarbha<sup>2</sup> brings sentient beings to spiritual maturity. Faith is therefore equally in Mahayana as it is of, that is, by the power of, Mahayana.

One would expect a treatise on the "awakening of faith" to include the concept of the arousing of the mind of enlightenment, bodhicitta. The term "bodhicitta", however, never appears in the AFM.<sup>3</sup> The idea of "non-backsliding" is discussed by the AFM.

The third reason [for writing] is to enable those whose capacity for goodness has attained maturity to keep firm hold upon an unretrogressive faith in the teachings of Mahayana.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See David S. Ruegg, "On the Knowability and Expressibility of Absolute Reality in Buddhism," Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies (hereafter abbreviated as JIBS) XX, No. 1 (1971), pp. 489-495.

<sup>2</sup>See discussion on the gunas of the asunya aspect of the tathagatagarbha on pp. 76-78 below.

<sup>3</sup>Concerning the bodhicitta concept in the Mahavairocana sutra, see Yamata Ryūjō, Daijō Bukkyō seiritsuron jōsetsu (Kyoto: 1959), p. 310f; see also Chapter Three below.

<sup>4</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 25.

## 5. The Issue of the Five Practices

Once again, the choice of the number "five" here is aimed at satisfying the mathematical progression of "one to five." The traditional (Indian) six paramitas are truncated into five to fit the scheme.<sup>1</sup> In terms of practice, the AFM remains meditatively oriented. The highest ideal is the attainment of the vision of Oneness in "Suchness trance."<sup>2</sup> Towards the end, however, the AFM makes a concession to Amida pietism, or, rather, meditation.

"If a man meditates wholly on Amida Buddha in the world of Western Paradise and wishes to be born in that world, directing all the goodness he has cultivated (towards that goal), then he will be reborn there."<sup>3</sup>

The above brief summary of the "One-to-Five" scheme raises some questions concerning that scheme. I will now turn to the main body of the AFM, that is, the interpretation of mind, consciousness, Suchness and ignorance.

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<sup>1</sup>The six prerequisites for the Bodhisattvic lifestyle are: charity (dāna), precepts (sīla), patience (ksanti), zeal (virya), cessation-discernment (samatha-vipasana) and wisdom (prajna). The AFM retains the first five and deletes the sixth. This scheme of "five" is unique to the AFM.

<sup>2</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, pp. 96-102.

<sup>3</sup>This is supposed to be a citation, see ibid., p. 102 and Hakeda's note No. 54: the passage does not come from any Pure Land text and is likely a precis of a common sentiment in China then. Walter Liebenthal in his "New Light on the Mahayana-sraddhotpada sastra," (T'oung Pao, XLVI[1958], pp. 189-197) considers the Amida passage to be a Chinese interpolation. However, similar sentiments can be found in the Lankavatara sutra, the Ratnagotravibhaga, the Mahayana-samparigraha and other clearly Indian texts.

6. The Issue of the Positive Attributes of the Suchness Mind

The One Mind has two aspects. The Mind in the Suchness aspect is described as beyond all words and beyond all expressions. This ultimate mystery is ineffable, all pervasive, imperishable and beyond human comprehension. Only a mind which has freed itself from all thoughts (nien 念) can ever approach it. In so describing the Suchness Mind, the AFM follows a Mahayana tradition that declares its teachings to be esoteric and "intelligible only to the Buddhas." The Samdhinirmocana sutra has so described its own mystery of the alayavijnana and the Srimala sutra has in the same way described the tathagatagarbha.

The AFM has close affinity with the latter sutra and borrows a key pair of concepts from it. The Srimala sutra describes the tathagatagarbha as having two aspects: empty (sunya) with regards to mundane dharmas and not-empty (asunya) with regards to the Buddha-dharmas.<sup>1</sup> The tathagatagarbha is the material cause that leads sentient beings to spiritual enlightenment.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Alex Wayman trans. The Lion's Roar of Queen Srimala (New York: 1974) pp. 50-51 for a discussion on asunya and p. 99 for the actual passage in the sutra. I shall refer to the sutra as the Srimala sutra.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter Two below for more detailed discussions.

The AFM, however, categorizes both the empty and the non-empty aspects under the mode of the Suchness Mind when Suchness is predicated in words. As "empty", the Suchness Mind is described negatively as "neither this nor that, neither one thing nor its opposite." As "not-empty", it is positively described as "eternal, permanent, immutable, pure and self-sufficient."<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese Buddhists had long interpreted the "emptiness" philosophy of Nagarjuna in terms of the Taoist notion of the ultimate "void" (wu).<sup>2</sup> The "not-empty" (asunya) philosophy of the Srimala sutra was "correspondingly" interpreted then as the philosophy of the ultimate "real" (yu). Asunya, however, was used in the Srimala sutra as a qualifier meaning "not empty of," but the AFM uses the term as a noun implying "that which is real." The suggestion is that Suchness (chen-ju) is in one sense real and not void.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 32f.

<sup>2</sup>The use of the "sunya"—a verb meaning "devoid of" (self-nature, svabhava)—can be easily lost in the Chinese reading. See T. Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana (Leningrad: 1927) for a strong statement on Sunya-vada as a philosophy of "Relativity"—a good contrast to the Chinese tendency to see Sunyavada as a philosophy of the "Absolute Void" 絕待空.

<sup>3</sup>David Ruegg in his La Theorie de tathagatagarbha et du gotra (Paris: 1969) has shown that in India and in Tibet the tathagatagarbha concept is closely aligned with and identified with the Sunyavada position. The sunya-asunya aspects of the tathagatagarbha might conceivably, I think, suggest the Vedantin notion of saguna-nirguna Brahman.

We will see later how Fa-tsang interpreted the tathagatagarbha philosophy as superior to the Sunyavada philosophy because the former finds a noumenal "Reality" behind phenomenal "emptiness." Part of the reason for this interpretation lies with the AFM's use of the Chinese term "chen-ju" 眞如 (meaning "true-such(ness)") to render tathata, suchness. The word "chen" (meaning "true" or "real") reinforces Fa-tsang's interpretation of "not-empty" as "(noumenal) Reality."<sup>1</sup>

#### 7. The Issue of the Suchness Mind as Superior to the Alayavijnana (Storehouse-consciousness)

The AFM clearly considers the One Mind to be superior to the alayavijnana.

The Mind as phenomena (samsara) is grounded on the Tathagata-garbha. What is called the Storehouse Consciousness is that in which "neither birth nor death (nirvana)" diffuses harmoniously with "birth and death (samsara)," and yet in which both are neither identical nor different. This Consciousness

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<sup>1</sup>Paramartha generally used the term "ju-ju" (meaning "such-such") to render tathata, whereas Bodhiruci preferred the term "chen-ju." Chinese Buddhists associate "chen-ju" with "chen-shih ju-ch'ang" 眞實如常 which means "what is real and permanent." Hui-yüan (Ching-yin) already elevated the Srimala sutra's "positivism" above the "negativism" of the Prajna-paramita sutras in his p'an-chiao (tenet-classification) system. The former "reveals the Real" as the latter "destroys the (phenomenal) form"; see Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, I, p.602a and also T. 12, p.221c for possible scriptural basis. On Chinese Buddhists' association of Dharmata with shih-hsiang, see Nakamura Hajime's study in Kegon shisō, ed. Nakamura (Kyoto: 1960), pp. 97-102.

has two aspects which embrace all states of existence and create all states of existence.<sup>1</sup>

The passage poses certain problems,<sup>2</sup> but there appears to be a hierarchial relationship between the Suchness Mind and its close affiliate, the tathagatagarbha, and the alayavijnana. The alayavijnana is "inferior" in that it is not identified with Suchness itself.

Mochizuki suggested that the AFM synthesized the diverging interpretations of the alayavijnana in the sixth century A.D. in China. The diverging positions may be outlined as follows:

1. The southern branch of the T'i-lun school:  
"The alayavijnana is identical with Suchness and together they establish phenomena."
2. The northern branch of the T'i-lun school:  
"The alayavijnana is not identical with Suchness."
3. The She-lun school:  
"The alayavijnana is not pure (i.e. not identical with Suchness); there is a ninth consciousness, amalavijnana, the untainted (pure) consciousness."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 36f.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter Three below for detailed discussions.

<sup>3</sup>Mochizuki, Daijō kishin ron no kenkyū, pp. 34-47. The above outline is my summary of the three key positions. The most lucid study is by Stanley Weinstein, "The Concept of alayavijnana in pre-T'ang Chinese Buddhism," Bukkyō shisō ronshū (Tokyo: 1964), pp. 35-50. Within the southern branch of the T'i-lun school (see diagram on p. 47 above): Hui-kuang had the idea of a "pure alayavijnana" whereas Fa-shang elevated the pure Suchness above the alayavijnana and fused the alayavijnana with the adanavijnana, the ego-clinging consciousness.

According to Mochizuki, the AFM harmonizes all three positions. By elevating a Suchness Mind above the alaya-vijnana, the AFM agrees with the third position in seeking for a purer consciousness, and concurs with the second position in seeing the alayavijnana as inferior to Suchness. In arguing that the One Mind is identical with Suchness and that Suchness establishes, even, creates, all phenomena, the AFM sides with the first position.<sup>1</sup>

The argument might seem ingenious, but there are problems. Mochizuki argues that T'an-tsun authored the AFM in the north but T'an-tsun did not even know that the She-lun school in the south existed. It was T'an-ch'ien, his student, who discovered the She-lun tradition. Realizing this problem, Mochizuki argues that T'an-ch'ien redacted the text authored by T'an-tsun. Were this the case though, T'an-ch'ien would have had to harmonize the three positions in a relatively short period of time.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the synthesis did not calm the debates<sup>3</sup>--the AFM only fanned the controversy more.

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<sup>1</sup>Mochizuki, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>See Tokiwa Daijō, Shina Bukkyō no kenkyū, II, pp. 44-49, 107; see also discussions above on p. 47 and p. 57. T'an-ch'ien discovered the She-lun school after 577 A.D. and the first commentary on the AFM was written by T'an-yen (d. 589, two years after T'an-ch'ien came south the second time).

<sup>3</sup>Mochizuki assumes that the AFM was the result of the conflicting opinions, but the AFM might be the cause of the debates themselves.

Despite doubts expressed over Mochizuki's hypothesis, I am still sympathetic with his position and would suggest the following modifications of the hypothesis: It is not necessary for T'an-tsun to be acquainted with the She-lun tradition to produce the so-called synthesis in the AFM.<sup>1</sup> There was enough tension within the two branches of the T'i-lun school to generate the AFM's resolution.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the drive towards a Suchness Mind, i.e. a pure core above the (impure) alayavijnana, had existed in Chinese Buddhist circles since the founding of the Nirvana school.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In his Shina Bukkyō seishi (Tokyo: 1935), pp. 694-685 Sakaino Kōyō challenges Mochizuki's hypothesis by uncovering a variant account of the position of the northern branch of the T'i-lun school. This branch might have argued for a "double-aspected" alayavijnana (pure-and-impure or mixed consciousness, just like the She-lun school had argued) and said: "When the deluded (impure) aspect is eliminated, the true (pure) consciousness will manifest itself." However, Sakaino's criticism can be turned to Mochizuki's advantage. If the position of the northern branch of the T'i-lun school was similar to the She-lun school's outlook (except that the former never openly hypostasized the "pure aspect" into a "ninth" consciousness), then T'an-tsun needed not to know of the She-lun school to fashion a "synthesis".

<sup>2</sup>Actually, the main innovation in the AFM is to elevate the tathagatagarbha and Suchness Mind above the alaya-vijnana. Any one of the three positions studied could generate the AFM's resolution.

<sup>3</sup>Chapter Two below deals in detail with this problem. Taking into consideration Sakaino's study mentioned above, all three positions can be seen as sharing a common drive to seek out a "pure mind" behind the less-than-pure (storehouse) consciousness.

8. The Issue of A Priori and Incipient Enlightenment

The alayavijnana is the abode of enlightenment and of nonenlightenment. Because the mind of sentient beings is in essential unity with Suchness, there is pen-chüeh, a priori enlightenment, or, omnipresent bodhihood. Because the mind is existentially lost in the world of samsara, enlightenment also appears as shih-chüeh, incipient enlightenment.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to find the Sanskrit original of this pair of concepts that is skillfully used by the AFM and by later Chinese Buddhists.

Although there are Indian precedents to the debate between sudden and gradual enlightenment,<sup>2</sup> the debate never was as heated or as crystal clear as it was in the Chinese Buddhist tradition. The pair of concepts, pen-chüeh and shih-chüeh, in the AFM seems to be part of this Chinese Buddhist concern. It is interesting to note that the debate in the early fifth century A.D. between subitists and gradualists was apparently revived in the sixth century

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<sup>1</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, pp. 36-46. On p. 46, the AFM even suggests that enlightenment and nonenlightenment are the same, citing a scriptural source which Hakeda cannot trace.

<sup>2</sup>See Fuse Kōgaku, Nehanshū no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1937), II, pp. 139-170. Fuse gives a very detailed analysis of this issue in India as well as in the Nirvana school.

A.D. in the south. The T'i-lun school in the north also talked then of li-fo-hsing 理佛性 and hsing-fo-hsing 行佛性 "principle and action Buddha-nature."<sup>1</sup> Principle and action, li-hsing, could possibly suggest the pen-shih distinction.

#### 9. The Issue of Ignorance as the Necessary Evil

The AFM insists on the immutability of the Suchness Mind as the base for a priori enlightenment. However, in so arguing for the subsistence of the enlightened inner self, the AFM might have inadvertently suggested a radical theme: that ignorance (avidya) has a role to play in the creative drama of the One Mind.

All modes of human mind and consciousness are due to ignorance. Yet the form (hsiang) of ignorance does not exist apart from the essence (hsing) of enlightenment. The form [furthermore] cannot be destroyed nor not be destroyed.<sup>2</sup>

The AFM uses the now-famous metaphor of "water-and-wave" to explain the above paradox. Ignorance is compared to the wind that agitates the water or sea of the mind to produce the waves of phenomenal realities. The essence of enlight-

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<sup>1</sup>See T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 716-717. The north might be influenced by the southern interest in sudden enlightenment and/or by the Ratnagotravibhaga; see Chapter Two below. Bodhidharma, the Zen patriarch affiliated with "subitism," also might have speculated on "principle" as a path (hsing); see T. 50, p. 551b.

<sup>2</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 41, gives a slightly different translation from mine here.

enment is compared with the "wetness" of the water which subsists unchanged. The phenomena (the "waves") cannot be destroyed because in essence they are none other than the water. Yet they should "formally" be destroyed, because they are deluding phenomena created by ignorance.

This seminal metaphor carries certain implications: (1) The phenomenal world comes into existence when the Suchness Mind (water) comes into contact with ignorance (wind). This suggests that the mind creates the phenomena out of itself. Water generates the waves. (2) Since the waves are considered to be in essence water, both being "wet," it means that ignorance is existentially evil but ontologically necessary for the existence of the phenomenal world. (3) The AFM seems to suggest that the phenomenal realm does not essentially vary with "levels of spiritual perception." Reality remains the same--only human cognition changes (chüeh-i ching-t'ung 覺異 境同).<sup>1</sup> (4) Since all waves are "wet," there is a homogeneity of all phenomena. Taoist pan-animism might have influenced the AFM's use of the "water-and-wave" metaphor borrowed from the Lankavatara sutra.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Compare this Hua-yen formulation with the expression in the "new school", san-hsing san-wu-hsing 三性 三無性 .

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter Three for a detailed contrast between the original metaphor and the AFM's transformation of it.

10. The Issue of the Absence of Theories Concerning the

Various Levels of Truth

*In assuming that the waves will always be watery and homogeneous, the AFM bypasses a problem central to the Yoga-  
ra philosophy. The "three levels of truth," that is, the distinctions made between (1) illusory consciousness, (2) actualizing consciousness and (3) direct intuition of <sup>1</sup> ess, is not an issue discussed by the AFM. The AFM has no mention of the "two truths" of Nagarjuna's philosophy either. In apparently assuming that illusory phenomena*

~~are analogous to "moving water," "particular waves" and~~

"the body of water" respectively, the AFM can only propound a theory of an essential unity ("all wet") of the three.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These three "perspectives" can be illustrated in the following way: (1) the illusory consciousness is that which mistakes a rope in the dark for a snake, (2) the conceptualizing consciousness is the everyday mind that sees a rope as a rope on the assumption that there is such a thing as "rope-ness" (svabhava), and (3) the highest consciousness, parinispanna, is when insight is gained into the insubstantial nature of the rope and all phenomena, that is, sunyata, emptiness. At this highest consciousness, Suchness or reality-as-it-is, i.e. empty, interdependent, impermanent, is recognized. The all pervasiveness of the Dharmakaya is "seen."

<sup>2</sup> The Hua-yen school did produce its own version of the "three levels of truth", but, following the T'ien-t'ai school, regarded the three to be harmonious. See Yamada Ryōken, "Nyoraizō engi shū ni tsuite," Indogaku Bukkyōgaku ronshū (Kyoto: 1955), pp. 251-252.

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11. The Issue of the Mind Emanating into Consciousness

The AFM also makes no explicit mention of the structure of the eight consciousnesses. Any attempt to correlate the terms hsin (mind), i (intention), and i-shih (consciousness) used by the AFM with the Yogacara categories of alayavijnana (citta, for hsin), manas (for i) and the six consciousnesses i.e. the five senses and the mental center, manosvijnana (together for i-shih) will run up against inner contradictions.<sup>1</sup> The writer of the AFM is apparently interested in how the world of illusion (samsara) arise out of the mind itself. Taking a cue from the Lankavatara sutra, the following "evolution" of realities is depicted:<sup>2</sup>

First, the mind is agitated by ignorance (the first cause of illusion). The cognizing ego then emerges (becoming the second cause). With the ego, comes the objective world (the third cause). With the subject-object dichotomy being established, the discriminatory mind makes its appearance (the fourth cause). The desire for a lasting object by the desiring mind creates a false sense of continuity (the fifth cause). Karma and suffering are inevitable when vain

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<sup>1</sup> See Hakeda's note in Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 47. The commentaries by Hui-yüan, Wonhyo and Fa-tsang did try to correlate the AFM's theory of mind with the theory of the eight consciousness. The lack of a consensus shows the inadvisability of pursuing such an enterprise.

<sup>2</sup> See D. T. Suzuki, Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra (London: 1930), pp. 189-191.

speculations on names and concepts conjure up the illusory nominal reality, in a blind attachment to desired objects.<sup>1</sup>

The mind goes through a corresponding series of metamorphosis. There are, in the descending order, the "activating mind," the "evolving mind," the "reproducing mind," the "analytical mind," and the "continuing mind."<sup>2</sup> The lowest of these, the "continuing mind" or the "perpetuating mind," the "mind-continuum," is identified by the AFM as shih, consciousness.<sup>3</sup> Although the AFM does not explicitly identify this shih with storehouse-consciousness, yet Fa-tsang criticism against the "new school" (Wei-shih, Consciousness Only) was influenced by the AFM's depreciation of shih (consciousness). The AFM has considered the alayavijnana to be inferior to the Suchness Mind. It also regards shih (vijnana) to be something emanated from the hsin (mind). I suspect that this peculiar relationship between hsin and shih follows the traditional Chinese understanding of hsing (nature) and ching (emotion).

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<sup>1</sup>See Hakeda trans. AFM, pp. 44-45. There the nine "causes" are given in sets of three "inner" and six "outer" "causes," attachment, speculations, karma and suffering making up the last four "causes". In my summary. I have stopped listing the causes after the fifth. The fifth cause --the aspect of "continuity"--corresponds to the "continuing mind."

<sup>2</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, pp. 47-48.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 49.

## 12. The Issue of the Mind that Creates Reality

The description of the mental process given by the AFM closes with a line cited by the AFM from the Hua-yen (Avatamsaka) sutra: "The three worlds are unreal, the creation (tso 作) of the mind."<sup>1</sup> The word "create" was a Chinese interpolation in the translation process and was not intended by the Sanskrit original.<sup>2</sup> The AFM, however, takes it in a literal sense, for in another passage it states, "The essence of Suchness is provided with suprarational powers and the nature to create (tso) phenomena."<sup>3</sup> The view that the mind can conjure up reality expressed in these two passages is consistent with the "water-and-wave" metaphor's idea of the mind as the sea or water from out of which the waves (phenomena) are produced. However, as we will see, this notion of a "creative Suchness" might be unique to the AFM and Sinitic Mahayana as represented by Hua-yen.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 48 and see notes, p. 49. Chapter Two below will look into the Sanskrit original and the style of Chinese translation involved here.

<sup>2</sup>See Hakeda, ibid. Hakeda prudently avoids the word "creation".

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Hakeda, ibid, p. 59. Hakeda prudently corrects the line and makes it read "...and the nature to manifest itself." See his notes on p. 60. T'an-yen and other commentators on the AFM including Fa-tsang took the word "tso" literally.

13. The Issue of the "Sudden Thought" as the First Cause

If ignorance is the cause of all phenomenal reality, where does ignorance itself come from? The AFM gives a unique answer to that question. It says, "Suddenly (hu-jan 忽然) a thought arises and [that] is ignorance."<sup>1</sup> Many Chinese Buddhists have speculated on the significance of this notion of "suddenly."<sup>2</sup> Hakeda in his translation feels the need of qualifying the "a thought" with "[a deluded] thought."

I believe, however, that thought, nien 念, carries certain connotations in Chinese Buddhist thought. The AFM emphasizes that Suchness is only known when the mind is "free from thought" (wu nien 無念) or "detached from (all) thought" (li nien 離念).<sup>3</sup> Nien has, as I will demonstrate in Chapter Two, close association with "momentariness" and with "phenomenal consciousness" (shih), all of which--nien, momentariness, shih--are regarded as the curse that prevents the mind (hsin) from rejoining the permanent, the ineffable Suchness.

I also believe the notion of "hu-jan" was probably indebted to the Neo-Taoist philosophy of Kuo Hsiang.

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<sup>1</sup> See Hakeda trans. AFM, pp.50-51.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 33-35. Hakeda qualifies "thought" often with the adjective "deluded" or similar devices.

Kuo Hsiang had rejected Wang Pi's theory that "Being (yu) comes from Non-being (wu)."  
Kuo Hsiang said instead that things simply suddenly (ku'ai-jan) materialized by themselves 物之生也·莫不塊然而自生 . Nature (tzu-jan) just "is" (tzu jan), and things are just "self-born" (tzu-sheng).<sup>1</sup> It is very possible that the AFM associates this Neo-Taoist tradition of nature being "self-born" with the Buddhist notion of the Unborn.<sup>2</sup> Suchness, like nature, just "is" (ju).

#### 14. The Issue of Suchness Perfuming Ignorance

If a sudden thought arises and ignorance produces all sufferings, what power delivers man from the sad state? The AFM suggests that it is the power of Suchness itself. The tathagatagarbha is not-empty of marvelous effects that can induce enlightenment in man. Just as ignorance beclouds the Suchness Mind, Suchness itself produces subtle effects or pure karma to "perfume" ignorance.

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<sup>1</sup> See Feng Yu-lan trans. Chuang Tzu (Shanghai: 1933), p. 45, commentary notes from Kuo Hsiang. Kuo Hsiang played on the double entendre of the Chinese word for "Nature," tzu-jan, which literally means "self be" and which is almost a synonym to "ju"--the word used to translate tathata (Suchness, things-as-they-are).

<sup>2</sup> Technically speaking, Buddhist philosophies in India denied the validity of satkaryavada ("the effect pre-exists in the cause") and therefore any theory of "self-born." Nagarjuna had, in his Madhyamika-karika, dismissed as a fallacy the theory of "self-born" along with theories of "other-born," "together-born," and "non-born."

The term "perfuming" (vasana) has a long history in Buddhist thought. It is used to explain how defilements come about. The tathagatagarbha is said to be tainted, perfumed, defiled by impurities, but it also produces liberating elements. The AFM follows this tradition in speaking of Suchness perfuming ignorance and vice versa.<sup>1</sup> Mahayana has accepted the "fact" that Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, through skilful means, can induce enlightenment in man. However, there might be, as we will see in Chapter Three below, some questions about the AFM's view on this crucial issue.

The above is a short summary of key issues in the AFM and a preliminary survey of the problem areas to be studied in the thesis. In the next chapter, I will look into the possible precedents to some of these issues and problems. Chapter Three will look into the last issue-- "Suchness perfuming Ignorance"--and the genesis of Fa-tsang's philosophy of "Creative Suchness."

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<sup>1</sup>See Hakeda trans. AFM, pp. 58-64, 76-78; see also entries in Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, I. p. 721; II, p. 1570a; III, pp. 2491c-2493a.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Ideological Roots of The Awakening of Faith in Mahayana

In the last chapter, it was suggested that the AFM may have incorporated certain "Chinese" elements. The present chapter will seek to trace the ideological roots of these "Chinese" elements. It would appear that these elements can best be traced back to native "exegetical"<sup>1</sup> modes of thought in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. in China. Of special importance is the exegetical speculations on the notion of the Buddha-nature within the Nirvana school in southern China, a school that specialized in the Mahaparinirvana sutra (hereafter abbreviated as MPNS). The first two sections of this chapter will look into the similarity between the Nirvana school and the AFM. The first section deals with the Nirvana school in general. The second section analyzes an essay within this school by Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty.

The AFM, however, cannot be considered as a mere extension of the Chinese exegetical tradition of the Nirvana school. There are in the AFM unique departures from that

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<sup>1</sup>To distinguish between the textual explanatory "notes" written during the Six Dynasties period and the more philosophical "essays" (based on the "hidden meanings" of texts) by Chinese Buddhist patriarchs in the Sui-T'ang period, I have chosen the words "exegesis" to signify the former and "commentary" the latter.

tradition. The last two sections of this chapter will look into two issues. The third section analyzes in what way the AFM can be said to be "superior" to the Nirvana school. The fourth section raises the question whether important Indian contributions, direct or indirect, might not lie behind the "Chinese" elements.

In order to lend some clarity to my argument which weaves in and out of the Chinese and the Indian Buddhist traditions, the following structure will be followed.

#### Sections

1. The Nirvana School as a Prelude to the AFM
  - a. The basic link: Buddha-nature (MPNS) and Suchness Mind (AFM)
  - b. A brief history of the Nirvana school
  - c. The message of the MPNS
  - d. The choice of the Chinese term "fo-hsing" (Buddha-nature) to translate the Sanskrit original terms
  - e. Chinese proclivity for fo-hsing as defined by a metaphysical li (principle)
  - f. Chinese proclivity for fo-hsing as mind
  - g. Summary: mind as Buddha-nature and mind as Suchness
2. An Essay by Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty as a Paradigm for the AFM
  - a. The basic issue: structural similarity
  - b. A brief note on the background of the essay
  - c. T'i-yung (substance and function)
  - d. Wu-ming ("dark", nonenlightenment) and shen-ming (spirit, spiritual illumination)
  - e. Hsin (noumenal mind) and shih (phenomenal consciousness)
  - f. The Taoist concept of hsin (mind)
  - g. Summary: Chinese idealism in Emperor Wu and in the AFM
3. The AFM as "Superior" to the Nirvana School
  - a. The basic difference: latency and reality
  - b. Wonhyo on the partial understanding of the Nirvana school
  - c. Wonhyo on the totalistic understanding of the AFM
  - d. Summary: Buddha-nature and tathagatagarbha

4. The Problem of Indian Scriptures as Preludes to the AFM
  - a. The tathagatagarbha tradition: A basic mystery
  - b. The concept of the innately pure mind
  - c. The Avatamsaka sutra
  - d. The Srimala sutra
  - e. The Ratnagotravibhaga
  - f. The Lankavatara sutra
  - g. Summary: A bold suggestion

1. The Nirvana School as a Prelude to the AFM

a. The basic link: Buddha-nature (MPNS) and Suchness Mind (AFM)

The AFM asserts that the mind of sentient beings is in tune to the absolute, Suchness, and that this unity of mind with Suchness is the base of man's a priori enlightenment. At first glance, the AFM's assertion reminds one of the doctrine of atman-Brahman identity in the Upanisads. That a Buddhist text, the AFM, should lean so heavily toward a Hindu position might evoke doubts as to the authenticity of the AFM. Buddhists, however, might not find this similarity upsetting. The doctrine of the universality of the Buddha-nature has been accepted by all living Buddhist schools in the Far East. The AFM only affirmed in the sixth century A.D. what was already known in the fifth century A.D. to the Chinese, when the MPNS was made available to the southern Buddhists. The MPNS preached the universality of the Buddha-nature and the southern Buddhists developed a "Nirvana school" specializing in this text and this key doctrine. The AFM therefore inherited a long-cherished

tradition since Suchness Mind in the AFM is considered to be synonymous with the Buddha-nature in the MPNS.

In actual fact, however, the AFM strangely contains no reference to the term "fo-hsing" (Buddha-nature). The absence of the term "fo-hsing" in the AFM raises a set of questions involving not only the AFM but also the Nirvana school.

b. A brief history of the Nirvana school<sup>1</sup>

The Nirvana school was the dominant school in the south during the 420-589 A.D. period. The school developed out of interest in the MPNS that was translated by Dharmaksema in Liang-chou in 421 A.D. The MPNS teaches the doctrine of the universality of the Buddha-nature even for the icchantika, a person without the "seed of enlightenment," and the doctrine of the four positive attributes of the "great nirvana": permanence, selfhood, purity and bliss. The Chinese at that time had just digested the Madhyamika (viz. Sunyavada) line of thought that negates the existence of the eternal self as well as eternal elements (dharmas) that constitute phenomenal particulars. The new doctrines of the MPNS which seemingly reversed the anatmavada (no-self) philosophy were

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<sup>1</sup>The term "school" (tsung) when applied to the Nirvana specialists means only an amorphous group of Buddhist scholars whose interest was predominantly the MPNS. The Nirvana school did not have the lineage-consciousness that typifies the mature Sinitic Mahayana schools. Lineage-consciousness began in Sui and lineages were sometimes projected back into history.

not received without some initial opposition. Chinese San-lun masters (specialists on the "Three Treatises") expounding the Madhyamika philosophy apparently rejected the new doctrines and it was not until master Fa-lang (506-581 A.D.) of She-shan that the Buddha-nature doctrine was incorporated into Chinese San-lun philosophy.<sup>1</sup> However, the more dramatic controversy surrounded the icchantika issue.

In the earlier section of the MPNS, the icchantika being destitute of the "seed of enlightenment" was condemned to eternal ignorance. Tao-sheng (ca. 360-434 A.D.), the founder of the Nirvana school, however, intuited the eventual acceptance of the icchantika by the later section of the MPNS. For daring to preach universal enlightenment when the scriptural base for that was not available, Tao-sheng was for a while exiled from the community of monks at the southern capital. He was eventually vindicated by the full MPNS text. Arguing that if the Buddha-nature was already in man, then enlightenment into Buddha-hood would by nature be "sudden" instead of "gradual," Tao-sheng also precipitated the controversy on "sudden versus gradual" enlightenment, and

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<sup>1</sup>The career of Madhyamika in China is more complicated than as presented. Nagarjuna was actually overshadowed for a long while by Harivarman who authored the Ch'eng-shih-lun 成實論 the treatise that "establishes the 'Real'." San-lun doctrine of Buddha-nature. See T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 718-765; Sakaino Kōyō, Shina Bukkyō shi no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1930), pp. 296-323.

offered a precedent for later Zen Buddhists.<sup>1</sup>

Interest in the MPNS took root in the south and overshadowed all other interests. The southerners edited the MPNS translated by Dharmaksema and for the next 150 years speculated upon the doctrine of the Buddha-nature in an atmosphere fairly isolated from further intellectual stimulation from Indian Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> The Nirvana school reached its peak of influence in the Liang dynasty and sought jealously to guard its own independence but slowly, by the Ch'en dynasty, it merged into the rising new schools. In the end, having seen its basic doctrines absorbed by all the Sinitic Mahayana schools, especially by T'ien-t'ai, the Nirvana school as an entity faded from Chinese Buddhist history.<sup>3</sup>

c. The message of the MPNS

The MPNS is a Mahayana sutra of Indian origin that retells the passing away (parinirvana) of the Buddha within a Mahayana framework. The earlier portion of the MPNS is thought to have come from north-west India, around the present Kashmir, about 300 A.D. North-west India was a prosperous

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<sup>1</sup>See Kao-seng-chuan, T.50, p. 366, and T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 601-676, for the life and thought of Tao-sheng.

<sup>2</sup>Two important works were translated in the south: the Avatamsaka sutra and the Srimala sutra.

<sup>3</sup>See Fuse Kōgaku, Nehanshū no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1932), II.

Mahayana center in the first century A.D. Due to international disturbances, that prosperity was declining in the third century A.D. An eschatological mood was in the air, as the MPNS speculated on the coming of the age of the degenerate Dharma in 80 years, or 700 years after Buddha's parinirvana.<sup>1</sup>

Despair apparently evoked only a deeper trust in the omnipotence of the Buddha-jewel and a more interiorized faith in the omnipresence of the seed of enlightenment (Buddha-nature). The MPNS was regarded by the southern Buddhists as the final teaching of the Buddha.<sup>2</sup>

Given the tradition of anatman (no-self) in the Buddhist tradition, nirvana is usually described in "passive" terms as a state in which the self, along with the passions of existence, is "blown out" like the flame of a candle. "Negative" terms were preferred: nirvana was "uncreated" (akrita), "uncompounded" (asamskrita) and "unborn" (ajata). The Buddhists also held that the four attributes of "permanence, purity, selfhood and bliss" favoured by the atmavada tradition were un-Buddhist. The most remarkable characteristics of

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<sup>1</sup>See the introduction by Tokiwa Daijō to the Japanese translation of the MPNS in the Kokuyaku Issaikyō, XXXIX, (Tokyo: 1929), p. 20bf.

<sup>2</sup>The MPNS was considered to have a more perfect doctrine of the eternal Dharmakaya (in timeless terms as over against the "time-bound" eternity of the same doctrine in the Lotus sutra) and a more positive message. Chih-i reversed this judgement; see Ōchō Enichi, Hokke shisō no kenkyū (Kyoto: 1971), pp. 231-264.

the MPNS is that these four attributes were associated with nirvana.<sup>1</sup> Because of this "positive" element in the MPNS, the MPNS is considered to show tendencies towards Hinduization.

The MPNS also accepted the icchantika into the scheme of final enlightenment for all in the spirit of Mahayana universalism. This generosity was not attained without an inner struggle. The issue of the icchantika, a person destitute of the seed of enlightenment (comparable, in that sense, with the sudra caste which is without the "sacred thread") appeared actually for the first time in the MPNS. The icchantika is almost inevitably the one who breaks the vinaya i.e. monastic precepts, and disrupts the sangha, fellowship (the basic "sin" in early monastic Buddhism) and who degrades or defames Mahayana (a familiar charge ever since the Lotus sutra dismissed its deriders as "chaff"<sup>2</sup>). In the first ten chapters of the standard (Dharmaksema) translation, the icchantika is vehemently attacked.<sup>3</sup> The next ten chapters

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<sup>1</sup>Issaikyō, XXXIX, p. 2cf; see T. 12, pp. 502b, 591a and 593b for the scriptural passages.

<sup>2</sup>See Saddharma-pundarika sutra, trans. Hendrik Kern (New York: 1963), p.39. Universal religions often cannot tolerate those who challenge their claim to universalism.

<sup>3</sup>These first ten chapters belong to the pre-300 A.D. stratum in which the prediction of the coming of the age of the degenerated Dharma is made.

show a curious ambivalence. On one hand it is said, for example in chapter sixteen, that it is no sin to kill an icchantika--a clear violation of the "non-injury to life" (ahimsa) doctrine. On the other hand, as in chapters fifteen, sixteen and twenty, there are compassionate and growing concessions made to allow perhaps some icchantikas in some future transmigration the ability to attain enlightenment.<sup>1</sup> However, only in the last twenty chapters, do we find a full and unconditional acceptance of these enemies of Mahayana. Even the icchantika has the Buddha-nature, that is, the seed to attain enlightenment in time.<sup>2</sup>

This final verdict regarding universal Buddha-nature was accepted by the Chinese Buddhists as definitive. No truly "Mahayana" school would deny that verdict. The "new school" of Hsüan-tsang, for adhering to a different, discriminative tradition which sees five grades of people with varying spiritual endowments, has been henceforth dismissed as not fully (Sinitic) Mahayana.<sup>3</sup> Yet the discriminative

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<sup>1</sup>Issaikyō, XXXIX, p. 5bc.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 6a; see T. 12, p. 524b.

<sup>3</sup>See Tokiwa Daijō, Busshō no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1944), pp. 1-35; Tokiwa gives a survey of the whole tradition, from India to China, related to the doctrine of Buddha-nature. The lowest of the five grades (pancagotrani) is agotra, "destitute of the seed (gotra)," and therefore is not eligible for enlightenment.

tradition is clearly one strand in Indian Mahayana.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese dismissal of the "new school" should be seen as a unique Sinitic Mahayana judgement and as a development that came out of the preeminence of the MPNS in the Chinese Buddhist worldview.<sup>2</sup> One can argue that Mencian humanism which admits all men to be potentially "sages" has influenced the Chinese Buddhist appreciation of the doctrine of universal Buddha-nature.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Important Indian Mahayana works like the Lankavatara sutra, the Yogacara-bhumi sutra and the Mahayana-sutralankara have accepted the pancagotrani doctrine; see op. cit., pp. 36ff.

<sup>2</sup>Although the MPNS was cited by other Indian Mahayana works, there is no known "great" interest in India shown towards the MPNS comparable to the interest in China. Two commentaries on the MPNS or portions of it are supposed to be translated from Sanskrit originals. One is a commentary translated in northern Wei by Dharmabodhi and the other is a commentary on one famous gatha in the MPNS ("Originally there is no [self]; now there is [Buddha-nature]") translated by Paramartha. Both are suspected to be forgeries. See Bussho kaisetsu daijiten, ed. Ono Genmyo (Tokyo: 1934), VII, p. 424, and Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, IV, p. 3358a.

<sup>3</sup>The fallacy of this argument is that of reading Neo-Confucian humanism into the Six Dynasties. Mencius was not in the main stream of Han Confucian thought. Hierarchical thinking dominated and grades of men were accepted. The "nine grades" of offices (九品中正)--established by Ts'ao Ts'ao to tap talent from below but used by the Ssu-ma rulers to monopolize offices for the upper gentry--became the "nine grades" of man in the Kuan-ching 官品經 ("Amida-dhyana sutra" T. 12, No. 340.) Apparently, the Indian tripartite scheme (Triyana) was expanded into the "nine grades" (based on the two sets of upper-middle-lower and birth-rank). This Chinese-expanded hierarchy worked against the eventual Pure Land doctrine of "universal salvation through the vow of Amida." Shan-tao (613-681 A.D.) finally collapsed the hierarchy by declaring all men to be pitifully of "low birth and low rank."

d. The choice of the Chinese term "fo-hsing" (Buddha-nature) to translate the Sanskrit original terms

The choice of "fo-hsing"佛性 by Dharmaksema to designate "Buddha-nature" contributed, I think, to the popularity of the doctrine of the "Buddha-nature." At first glance, one would assume that the original Sanskrit would be buddhata or buddhatva.<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit suffix "-ta" and "-tva" would correspond to the Chinese term "hsing", essence, -ness.<sup>2</sup> However, the issue is more complicate. In fact, this is where we find an important key to our study of the Sinicization of the MPNS within the translation process and of how this might have influenced the AFM. The point most essential to the present discussion has been raised by Ogawa Ichijō who has traced the original Sanskrit terms for fo-hsing.<sup>3</sup> The original terms turn out to be buddha-dhatu (buddha-realm; fo-chieh佛界 would be the proper literal translation) or buddha-garbha (buddha-womb, -store, -matrix; fo-tsang佛藏 is the standard choice ). Had Dharmaksema chosen fo-chieh

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<sup>1</sup>Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, V, pp. 4454-4456 actually considers buddhata to be the Sanskrit original.

<sup>2</sup>For example, fa-hsing corresponds to Dharmata although Dharmata is also translated as chu-fa shih-hsiang 諸法實相.

<sup>3</sup>See Ogawa Ichijō, Nyoraizō, Busshō no kenkyū (Kyoto: 1969), pp. 43-68.

or fo-tsang in his translation, the interest in "Buddha-nature" might have been inhibited. This is because the term fo-hsing evoked among the Chinese readers the many nuances of the classical debate between Mencius and Hsun-tzu. Mencius argued that human nature (hsing) is good; Hsun-tzu argued that it is evil. Dharmaksema's choice of the word hsing permitted the Chinese to articulate a matrix of concepts and meanings.

The MPNS text, in describing the role of the Buddha-nature in the scheme of enlightenment, sees the Buddha-nature as the "seed (gotra) of enlightenment" or the "seed leading to Buddha-hood."<sup>1</sup> The icchantika is the person without this seed. The term "hsing" (like the word "nature" in English) does not usually denote a germinal seed.<sup>2</sup> The original meaning of gotra would perhaps be best preserved by the Chinese term "chung" (seed) or "chung-hsing" (seed-nature).<sup>3</sup> Had Dharmaksema chosen "chung-hsing," the doctrine of Buddha-nature might also have been less welcome. Tokiwa Daijō

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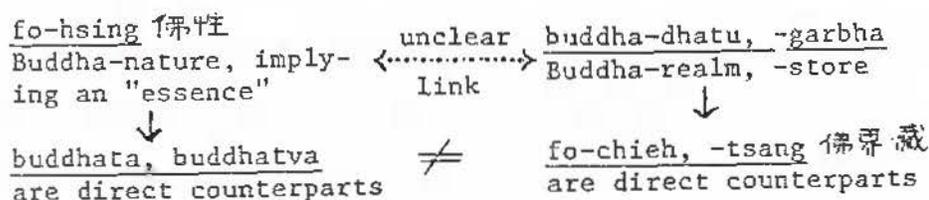
<sup>1</sup>See T. 12, p. 538cf and passim.

<sup>2</sup>Hsing suggests "essence"--an unchanging characteristic; see discussions on the etymology of "hsing" below. "Nature" in English has comparable roots. Latin "natura" is related to "natio": birth, race, nation.

<sup>3</sup>The standard translation for gotra is chung-hsing; panca-gotrani is in Chinese wu chung-hsing 五種性, see Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, I, p. 1212b, II, p. 2469a. These two entries are clearly separated by Mochizuki from the entry for fo-hsing (buddhata [sic]); see p. 102 above.

in his study of the doctrine of Buddha-nature dissociates the "hsing" from the "chung" traditions.<sup>1</sup>

The choice of the term "fo-hsing" is therefore questionable. The link between the Chinese word and the Sanskrit terms seems to be missing:



However, when one considers the etymology of the word "hsing", the choice seems justified and even ingenious. "Hsing" is rooted in the word "sheng" 生 (life, birth). In early oracle-bone writings, "sheng" covered the meaning of "hsing". In the book of Mencius, Kao-tzu recalls this old tradition when he defines "[Human] nature (hsing) is [what is given at] birth (sheng)."<sup>2</sup> Kao-tzu's earthly line--"Food and sex are human nature (hsing)"--troubles many Neo-Confucians<sup>3</sup>, but what the line means is simply that food and sex "pertains to life." The Book of Rites, Li chi, affirms the

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<sup>1</sup>Tokiwa Daijō, Busshō no kenkyū, pp. 27-35, makes the neat distinction between the "discriminative" chung-school and the "universalistic" hsing-school. The former excludes the icchantika while the latter accepts all into the Ekayana (one vehicle).

<sup>2</sup>Mencius, Chap.6.A.1-4.

<sup>3</sup>Neo-Confucians regard hsing to be the "ought", the moral norm above physical needs.

etymological relationship of "sheng" and "hsing":

Human nature by birth (sheng) is quiescent  
this is his heaven-endowed nature (hsing).  
In contact with external things, [human nature]  
becomes active; this is its desiring aspect. <sup>1</sup>

Emotions are generated out of "hsing" as man comes to know  
of the external world. <sup>2</sup>

By a coincidence, Dharmaksema translated the term  
"sentient beings" with the Chinese "sheng (beings)", that  
is "living beings" 生. The oft-quoted line "All living  
(sheng) beings have Buddha-nature" reaffirms the classical  
"sheng-hsing" association. Since "sheng" means "what is  
alive, living, growing," it comes close to the Sanskrit  
term "gotra", seed. Both "sheng" and "gotra" share import-  
and etymological relations with the words for clan, species.  
When one takes into consideration the intermediate links,  
the choice of "fo-hsing" in the translation can be explained.

buddha-garbha or -dhatu  
defined as the gotra  
(seed) to enlightenment,  
i.e. Buddha-gotra.

gotra: seed, clan  
species.

fo-hsing as what is  
given to sentient or  
living beings; Buddha  
-nature.

sheng: birth, life,  
what grows in time.

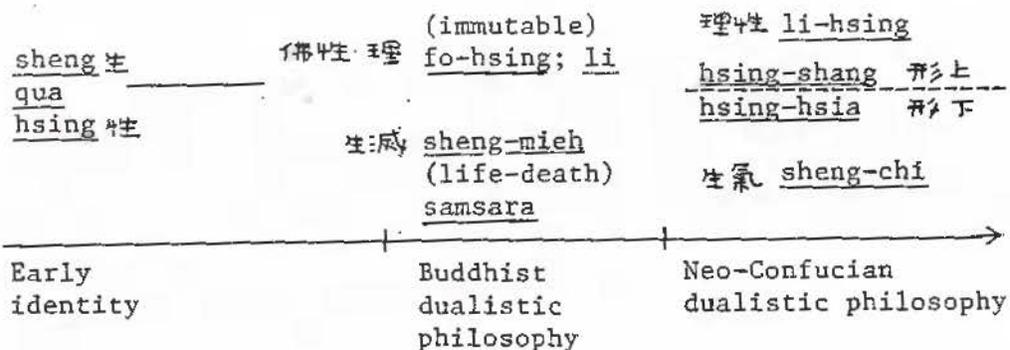
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<sup>1</sup>Li chi, Chap. 19. 1 (On Music).

<sup>2</sup>In Neo-Confucian thought, hsing is relegated to the  
metaphysical (hsing-erh-shang) and emotions, especially,  
private desires, belong to the 'physical' (hsing-erh-hsia).

"Fo-hsing" can imply a Buddha-seed, given to the living sentient being, a "nature" that will flower in time into enlightenment. The reason that modern Chinese looking at the term "fo-hsing" fail to associate "hsing" with a geminating seed-element is because Neo-Confucian thought has taught the Chinese to associate "hsing", not with a life (sheng) process, but with an eternal norm or principle li.<sup>1</sup> However, the persons who first made a significant link between "hsing" and "li" and spoke of an unchanging "principle nature" (li-hsing) were probably the Buddhists.

<sup>1</sup>The history of the concept "hsing" in Chinese thought requires a study in itself. The above brief observation draws upon Yü-t'ung, Chung-kuo che-hsüeh wen-t'i-shih (Hongkong: 1968), pp. 199-263, and T'ang Chun-i, Chung-kuo che-hsüeh yüan lun, II, Yüan "Hsing" lun (Hongkong: 1957). My argument is that the terms "sheng" and "hsing", at one time "synonymous", were slowly differentiated and grafted to a dualistic philosophy. Sheng is associated with the physical life while hsing represents then the metaphysical moral principle. The diagram below suggests the historical process of differentiation:



e. Chinese proclivity for fo-hsing as defined by a metaphysical li (principle)

The Indian Buddhists, like all Indian philosophers, were interested in causality. Good roots (kusalamula) are to be accumulated because they would be conducive to enlightenment. The MPNS follows this tradition and sees the Buddha-nature as a seed (gotra) or as a cause (hetu) leading to enlightenment. Auxiliary causes (pratyaya), time and energy are usually required to produce the final result (phala)-- Buddha-hood. The Chinese were generally impatient with such detailed analyses and had no word for "cause" and "effect" until the Buddhist tradition initiated them into such ideas.<sup>1</sup> Even before Tao-sheng, the gentry monk Chih-tun argued that enlightenment was sudden: If the ultimate principle (li) is One, it would not tolerate any piecemeal or "cause-effect" process in attaining it.<sup>2</sup> Tao-sheng followed this tradition of Chih Tun and argued for sudden enlightenment.<sup>3</sup> The gradualists, being more patient and realistic, won in the end.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Chinese used the words meaning originally "base" "rim or alongside" and "fruit" to render the Sanskrit terms hetu, pratyaya and phala. China, being more informed by a "biogenerative" outlook, had no concept for "mechanical" cause-effect relationships. See Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization in China, II (Cambridge, England: 1956), p. 554f.

<sup>2</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 651-657.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 657-669.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 669-676. Hui-kuan, a gradualist, subsumed "sudden teaching" within his tenet-classification system.

A causative and "gradualist" scheme was given by the MPNS itself: Buddha-nature is the seed leading to enlightenment and the "cause is the twelve nīdanas (chains of causation), the cause of cause is prajna (wisdom), the result is samyak-sambodhi (highest enlightenment) and the result of result is the mahāparinirvāna (great final liberation)."<sup>1</sup> Following this scheme, Pao-liang (444-509 A.D.), the foremost master in the Nirvana school, classified the Buddha-nature into four aspects:

Basic cause Buddha-nature	the pure mind
Auxiliary cause Buddha-nature	meritorious deeds
Result cause Buddha-nature	enlightenment
Result of result Buddha-nature	<u>parinirvāna</u>

Chih-tsang (458-552 A.D.) had five aspects in his scheme:

Basic cause Buddha-nature	the mind
Auxiliary cause Buddha-nature	twelve <u>nīdanas</u>
End cause Buddha-nature	<u>prajna</u>
Result Buddha-nature	<u>bodhi</u>
Result of result Buddha-nature	<u>mahāparinirvāna</u> <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 12, p. 524a.

<sup>2</sup>Few of the writings of the Nirvana school have survived except for a collected work, Ta-pan nieh-p'an-ching chi-chieh (T. 37, No. 1763), supposedly compiled by Pao-liang under the auspices of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty. On the textual problems involved, see Fuse Kōgaku, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-72. The above diagrams are based on the collected work, T. 37, pp. 547b-548a. The contribution of Pao-liang to the theory of Buddha-nature is discussed in Tokiwa, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-192, and that of Chih-tsang, *ibid.*, p. 190. Pao-liang and Chih-tsang in their approach as cited above represent the "causative or gradualist" understanding of the Buddha-nature.

There was, however, another group of monks who went beyond the scripture in their speculation on the Buddha-nature. Most noteworthy was Fa-yao (d. 473-476) who utilized the concept of li that was favoured by the subitists Tao-sheng and Chih Tun earlier. Fa-yao defined the Buddha-nature as the "principle (li) by which sentient beings become enlightened."<sup>1</sup> Fa-yao came after the "sudden versus gradual" enlightenment debate between Tao-sheng and Hui-kuan. In associating Buddha-nature with li, the One absolute, he drew upon the tradition of the subitists. In underlining the idea "become", he endorsed the position of Hui-kuan. Fa-yao synthesized both extremes and was possibly influenced by the Srimala sutra.<sup>2</sup> He articulated a theory of the Buddha-nature that is uniquely Chinese:

Sentient beings have the principle by which to become enlightened.

The Buddha-nature's principle will ultimately be used (yung, functioned) by the mind, despite the fact that [the mind] is being hidden by defilements.

People who receive the teaching hear of the doctrine of the Buddha-nature and attain faith-understanding [adhimukti]. This is because there is already this superior principle inside them which allows them to attain extraordinary insight.

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<sup>1</sup> See T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 679. Fa-yao's position on the Buddha-nature was important enough to be counted as a third main school. See also Fuse Kōgaku, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Fa-yao was one of the first to comment on the Srimala sutra, a short but important tathagatagarbha treatise (T. 12, No. 353); see section 4-d below in this chapter, pp. 177-178.

The permanent principle being manifested, one knows the meaning of the teaching previously revealed.<sup>1</sup>

A grand-disciple of Fa-yao, Seng-tsung, gave even more radical expression to the relationship between li and the Buddha-nature in man:

The Buddha-nature is li, principle.

The essence-principle (hsing-li, nature-principle) never varies; it only differs in the degree of manifestation.

To be one with the principle is the dharma that transcends the world.

The principle of the Buddha-nature lies at the heart of all transformations and is beyond life and death (sheng-mieh, samsara) itself.

The essence-principle is permanent, and it is only hidden because sentient beings are deluded.

Not part of matter: the principle is beyond all form or color.<sup>2</sup>

In most of the passages cited above, the word "Tao" can easily be substituted for "li". Like the Tao, li is the absolute principle behind, in or above phenomenal changes. The Buddha-nature defined in terms of li is therefore an essential, transcendent entity, and, unlike the Sanskrit gotra or hetu, a priori perfect and complete.

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<sup>1</sup>Gleaned from the writings of Fa-yao in the "collected work" cited on p. 108 above by T'ang in his Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 687-688.

<sup>2</sup>Similarly gleaned and cited by T'ang, ibid., p. 688.

Chi-tsang (549-623 A.D.) of the San-lan school was alert to this innovative use of the term li by Seng-tsung.

This interpretation [by Seng-tsung that identifies Buddha-nature with the principle] is most ingenious but it is not based on proper lineage transmission. It is important that all doctrines have traceable roots. I would like to know on what sutra and on whose authority is the theory that "the Buddha-principle is the basic-cause Buddha-nature" based?<sup>1</sup>

T'ang Yung-t'ung commented on Chi-tsang's observation:

This passage [from Chi-tsang] is most noteworthy. This is because the Chou I (I Ching, Book of Changes) had the idea of "exhausting the principle (li) and fulfilling one's nature (hsing)." In the Chin period, the philosophers based themselves on this tradition and used the word "li" to designate a thing's essence. Among the Buddhist scholars like Tao-sheng, the term was also appropriated. With Fa-yao, the use of the term was developed and quite a few followed in his tradition.... This development is extremely significant in the history of Chinese thought and demands investigation.<sup>2</sup>

The association of li and hsing by Fa-yao and Seng-tsung anticipated the Neo-Confucian "hsing-li" philosophy of Chu Hsi (1130-1200 A.D.).

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<sup>1</sup>Cited by T'ang from Chi-tsang's Ta-ch'eng hsüan lun in T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 689f. Chi-tsang was "hu" (Parthian) on his father's side, and his criticism reflects the new concern for "lineage-transmissions."

<sup>2</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p.690. The history of the idea "li" is a complicated one; for the mature Neo-Confucian usage of the term, see A. C. Graham, Two Chinese Philosophers (London: 1958), a study of the Ch'eng brothers. Li is an ontological concept, dealing with "pen-t'i" (essence). Tao has cosmogonic functions; see Lao-tzu, Chap. 42--the Tao gives birth to the One, the Two, the Three and myriad things.

Towards the end of the sixth century A.D., the T'i-lun school spoke often of a "li-fo-hsing", principle Buddha-nature as distinct from "hsing-fo-hsing", action Buddha-nature.<sup>1</sup> The implication is that the former is a priori, non-causative while the latter is incipient and requires nurturing. Hui-yuan (523-592 A.D.) formulated the Buddha-nature in the following manner, different from Pao-liang and Chih-tsang:

Neither cause nor effect Buddha-nature	Suchness
Cause Buddha-nature	twelve <u>nidanas</u>
Cause of Cause Buddha-nature	<u>bodhi</u> path
Result	<u>mahabodhi</u>
Result of result	<u>mahanirvana</u> <sup>2</sup>

The li-fo-hsing would be the "neither cause nor effect Buddha-nature," for the principle or Suchness is above causative impermanence. The hsing-fo-hsing would correspond to the four modes of cause and result.

By so aligning fo-hsing with li, the Chinese Buddhists elevated the Buddha-nature--originally the "seed" or "cause" leading to enlightenment in the future--above samsara, life and death (sheng-mieh), into the timeless realm of the absolute Suchness itself.

<sup>1</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 716f. This period just prior to Sui was also the time in which past theories of the Buddha-nature were recategorized under the headings of "de facto Buddha-nature" and "de jure Buddha-nature"; see ibid, p. 636f.

<sup>2</sup>Tokiwa Daijō, Busshō no kenkyū, p. 190.

f. Chinese proclivity for fo-hsing as mind

If Mencius' influence on the choice of the term for Buddha-nature, fo-hsing, existed, then Mencian association of hsing (human nature) and hsin (mind) might also elucidate important developments in Chinese Buddhist thought. Mencius' idea of the innate goodness of man is based on his appreciation of humanity (jen, virtue) as rooted in the "compassionate mind." The mind is the locus of the principle of heaven and the true nature of man; to exhaust the mind (chin hsin 盡心) is to see one's nature.<sup>1</sup> In the sixth century A.D., the confluence of the Chinese appreciation of the mind and the Indian Buddhist exploration of the citta (mind) seemed to reinforce one another to produce eventually the equally Buddhist and equally Chinese Zen sentiments later of chien hsing ch'eng-fo ("See your nature and become a Buddha" 見性成佛) and chi-hsin chi-fo ("Your mind is Buddha" 即心即佛). This hsin-hsing or mind-nature association anticipated the Neo-Confucian philosophy of Wang Yang-ming (1473-1529 A.D.).

Within the Nirvana school, the hsing-hsin identity was accepted by the following figures: Pao-liang located the Buddha-nature in the innately pure mind (visuddhi citta-prakrti) or the tathagataqarbha. Emperor Wu located it in

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<sup>1</sup> See Mencius, Chap. 7. A. 1; see also Arthur Wright, Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China (London: 1939), pp. 115-118.

the luminous spirit (shen-ming) and in the mind (hsin). Fa-yun regarded the impulse in the tathagatagarbha to desire bliss and avoid suffering to be the Buddha-nature. Fa-an emphasized the indestructable mind that transmigrates. The T'i-lun school placed the Buddha-nature in the alaya-vijnana (storehouse consciousness) qua pure mind. The She-lun school placed it in the amalavijnana (untainted consciousness, the ninth consciousness).<sup>1</sup>

The interest in the mind was also shared by the emerging Chinese Buddhist schools. Chih-i of the T'ien-t'ai school freely took a line in the Ta-chih-tu-lun to mean his theory of "The three wisdoms are of one mind."<sup>2</sup> The Hua-yen school explored the significance of the line in the Hua-yen sutra: "The three worlds are of one mind." The Zen tradition had long been associated with the philosophy of "Mind Only." The Pure Land school gave a Chinese twist to the Sanskrit phrase, "ekacitta prasanna," which means "the composed one mind" (in Chinese rendered as

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<sup>1</sup>The above six interpretations of the Buddha-nature are summarized from T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 698-699, 705-712, 699-702, 710-712, 681 and 681 respectively.

<sup>2</sup>The oft-quoted line 三智(諦)一心 is not directly from the Ta-chih-tu-lun (Commentary on the larger Prajna-paramita sutra attributed to Nagarjuna) but is inferred from it; see Leon Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 274 footnote 2 and p. 315 and Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, I, p. 144a.

i-nien hsin-hsin -念信心 which can read "faith in one Buddha-name recitation").<sup>1</sup> What is remarkable is the fact that hsin (mind) was at the heart of every school's concern and that all the schools with little hesitation identified the mind with the Buddha-nature. The Chinese proclivity for a doctrine of the mind in the understanding of the Buddha-nature was probably responsible for such developments. The notion of a "mind in harmony with Suchness" in the AFM is very likely due in part to this Mencian-Nirvana school heritage.

g. Summary: mind as Buddha-nature and mind as Suchness

In this first section, I have attempted to show how the Indian tradition of the MPNS was gradually Sinicized. The choice of words in translating Sanskrit into Chinese effected the first subtle metamorphosis. The Chinese association of fo-hsing (Buddha-nature) with an ontological li (principle) took that metamorphosis a step further. Pao-liang used the phrase "Suchness Buddha-nature" chen-ju fo-hsing.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the Chinese association of (fo)-hsing with hsin (mind) and chen-ju (Suchness) seems to lead up to the AFM's idea of a "Suchness Mind."

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<sup>1</sup>See Fujita Kōtatsu, Genshi jōdo shisō no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1970), pp. 576-618.

<sup>2</sup>See T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 680, 698-699.

However, the absence of the term fo-hsing in the AFM is rather bewildering. Assuming the AFM to be largely a Chinese-edited, redacted or authored text, I would venture to suggest the following: The omission of "fo-hsing" may be explained by these hypotheses: (1) the work emerged in the north within a circle not influenced by the southern speculation on Buddha-nature, (2) the likely circle would be that of Ratnamati and Bodhiruci who seemed to prefer the term "chung-hsing" to render the Sanskrit gotra, and (3) the AFM followed the Lankavatara sutra's style in stressing the alayavijnana, the tathagatagarbha, and much less so the theory of "universal Buddha-nature."

We have looked into the elements of similarity between the Nirvana school and the AFM in terms of general ideas shared by both. In the next section, we look more deeply into a specific, concrete case: an essay from the Nirvana school.

## 2. An Essay by Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty as a Paradigm for the AFM

### a. The basic issue: structural similarity

Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (502-549 A.D.) during the heyday of the Nirvana school wrote an essay identifying

Buddha-nature with the immortal soul (shen).<sup>1</sup> In this section I hope to show the structural similarity between this essay and the AFM. Isolated ideas or concepts can be inadvertently incorporated in the translation process from one language into another, but it is fairly difficult to interpolate a whole matrix of ideas into a translated text without destroying the organic unity of the original. One strong case for the theory of Chinese authorship of the AFM is the fact that there seems to be an inherent "Chinese" structure to the text. The three "Greats," of substance, form, and function (t'i-hsiang-yung), strongly suggest Chinese philosophical influence on the AFM. In addition, such influence does not seem to be "accidental" but rather "basic" to the AFM. In this section, I will explore three sets of Chinese concepts that are shared by the AFM and the essay by Emperor Wu. The three sets are: t'i-yung (substance and function), wu-ming (avidya, ignorance) and its opposite shen-ming (spirit, in the emperor's essay) or Suchness (in the AFM), and hsin (mind) and shih (consciousness).

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<sup>1</sup>The essay, "Li shen-ming ch'eng-fo i-chi" 立神明成佛義記 has been collected in Chapter 9 of the Hung-ming-chi; see T. 52, No. 2102, p. 54bc.

b. A brief note on the background of the essay

Emperor Wu was the King Asoka of China in the Six Dynasties period.<sup>1</sup> He was a religious Taoist before he was converted to the Buddhist Dharma and became a member of the Nirvana school. The religious Taoists, long before the Buddhist tradition was firmly established in China, believed in the immortality of the shen, spirit. Early Chinese Buddhists had also erroneously accepted the doctrine of immortality of the self, which contradicted the anatman ("no-self") doctrine. The introduction of Nagarjuna's philosophy by Kumarajiva apparently alerted the more philosophical Buddhists in China that the existence of the eternal self as well as eternal elements (dharmas) should be negated. Strictly speaking, the Buddhist Dharma teaches the absence of an immortal spirit.<sup>2</sup>

However, the doctrine of immortality was not abandoned by the Buddhist laymen, the apologist, nor even by

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<sup>1</sup>The most complete study is Mori Mikisaburō, Ryō no butei (Kyoto: 1956).

<sup>2</sup>See Walter Liebenthal, "The Immortality of the Soul in Chinese Thought," Monumenta Nipponica, VIII (1932), pp. 327-394, and Feng Yu-lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: 1952-53), II, pp. 284-292.

elite thinkers. If there is transmigration, samsara, and if karma produces effects that visit upon the "person," it would be natural for many to assume that there is a "continuing entity" or "self" that transmigrates. The Buddhist laymen believed in the transmigration of his "self"; the Buddhist mass for the dead and the Buddhist teachings of "heavens" and "pure lands" strengthened this belief. The apologist tried to mediate between sophisticated doctrines and native ways of thought. Hui-yüan of Lu-shan, for example, avoided the topic of the "immortal soul" in his communications with Kumarajiva but expertly defended the autonomy of the monk and the theory of karmic retribution with recourse to the doctrine of the "transcendental spirit."<sup>1</sup> In fact, Hui-yuan ingeniously wove two different but related meanings of the word "shen": (1) as the individual "spirit" that transmigrates and (2) as the cosmic "spirit" or Geist, i.e., a luminous, transcendental entity that is prior to yin and yang.<sup>2</sup> Of course, this ambiguity created some confusion.

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<sup>1</sup>See Kimura Eiichi ed., Eon Kenkyū, I, pp. 88-90.

<sup>2</sup>I Ching, Appendix 3 .A.5. "When yin and yang cannot be differentiated, [it] is called shen (陰陽不測謂之神)." See Chapter Three below, pp. 226-227 for further discussions.

When the MPNS became known to the southerners, the popular notion of an immortal soul was indirectly legitimized by the text. The popularity of the doctrine of the "Buddha-nature" itself was, I think, partly due to the momentum of this early interest in the immortal soul. In fact, since the individual "spirit" (shen) was considered to be one with the cosmic "spirit" or Geist (shen), or with the Tao,<sup>1</sup> it was possible to argue that the Buddha-nature (fo-hsing) is one with the li, the metaphysical principle. I think the impact Fa-yao had on the Nirvana school's understanding of hsing and li is derived again in part from this pre-Buddhist concern for the oneness of shen and Tao. However, Tao-sheng perhaps gave the ingenious definition of what the Buddha-nature is and what it is not. Confronted with the discrepancy of the anatman doctrine of old and the new Buddha-nature theory, he said:

There is not the self of life and death  
(samsara) but there is the self of Buddha-  
nature.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The practice of "nurturing the breath" in religious Taoism is aimed at refining the spirit in men until the microcosmic spirit becomes as sublime as the primordial or macrocosmic ether itself. See Ko Hung in Alchemy, Medicine, religion in the China of A.D. 300. Trans. James R. Ware, (Cambridge, Mass.: 1967), pp. 47, 49.

<sup>2</sup>Tao-sheng commenting on the Vimalakirti-nirdesa as cited by T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 635.

In other words, phenomenally considered, there is no self (anatman); noumenally considered, there is the Buddha-nature.

The doctrine of the immortal shen was still regarded as "superstitious" by rational Confucians. The Confucian rationalist Wang Ch'ung (ca. 27-100 A.D.) had launched an attack on religious Taoist and popular "superstition" in the Han. Later Confucians directed the same attack against the new heretics, the Buddhists. The history of the debates between Confucians, Buddhists and Taoists over the immortality or the mortality of the spirit requires a study in itself.<sup>1</sup> The opposing sides of the debate differed with regard to their approach to the reality of the world. For example, the Buddhists emphasized a spiritual individualism that denied the reality of the world of men and nature, while the Confucians stood by the classical ideal of homo politicus and defended the reality of the world of men and nature.<sup>2</sup> These two different approaches

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<sup>1</sup> See Tsuda Sōkichi, Shina Bukkyō no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1957), chap. on this debate, pp. 93-262.

<sup>2</sup> The contrast made here is based on generalizations.

to the reality of the world determined two different meanings of the same term shen.<sup>1</sup>

The Buddhist used the term "shen" to mean "pneuma," i.e., a transcendental spirit desiring liberation from the socio-cosmic fate. The Confucian generally used the term "shen" to mean "anima," that animating force in and of the body, a force that disintegrates at death or merges with the pan-animistic universe once more.<sup>2</sup>

The controversy over mortality or immortality was rekindled in the Liang dynasty. Fan Chen, a rationalist, attacked the Buddhists in a treatise. The Emperor and others replied.<sup>3</sup> To that debate we owe the essay by

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<sup>1</sup>A work which might enable scholars to understand the controversy over the above issue of immortality in a new light is Hans Jonas' The Gnostic Religion (Boston: 1958). The gnostics referred to the pneuma, the transcendental spirit which was different from the anima, the animating spirit, or the psyche, the rational soul. The reference to the pneuma perhaps explains the world-denying lifestyle at the gnostics. The Buddhists in China may be using the old term shen in a new religious context in a way comparable to the gnostics' use of the term "pneuma" in the West.

<sup>2</sup>Thus, in citing Buddhist or Chinese classics on how shen and atman should be understood, one must keep in mind that the same term may be used with different meanings according to the point of view or intent of the one who uses the term.

<sup>3</sup>See Hung-ming-chi, chap. 9 in T. 52, p. 54ff. Fan Chen's position is incorporated in a refutation on p. 55b.

Emperor Wu. T'ang Yung-t'ung regarded the Emperor's thesis to be a weak one that shows a confusion of the (transcendental) Buddha-nature with the (transmigrating, samsaric) spirit and elsewhere even with the common phenomenon of "ghosts."<sup>1</sup> However, the Emperor's thesis can be analyzed in another way: the essay seems to anticipate the arguments of the AFM. The essay's argument subtly blends Taoist and Buddhist understandings. The following is a summary of the essay:

Faith requires affirmation,<sup>2</sup> an awareness that the spirit (shen-ming) is permanent and transcendental. Yet the spirit cannot help being involved in impermanence, that is, the changing phenomenal world. A question is then raised about whether the mind (hsin) would not disintegrate naturally with the momentary consciousness (shih). The

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<sup>1</sup>See T'ang's opinion in T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 709-710. T'ang is correct in his analysis of the contents of the Emperor's thesis. However, I am more interested in the structure of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup>It is significant that faith is an issue here as it is in the AFM. The Chinese word for "faith," hsin, was originally related to interpersonal trust and was the last of the five Confucian virtues. In the Buddhist period, hsin became a central concept. T'ang Yung-tung considers the essay by Emperor Wu to be apologetic in nature, see T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 706-708.

Emperor answered that the mind, being the one basis (pen) remains unchanged and it is only its function (yung) which seemingly changes. The one basis, however, is a paradoxical unity of dark ignorance (wu-ming) and its opposite, the spirit (shen-ming). Forgetting the mind's original basis, man lured by objects becomes blind or ignorant. It is this forgetfulness or ignorance that causes man to be drawn into the transient reality of the many. Thus, it indeed appears that the divine mind would vanish along with the vanishing phenomena. Therefore it is necessary to remind man of the permanent basis behind phenomena, and furthermore that wu ming is shen ming and that shen ming never changes. Only by having this permanent core can karmic retribution work. What is permanent is the mind (hsin); what is going along with changes is the consciousness (shih). The two are basically one, but two in their responses to the world. The mind as substance, t'i, tends toward enlightenment; the consciousness as function, yung, explains why man is in samsara.

c. T'i-yung (substance and function)

T'i-yung is an important pair of Chinese concepts. The "terms" t'i and yung were first used in conjunction

with one another by the Neo-Taoist philosopher Wang Pi,<sup>1</sup> and their nuances were explored by the Chinese Buddhists in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. They were ably applied by the Hua-yen school in the T'ang dynasty and later inherited by the Neo-Confucians. In the AFM, the expression t'i-yung appears explicitly within the three "Greats" t'i-hsiang-yung and implicitly in the "water-and-wave" metaphor.<sup>2</sup> Water is substance (t'i); waves are its function (yung)--but the waves are nonetheless the water.

I will enumerate the characteristics of this conceptual pair: (1) T'i-yung is an ontological pair. T'i, substance, subsists as a permanent basis to changing phenomena. Both the AFM and Emperor Wu utilize t'i to demonstrate the permanence of the shen (spirit), hsin (mind) or the Suchness mind (the innately pure mind, tathagatagarbha etc.) (2) T'i-yung is not a causative pair. T'i, substance, does not cause yung, function, to come into existence.

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<sup>1</sup>Chan Wing-tsit, ed. Sourcebook of Chinese Philosophy (Princeton: 1963), p. 323.

<sup>2</sup>See Shimada Kenji, "Tai yō no rekishi ni yosete," Bukkyō shigaku ronshū (Volume presented to Prof. Tsukamoto Zenryū), (Kyoto: 1961), pp. 416-430.

T'i evolves into yung. Water becomes waves. Both the AFM and Emperor Wu substitute the t'i-yung paradigm for the Indian causation scheme of hetu-pratyaya-phala (cause, auxiliary condition, effect). In fact, what the Indian Buddhists regard as "caused", i.e., life and death, samsara is considered by the Chinese as yung or "functional." As a corrolary, (3) t'i-yung is a harmonious pair. In the AFM, Suchness (water) and phenomenal particulars (waves) fuse with one another and interpenetrate harmoniously. Although the end-result may be described by the Indian Mahayana formula of "samsara is nirvana," the meaning of the Chinese expression ti-yung is based on "fluidity" and not on a philosophy of dialectical negation or a theory of interdependence. In fact, the Chinese identity-harmony is based on a theory of substance (t'i) instead of emptiness, on a "host-client" relationship of unequal dependence instead of pratitya-samutpada (conditioned co-arising).<sup>1</sup>

(4) T'i-yung, being non-causative, is a timeless pair. The water is immediately the wave, the wave immediately the water. In the Hua-yen formulation of this relationship,

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<sup>1</sup>This "host-client" or "superior-inferior" relationship is natural to t'i-yung, since Chinese paired concepts often follow the yang-yin (male-female) pattern. In Han thought, the "male" is depicted as the "host" on which the "female" depends.

spontaneity was brought to the forefront. Although this spontaneity is less evident in the essay by Emperor Wu and only implicit in the AFM, t'i-yung is essential to the Chinese idea of sudden enlightenment. T'i is in tune with li or Tao since t'i is the absolute basis.<sup>1</sup> (5) T'i-yung is a Sinitic pseudo-"non-dualistic" pair. T'i-yung is a paradoxical pair that can imitate the negative nondualistic dialectics of advaya (not-two). Emperor Wu characterized the relationship between mind and consciousness as one in basis but two in that consciousness goes along with change but the mind remains unperturbed.<sup>2</sup> T'i-yung is not two (in substance) nor is it one (in function). (6) T'i-yung has other associations that draw on the Han yin-yang tradition. T'i is usually passive; yung is active. T'i is pen (basis, origin) whereas yung is mo (end, tip). The more mature use of t'i-yung, however, collapses the "sequential" overtones involved in the above sets which argue that originally the t'i was quiet and not

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<sup>1</sup>The word "t'i" can also be used as a verb meaning "to embody," "to be in tune to." Thus it is said that the "shen-jen t'i-tao," the man of spirit embodies, is in tune with or is one with the Tao.

<sup>2</sup>T. 52, p. 54b.

moving but in the end activity evolved. Emperor Wu actually leaned closer to the Han yin-yang tradition, and although what we call the t'i-yung logic was used by him, in actual expression, he used the synonymous though cruder pair pen-yung. In the following discussion, I will trace the Han roots of the emperor's thinking and demonstrate his contributions to the maturing of the t'i-yung pair.

Emperor Wu drew consciously upon the Book of Rites for inspiration as he tried to understand the Buddhist teachings. In another essay, he said:

The Li (Chi) says: "Man is by birth (sheng) quiescent. This is his heaven-endowed nature (hsing). In responding to things, he becomes active. That constitutes the desiring aspect of his nature." [Therefore], it is activity which brings defilements upon the mind and inactivity which purifies it. When external actions cease, then the inner mind will be lit up (ming). Then man comes to recognize the truth and evil can no longer be born.<sup>1</sup>

Implied in the scheme drawn from the Li Chi is this: the heaven-endowed nature of man is originally quiet until in contact with objects man becomes emotionally and actively involved. Selfish desire is produced and evil is born. By returning to the original passive source through understanding, man can terminate the active evils.

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<sup>1</sup>Passage cited from the emperor's Ching-yeh-fu ( 爭業賦 ) collected within the Kuang Hung-ming-chi, T. 52, p. 335.

T'ang Yung-t'ung also noted that a Confucian text which well depicted this psychological corruption of man is the Doctrine of the Mean (Chung-yung 中庸). T'ang Yung-t'ung suggested that the emperor borrowed the hsing-yung (another proto-type of t'i-yung) from the Book of Rites and applied it to the defense of the immortality of the spirit.<sup>1</sup> He noted that the Emperor himself wrote a commentary, now lost, on the Doctrine of the Mean.<sup>2</sup> However, the immediate "t'i-yung" precedent that Emperor Wu drew on was probably from the writing of Fan Chen. Fan Chen used the pair "chih-yung" 質用 (matter and function),<sup>3</sup> another proto-type of t'i-yung, in his argument for the destructability of the soul.

Spirit (shen, anima) is form (hsing), and form is spirit. If form exists, then spirit exists. If form withers, so withers spirit. Form is the matter (chih) to spirit, while

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<sup>1</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 706. Hsing-yung, essence and function, refers to the fact that the essence (hsing) of man, though passive in nature, evolves into the activity of using (use, yung) objects.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 707. According to T'ang, the emperor was one of the few early commentators on the Chung-yung, which later became a key "scripture" used by Neo-Confucians to criticize and displace Buddhism.

<sup>3</sup>Chih is almost synonymous with t'i; matter is substance.

spirit is the function (yung) of form. Form is substantive as spirit is functional. Form and spirit cannot be two. Spirit is to form like sharpness is to a knife. Form to spirit is like a knife to sharpness. The term "sharpness" is not about the [substance of the ] knife [per se] nor does the name "knife" describe [the attribute of ] sharpness itself. However, if one forsake sharpness there will be no knife. If one eliminate the aspect of "knife," there will be no sharpness. Now, who hears of sharpness remaining when the knife is destroyed? How then can one argue that the spirit continues when the body decays?<sup>1</sup>

According to Fan Chen the spirit animates the body, but the body is the "host" on which spirit depends. When physical life ceases, animation ceases. There cannot be anima (spirit) without soma (body). Like "sharpness," "spiritedness" is only an attribute to a substance, a function to an essence.<sup>2</sup> Attributes cannot exist independently of the items to which they are originally related.

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<sup>1</sup>Cited by T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 471 from the Nan Shih; see also Hsiao Tan's 籍琛 direct refutation (T. 52, p. 55ab). The words "anima," "substance" and "attribute" have been interpolated. The word "form" 形 (hsing) implies physical form, body. The phrase "hsing-erh-shang," above-form, is later used by Neo-Confucians to designate the realm of principle (li), which is immaterial in nature. In Fan Chen, that sharp dualism of immaterial spirit and material body is absent. "Spirit is form; form is spirit."

<sup>2</sup>The discussion here draws on Western parallels. Anima (shen) cannot exist without the soma, body, it animates. Emperor Wu, in contrast, used the term, shen, not in the sense of anima but of pneuma. Pneuma transcends the body. Also brought into discussion are the classical Western philosophical terms "attribute" and "substance," "essence."

Emperor Wu did not really reply to the challenge of Fa Chen's rational critique. Instead, he used his own idealistic t'i-yung philosophy to prove the subsistence of the spirit or mind. The Emperor said:

[ Shen ming, the luminous spirit ] has as its essence the denial of discontinuity [ i.e., it is eternal ]. The spirit will eventually lead to the mysterious ultimate. The ultimate substance (t'i) of this mysterious goal [ i.e. nirvana with the four positive attributes ] is that it is eternal. However, the spirit cannot help being involved in the world of impermanence.<sup>1</sup>

Implied in the above is the idea that the ultimate spirit has an eternal, unchanging substance (t'i) but that it also acts (functions, yung) in the phenomenal world. This interpretation of Buddha-nature (fo-hsing) as being both inactive and active or actively inactive (wu-wei) had long been followed by members of the Nirvana school.<sup>2</sup>

Whereas Fan Chen considered the body-form to be the essence and spiritedness to be an attribute (thus, secondary), Emperor Wu made the spirit the essence and phenomenal

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54b. Explanatory notes added in brackets.

<sup>2</sup>The theme of paradox had been utilized to explain the mystery of the teaching of the MPNS ever since the earliest writing on the MPNS. See Tao-lang's preface to the MPNS in T. 37, p. 377.

reality secondary! Pondering upon how there could be a lasting entity if reality was, as the Buddhists say, only a succession of discrete moments with no link, he answered:

Basing myself [on the MPNS] , I discovered that the mind (hsin) is the basis (pen) to its [mental] functions (yung). The basis is one, but the functions participate in the many. What is many naturally goes through life and death (samsara), but the nature of this unitary basis (i-pen) is that it cannot suffer change.<sup>1</sup>

The t'i-yung pattern was set in this pen-yung (basis and function) metaphor. The mind is the permanent substance which nevertheless acts through its mental agent (consciousness, shih<sup>2</sup>) in the world of the many. The One implies passivity. Multiplicity, growing out of interactions of opposites, implies the "rise and fall" or life and death of samsaric existence.<sup>3</sup>

The Emperor suggested two usages of the term "t'i":  
(1) The spiritual substance (t'i) cannot help being caught up in the process of thought-functions in the process of

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54c.

<sup>2</sup>See discussion below on hsin-shih (mind and consciousness), pp. 146-149.

<sup>3</sup>The One recalls the notion of the great ultimate and the many the myriad things generated out of the dynamic alternation of yin and yang; see Chapter Three below, pp. 207f.

which life and death (samsara) arise. (2) "Upon the substance (t'i) of unenlightenment (wu-ming) is life and death."<sup>1</sup> The Emperor had rephrased the Buddhist insight that avidya (ignorance) is the cause of all sufferings in samsara in terms of ignorance as substance (t'i) and life and death as its manifestation. The substitution of a t'i-yung scheme for a cause-effect scheme means attributing to ignorance or unenlightenment an ontological status.

In a subtle way, the AFM follows this Sinicized understanding, and in Fa-tsang's commentary on the AFM, ignorance as the negative element was conceived unconsciously in terms of the yin (the feminine) in a yin-yang scheme.<sup>2</sup> In a cruder form, Emperor Wu also anticipated this development as he speculated upon the paradoxical relationship between wu-ming and shen-ming: 神明 無明.

d. Wu-ming ("dark," non-enlightenment) and shen-ming (spirit, spiritual illumination)

The eternally subsisting entity, says Emperor Wu, is the shen or shen-ming, spirit, which nevertheless participates in impermanence or change. The mind is the

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54c.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter Three below, especially p. 211.

one basis (pen) to the many functions (yung). In other words, shen (spirit) or hsin (mind) is the substance.<sup>1</sup> However, the emperor also says that life and death is based on the substance of wu-ming (ignorance). How are these two substances, shen-ming and wu-ming, both said to be basic, reconciled? The Emperor suggests this paradox in a cryptic passage:

The one basis is the wu-ming shen-ming.  
Wu-ming (ignorance) is not like the big void. Earth and stones have no feelings. Is this to say that earth and stones are wu-ming (ignorant)?<sup>2</sup>

The phrase "wu-ming shen-ming" would normally read "the spirit which is unenlightened" or "the ignorant spirit." However, there is double entendre involved in the Chinese language. Wu-ming, the term usually used to render avidya, means "un-lit" i.e., "not enlightened," but what is "unlit" implies what is "dark." The imagery of "darkness," however, carries in the Taoist frame of mind the implication of the "mysterious." For example, Neo-Taoism is, in Chinese, 玄学 hsüan-hsüeh, "dark learnings" or "learning of the (three)

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<sup>1</sup>The emperor apparently regards shen and hsin to be fairly synonymous. The word hsin, mind, means "mind" or "heart" and both are affiliated with spirit. In a similar way in English, the word "psyche" means soul as well as mind.

<sup>2</sup>T. 52, p. 54bc.

mysteries--Lao-tzu, Chuang-tzu and I Ching." The phrase "wu-ming shen-ming" can mean therefore either the "unenlightened spirit" or the "mysterious spirit." To complicate the matter further, the term "shen-ming," normally a synonym of shen, spirit, actually includes the same character "ming," light, enlightened. Literally, "shen-ming" reads "luminous spirit."<sup>1</sup> However, "shen" can be an adjective, i.e. spirited, spiritual, and "ming" can be a noun "recognition, knowledge, gnosis, bodhi, enlightenment." Thus, "shen-ming" can mean "spirited understanding" or "spiritual enlightenment." The first line of the above quote can therefore mean one or more or all of the following. The "one basis" is the (1) ignorant spirit, (2) mysterious spirit, (3) conjunction of ignorance and enlightenment or (4) mysterious understanding. The four connotations are all included in the phrase "wu-ming/shen-ming." The one basis is a paradoxical union of avidya (wu-ming) and bodhi (shen-ming)--the "dark, mysterious, ignorant, yet all-knowing spirit."

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<sup>1</sup>The association of light (lumen) with the divine (numen) is fairly common. The Chinese character for shen may include the pictograph of "light streaming from the clouds" and "lightning." Shen-ming is commonly used to designate spirit or gods.

The rest of the cited passage also poses problems. The running commentary to the Emperor's essay, written by an admiring courtier, provides one possible interpretation of it.<sup>1</sup>

The spirit is by nature dark. It requires ignorance (wu ming) as a cause.

The [human] ability to distinguish good and evil can function only because of the mind. The [human] ability to judge right and wrong depends on feeling. The big void [the primordial chaos] has no feeling, therefore, it is said to be wu-ming, dark and ignorant. Earth and stones have no mind, therefore they can never resolve doubts, [i.e. never be enlightened]. From the above observations, we can conclude that the ability to resolve problems resides with the mind (hsin). Primitive or crude intelligence is based only on consciousness (shih).<sup>2</sup> Earth and stones, [being of low intelligence], are therefore said to be without ming, enlightenment. Therefore, the importance of having a mind is established.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The running commentary is included within the essay; see T. 52, p. 54bc. The Chinese practice is to include the comments in small characters between sentences.

<sup>2</sup>The idea expressed here that only higher beings have mind, while lower beings of crude intelligence--possibly referring to animals but perhaps including earth and stones--have only consciousness, seems innovative in interpretation.

<sup>3</sup>T. 52, p. 54bc. Explanations found in brackets have been inserted to clarify the argument.

The above interpretation seems logical. It underlines the centrality of the mind as a prerequisite for enlightenment. Things without mind, like plants and stones or impersonal reality like the primordial void, cannot be enlightened. T'ang Yung-t'ung follows this line of argument as he summarizes Emperor Wu's position:

In investigating what is designated by wu-ming, it is known that wu-ming does not belong to the category of the big void, i.e. ignorance is deluded knowledge; it is not without the mind; it is not like the [mindless] big void. Earth and stones have no feelings. They too are not what can be designated as ignorant items, i.e., earth and stones have no mind, therefore they have no Buddha-nature.<sup>1</sup>

However, unless there is corruption in the text itself, Emperor Wu's rhetorical question--"Is this to say that [feeling-less] earth and stones are unenlightened (wu-ming)?" --implies that he thinks that, to the contrary, inorganic, non-sentient, things can be enlightened.

Originally, Indian Buddhism limits enlightenment to sentient beings, beings with feelings.<sup>2</sup> The MPNS itself also limits the Buddha-nature to sentient beings. However,

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<sup>1</sup>T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 707. The portions following the "i.e." are explanations inserted by T'ang in small characters between the sentences. The word "not" in the last sentence defies the interpretation provided by T'ang in smaller characters.

<sup>2</sup>Only sentient beings suffer and require liberation from it.

by the Sui-T'ang period, Chinese Buddhism developed the theory that "insentient[grass and trees too] have [the Buddha]-nature, wu-ch'ing yu-hsing." It is generally recognized that this innovation is due to Taoist pan-animistic influence and Taoist admiration for the impersonality of nature (tzu-jan).<sup>1</sup> Tao-sheng actually anticipated this later development for he said:

All things that receive ether (ch'i) and yin-yang to be what they are are "basic cause" [Buddha-seeds] on the path to nirvana. The various things of the three worlds receive life as a result of delusion. The icchantika is another life-possessing being. Why should he not have the Buddha-nature also?<sup>2</sup>

Tao-sheng shifted the Indian emphasis on sentiency to the Chinese emphasis on "life." Since according to Han cosmology, everything organic or inorganic is derived from a primordial ether and that the whole universe is one process of endless change ("life giving birth to life"),<sup>3</sup> it follows that Tao-sheng already argued for the availability of the Buddha-nature to even mountains and streams.

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<sup>1</sup>See Kamata Shigeo, Chūgoku Bukkyō shi kenkyū (Tokyo: 1969), pp. 11-46, on the "hijō busshō 非情仏性."

<sup>2</sup>Cited by T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 649.

<sup>3</sup>This is the traditional definition of i, change, in the I Ching, 生生之謂易 - 繫辭上 (Appendix 3. A. 5).

Chinese consider mountains and streams to be full of ether.<sup>1</sup> Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty, being at one time a Taoist, could not have been ignorant of this pan-animistic tradition and his argument, as stated above, shows his sympathy with this Taoist adoration of "earth and stones."

He also plainly says: "Wu-ming is not like the big void." The running commentary to Emperor Wu's essay which says "The big void is without feeling [ necessary for human judgment of right and wrong ] , therefore, it is not enlightened" is, in my opinion, probably misguided. The commentator, probably a Confucian humanist, seems to give too much credit to human feeling and judgment. In both the Buddhist and the Taoist tradition, the opposite evaluation often holds true. Only sentient beings suffer, says the Buddhist, because they cling onto what they desire. In a similar vein, Lao-tzu finds discriminative judgment of good and evil, right and wrong, to be the fall of man into artificial distinctions.<sup>2</sup> Han mystical thought in general accepted the dictum that the true sage is "without feeling" (wu-ch'ing). In being above emotions, the sage

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<sup>1</sup>This "dynamic" quality of nature may be philosophically appreciated, or captured in Chinese painting or secured by geomancy. For example, geomancy looks for the vein of the dragon in the landscape.

<sup>2</sup>Lao-tzu, chap. 2.

models himself after the impassivity of heaven itself.<sup>1</sup> Heaven by virtue of its public (kung) or open, not selfish character is impartial. The pursuit of the heaven-like state is therefore actually to attain wu-hsin (no mind), that is, absence of a discriminative mind.<sup>2</sup> That the primordial void is often said to be without feeling (wu-ch'ing) actually shows an appreciation of the impersonal impartiality of the great void prior to the differentiation into yin-yang. Therefore, it is conceivable that Emperor Wu intended the line "Wu-ming is not like the big void" to mean "Ignorance, being discriminative, cannot be compared to the big void." The human ability to judge good and evil by an innate feeling for the good may be a Mencian virtue but it is or can be according to the Buddhist and the Taoist a sentient vice.<sup>3</sup> Wu-ch'ing yu-hsing, 無情有性 "(things) insentient (nevertheless) have (Buddha)-nature" only makes good sense.

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<sup>1</sup>The source of the impassive sage-ideal is from Chuang-tzu chap. 5. Wang Pi, the Neo-Taoist, is supposed to have suggested the reverse: Confucius the sage who cried when his disciple died demonstrated the sage's ability to have feelings without being burdened by them. See the commentary section in the biography of Chung Hui in San-kuo-chih (chap. 28.37).

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that T'ung Chung-shu did speak of a mind of heaven. Confucians generally prefer a more "personal" Heaven with volition, intention, or will.

<sup>3</sup>Nirvana in one sense resembles the "divine impassivity" some Byzantine monks strove after, i.e. the cessation of sentiency.

The running commentary to the essay by Emperor Wu provides, however, a very necessary insight. It says that the spirit is by nature dark and that it requires ignorance (wu-ming) as a cause. The reference to the "dark, mysterious spirit" pinpoints a subtle dialectic involved in the argument of Emperor Wu. The Chinese consider the spirit, or the mind, to be dark and mysterious, like the primordial void. This dark spirit is "pre-cognitive," happy in its divine ignorance, abiding in its own absoluteness (perhaps like the Hegelian Geist prior to its historic self-alienation or self-dissociation and reintegration). This dark spirit is neither conscious of itself as a subject any more than it is conscious of something other than itself as an object. It is antecedent to the subject-object dichotomy that haunts all phenomena in what the Chinese call "post-heaven," that is, after the cosmic differentiation.

This dark, pre-cognitive spirit is none other than the inactive heaven-endowed hsing, (human) nature, discussed earlier. Emperor Wu elaborated on the ideas set down by the Book of Rites in his essay on "pure karma":

In observing the heaven-given nature in man, it would seem that this nature embraces the sublime ether in order to be "clear" ["luminous" ]. This nature feels for objects outside and becomes actively involved in the world. The

desiring mind overreaches itself and becomes blind [to its own innate essence] . This blindness (or ignorance) is due to the defilements from the external world. Phenomenal realities then burden the mind. This greedy mind wants more, [in an insatiable way]. The inner spirit becomes distracted, and the eyes wander about, following the changing phenomena.<sup>1</sup>

The pre-cognitive spirit or mind has lost its "heavenly" composure as it is bewitched by the colors of the world.<sup>2</sup> This development is usually regarded negatively as a corruption of pristine purity. However, the running commentary to the Emperor's essay gives a new twist in its interpretation. The pre-cognitive spirit or mind requires blindness (ignorance, wu-ming) as a cause, that is, as a necessary factor for the spirit to become cognizing and, hopefully, eventually self-conscious or enlightened. A happy innocence is ignorance (wu-ming), but an illumination (knowledge [ming] gained through a process of alienation/reunion) brings the spirit to fuller self-awareness.

A lucid formulation of this motif of "returning to the roots" is given by the Buddhist, Seng-chao, in the

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup>The "five colors," i.e., the colors of the five elements, are actually regarded by Chinese thinkers to be agents that delude the once passive mind; see Lao-tzu, Chap. 12.

early fifth century A.D. Seng-chao stated that prajna, wisdom, is non-cognizing, that is, supreme wisdom is not subject-object knowledge. He describes the action of the sage in the following manner.

Therefore the sage should empty his mind [of thoughts or matters] and simply reinforce its [passive capacity to] reflect or illuminate [objects]. The sage would then know everything [there is] without actually cognizing [any particulars]. He dims [or darkens] his mental light and surveys [all, impartially] with a vacuous mind. He closes off his facility of [everyday] perception and blocks up his [worldly] knowledge. Mysteriously and by himself, he becomes enlightened.<sup>1</sup>

This psychology of withdrawal was an undercurrent in Chinese Taoist and Buddhist thought. Chinese philosopher and intellectual historian T'ang Chun-i traced it back to Chuang-tzu,<sup>2</sup> and the same idea came up later in Zen practice, especially within the Ts'ao-t'ung (Jap. Soto) sect. "Quiet reflection" 默照 mo-chao (that

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<sup>1</sup> Seng-chao, "Prajna is non-cognizing," Chao-lun, T. 45, p. 153ab. See detailed analysis of this figure in Tsukamoto Zenryū ed. Jōron kenkyū (Kyoto: 1955) and The Book of Chao trans. Walter Liebenthal (Peking: 1948).

<sup>2</sup> See section 2-f in this chapter, pp. 149-154 below. The more immediate predecessor to Seng-chao's idea of the vacuous mind may be the "hsin-wu 心無" school that he criticized. On "no-mind" (hsin-wu, wu-hsin), see p. 140 above and T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 266-273.

Seng-chao prescribed) was a term used to characterize this Zen practice in Sung.<sup>1</sup>

The passage in which Emperor Wu posited a paradoxical entity called "wu-ming shen-ming" can now be given a second interpretation on the basis of the above long discussion. In the following, I provide my own commentary to this passage:

The spirit is by nature dark and mysterious. It is originally oblivious of subject and object, being pre-cognizing. The phrase "wu-ming shen-ming" therefore refers, on the one hand, to an unenlightened spirit but, on the other hand, to a spirit that requires wu-ming as a catalyst to awaken the spirit to self-knowledge (ming).

Wu-ming, however, cannot be considered to be like the primal void. Unlike the primal void, wu-ming (ignorance) discriminates, cognizes and craves. Ignorance cannot be considered as antecedent to shen-ming, which being impartial, resembles more the void.

People have said that earth and stones are without the Buddha-nature, but since earth and stones are precisely those entities without craving feelings, discriminative knowledge, etc. and thus are closer indeed to the primal void, why shouldn't they be considered to be enlightened?

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<sup>1</sup>See Heinrich Dumoulin, A History of Zen Buddhism (New York: 1963), p. 133. The term "quiet reflection" was used by a Lin-chi (Jap. Rinzai) master Ta-hui to deride the "dumb sitting" practice of his opponent, who, however, elaborated on this "inner illuminating mind."

Emperor Wu further explains the relationship between shen-ming (spirit), wu-ming (ignorance) and the phenomenal world:

Upon the substance (t'i) of wu-ming is life and death (samsara); the phenomenal changes are the functions of unenlightened differentiations. The [one] mind that subsists behind enlightenment remains unchanging. However, fearing that people might be misguided into thinking that since the functions are many and therefore when the many disappear, the mind also vanishes with them, we insist on showing that behind the apparent changes, there is another foundation-reality [wu-ming shen-ming]. Furthermore, we insist that wu-ming is none other than shen-ming [except] that the latter (shen-ming) subsists at all times.<sup>1</sup>

In this bold manner, the emperor resolves the issue of two basic substances (t'i). The many is based on the one mind or spirit (shen-ming); the phenomenal world is based on ignorance (wu-ming). Combining these two substances, he comes up with "wu-ming shen-ming." In the spirit of the Prajna-paramita sutras, he stated bluntly that wu-ming is shen-ming, just as the sutras would say "klesa (defilement) is bodhi (enlightenment)." One, however, suspects that the paradox has a Taoist twist. Finally, the emperor implies that, nonetheless, whereas ignorance can be eliminated, shen-ming will never be erased. It is the foundation of Buddha-hood.

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54c.

The dialectic between wu-ming and shen-ming reappears in the AFM in a more sophisticated fashion. The running commentary to the emperor's essay suggests that wu-ming is required as a cause for the production of phenomena, of object-knowledge and final spiritual self-knowledge (shen-ming). Fa-tsang, commenting on the AFM, came up with a more refined idea that wu-ming (avidya) is not the cause (hetu), but the auxiliary condition, pratyaya. The structure of argument, however, remains fairly similar. Fa-tsang and the AFM also seem to have inherited another key pair of concepts from the essay by the emperor: the distinction between the one mind and the consciousness of multiples.

e. Hsin (noumenal mind) and Shih (phenomenal consciousness)

Emperor Wu wrote his essay supposedly as a refutation of Fan Chen's thesis. Yet, the emperor apparently did not consider the issue from his opponent's perspective. The emperor's concern is shared by those within the Buddhist faith; how can karmic retribution work if there is no permanent self? This concern may be expressed in another way: how can the theory of momentariness basic to the Buddhist outlook be reconciled with the theory of a

permanent Buddha-nature taught by the MPNS. Emperor Wu puts it succinctly:

By impermanence is meant that something disappears in one instant and that something else is born in the next instant. If the mind (hsin) functions (yung) within the karmic process, then a previous consciousness (shih) would (accordingly) be different from a succeeding consciousness. If that is true, then the mind (hsin) itself would disintegrate along with the changing phenomena. How then can there be an entity which attains enlightenment?<sup>1</sup>

Apparently, the emperor aligned the mind with the spirit that subsists eternally, and associated consciousness, shih, with the momentary succession of phenomena. His concern was whether "the mind disappears with the phenomenal realm" 心隨境滅 hsin-sui ching-mieh.

The MPNS resolves his doubts:

The [MPNS] says: "The mind is the basic cause. It end is to become the result, enlightenment itself." It also says, "By a turn or revulsion, ignorance can become enlightenment." Basing myself on this, I discover that the mind is the basis (pen) of its functions (yung). The basis is always one but the functions are many. What is many naturally "rises and falls" [goes through life and death, samsara], but the nature of this one basis is the wu-ming shen-ming.

From the above discussion [on the big void, earth and stones] we know that cognition and

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54b.

reflection are the natural responses of the spirit, that the divine substance (t'i) cannot help being caught up in the thinking process. It is when one fails to acknowledge this [above] fact that wu-ming arises. Upon the substance of wu-ming is life and death...<sup>1</sup>

The mind is one, the basis, substance, the spirit, Buddha-nature, divine and transcendental. Consciousness (shih) is not designated by these terms. The relationship between the two is not always clear,<sup>2</sup> but in one crucial passage the t'i-yung motif emerges:

The [MPNS] says, "Ignorance is when the mind is bound to the various defilements. Enlightenment is when the mind is tied to the good." Does this not show that mind (hsin) and consciousness (shih) are one in nature (hsing) but different with regard to whether the items go along with change (or not)?<sup>3</sup>

The eternal mind abides with the unchanging; the consciousness is that which ends up being involved with the many, the function, the samsaric world. Mind and consciousness are one in substance but two in function. The mind cannot help being dragged into mundane mental reflections, but its sacred home is always the eternal.

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54c.

<sup>2</sup>Elsewhere in the essay, hsin and shih seem to be fairly interchangeable; see ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. According to T'ang Yung-tung, Emperor Wu's philosophy has been anticipated by the early Prajna-ist school of "Consciousness [being] incorporated 識含 [within the spirit, shen ]"; see T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 263-265.

The elevation of mind above consciousness has great implications for Sinitic Mahayana developments later. In the AFM, Suchness, the absolute, is identified with the mind (hsin) whereas consciousness is seemingly relegated to the level of the mind-continuum ("perpetuating consciousness"),<sup>1</sup> and associated with the alayavijnana (storehouse-consciousness). As Chapter Three below will deal with this issue in greater detail, I will address only one general issue here.

f. The Taoist concept of Hsin (Mind)

It was natural for the Chinese Buddhists to select the mind as a topic for their discourse. There had been a long tradition of philosophical thought regarding the mind, hsin. The Mencian association of mind (hsin) and nature (hsing) was analyzed earlier. In the present context, of greater relevance is Chuang-tzu's discovery of the transcendental mind (Hsü-ming ling-chüeh hsin "vacuous, luminous, spiritually alert mind" 虛明靈覺心).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The mind-continuum supplies the Buddhist the necessary notion of a continuity in personal identity, i.e. there is no permanent self that cognizes but there is a continuity in the cognition process. The AFM apparently considers this to be shih (consciousness), which is lower in status compared with the Suchness mind.

<sup>2</sup>T'ang Chun-i, Chung-kuo che-hsüeh yüan lun I, chap. on hsin, pp. 102-104.

Chuang-tzu (between 399 and 295 B.C.) was a philosopher keenly aware of the workings of the mind. He described the "scheming, plotting, restless mind" of the "little man" or the "everyday man."<sup>1</sup> He was acutely aware of the tension between the self and objects and is reputed to have propounded the final dissolution of self and object, identifying the two as one. On the one hand, he was the poet of despair, lamenting the corruptibility of the mind that decays along with the body. On the other hand, he was the euphoric dreamer of roving cosmic freedom, the fantasy-builder of the immortal hsien tradition.

What we earlier described as the "dark spirit" or "pre-cognitive mind" originated in the writings of Chuang-tzu. I shall only quote a line from T'ang Chun-i's study of the concept of mind in Chuang-tzu to illustrate a point which should be familiar by now:

The mind discovered by Chuang-tzu is the mind that has momentarily ceased to respond to external matters and ceased to acknowledge outside affairs. This mind has turned inwards upon itself and come to recognize its<sup>2</sup> own [absolute, independent] existence as such.

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<sup>1</sup>Chap. 2 of Chuang-tzu, cited in T'ang Chun-i, Chung-kuo che-hsüeh yüan lun, I, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup>T'ang, ibid.

As Chuang-tzu lamented the mind that was bewildered by and drawn into the interchanging colors of the world outside, Chuang-tzu too celebrated this discovery of a luminous, spirited mind. This self-sufficient mind is compared to a mirror that shines forth in a strange "dark" light, illuminating passively without beholding consciously either self or object.<sup>1</sup> It is pre-cognitive as well as supra-cognitive. It is this mystical concept of mind that influenced much of Chinese spiritualism. The Chinese Buddhists merely inherited this tradition and blended it with the Indian understanding.

In contrast to the Indian Buddhist tradition, which went into elaborate detail in its analysis of the mind, its functions and the various aspects and levels of consciousness, the Chinese concept of mind remained comparatively compact.<sup>2</sup> What is often differentiated in the Yogacara philosophy remains undifferentiated in the Chinese scheme. For example, the alayavijnana (storehouse-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.; see chap. 7 of Chuang-tzu: 至人用心若鏡。

<sup>2</sup>The word "compact" is used as an antonym for the word "differentiated" in the next sentence; see the usage by Robert N. Bellah in his essay "Religious Evolution," in Bellah, Beyond Belief (New York: 1970).

consciousness) is largely a repository of bijas (seeds). The alayavijnana does not cognize objects nor itself, since the discriminative (subject-object) knowledge based on a false sense of self-nature (svabhava) applied to self and others "resides" with the seventh vijnana, the manas. In normal everyday cognition (false) self and (false) object exist interdependently; the five senses (first five consciousnesses) and their corresponding sense-realms "feed" on each other. To attain wisdom, the ideal is to put an end to this endless flow of impressions from without and misguided habitual thinkings from within. The cessation of "subject" and "object" is therefore desirable for enlightenment into the anatman insight. Compared with this Indian scheme, Chuang-tzu's conception of mind has a certain charming simplicity. Hsin (mind, heart) is "pre-cognitive" in its pristine state, "object-cognitive" through its involvement with the world of objects, and "trans-cognitive" or self-enlightened when it returns to its roots. It includes within itself functions that the Yogacara philosophy would delegate to the manas (hsin like manas can cognize itself and objects) and perhaps the manosvijnana (hsin like manosvijnana synthesizes the impressions received by the senses).

Hsin is therefore a more monistic reality and because of this, Chinese Buddhism produces perhaps its own form of philosophical idealism.<sup>1</sup>

Chuang-tzu envisions a state in which the self and objects become one and identical when all things are "equalized." Accordingly, the Chinese Buddhists seem to favour a Taoist version of "equalization of self and object" more than the "elimination of cognition and cognized objects."<sup>2</sup> I suspect this is why Emperor Wu was bothered by the possibility that "the mind will disappear with the changing phenomenal realm." The mind, hsin, is eternal; and unlike shih, consciousness, it can never and must never disintegrate. A distinction was then made between noumenal hsin (mind) and phenomenal shih (consciousness).<sup>3</sup> Although in substance one with hsin, shih is

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<sup>1</sup>Liebenthal suggested that strong Chinese influence lay behind the Chinese Buddhist interest in the One Mind, see his "One Mind Dharma," Bukkyō shigaku ronshū (Kyoto: 1961); see also Hsun-tzu, chap. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Chuang-tzu does speak of the negation of self and object, but more important in his philosophy is the higher synthesis known as "equalization of things;" see Chuang-tzu, chap. 2.

<sup>3</sup>The word hsin in Chinese is a key concept; words with hsin (heart) radicle are numerous as any Chinese dictionary can attest to. Shih is in no way as important a word and is always related to "knowledge" of some object.

that aspect of the mind that reacts with the changing phenomenal world and is seen often as equally mutable.

g. Summary: Chinese Idealism in Emperor Wu and the AFM

In this section, we have examined the possible structural similarity between the essay by Emperor Wu and the AFM. Emperor Wu, by using the paired concepts of pen-yung, hsin-shih, shen-ming and wu-ming and by exploring their dialectical "noumenal/phenomenal" relationships, blended together Taoist and Buddhist motifs. The commentator to the Emperor's essay actually lauded the Emperor for "harmonizing li (metaphysical principle) and shih (phenomenal fact)."<sup>1</sup> This comment anticipated Hua-yen philosophy since the latter was known precisely for uncovering the non-obstruction or interpenetration of li and shih. The centrality of the mind (hsin) and its superior status above consciousness (shih) foreshadowed a similar structure in the AFM and foretold the defeat of the Wei-shih (Consciousness Only) philosophy by Fa-tsang. A Taoist understanding of the mind, that is, Chinese philosophical idealism, colored later Sinitic Mahayana development.

Chinese idealism may be characterized in this manner: man has this dark, mysterious spirit or mind within himself.

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52, p. 54a: 理事通亨 (cf. 事理無礙).

This mind naturally loses itself in the world of things. Failure to recognize this natural fact constitutes ignorance. By dimming one's mental light and learning to survey all with a vacuous mind, the person can--to use a favourite Chinese phrase--"know the affairs of the universe without stepping outside his door." He will find his union with heaven and earth, the Tao or the li.<sup>1</sup>

Awakening, illumination (ming) carries a certain unique flavour in the Chinese context. Perhaps the distinguishing marks are a confidence in a pure, heaven-endowed mind and a wisdom based on a passive acceptance of the natural functions of the mind. In the Indian Buddhist context, avidya (ignorance), klesa (defilements), vikalpa (subjective views) are all considered to be "negative" in nature. They are either to be eliminated or "transvalued" into a higher level of psychic consciousness. In Chinese Buddhism, although avidya, klesa and vikalpa are also viewed along the same lines, they are more tolerantly accepted, even appreciated. Ignorance is sometimes regarded as a necessary cause or "condition."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The above summary draws on previous discussions of Chuang-tzu, Li-chi, Emperor Wu, and Seng-chao.

<sup>2</sup>See the commentator's remark on Emperor Wu's idea of wu-ming shen-ming cited earlier, and Fa-tsang's idea of "suchness following condition, pratyaya (sui-yüan)" in Chapter Three below, p. 207.

Defilements seem at times to be like yin, the feminine element in a fuller yin-yang harmony.<sup>1</sup> Subjective views at times are challenged by a call to bring harmoniously in line the view of the "host" and the view of the "client."<sup>2</sup> As China in her late medieval period turned more and more away from the world-denying asceticism that she had learned from the Indian Buddhists, her acceptance of the innate goodness of a natural mind and its functions grew. Shen-hui of the southern Zen school, for example, often spoke of "natural knowledge" (tzu-jan chih).<sup>3</sup> The Taoist elements, evident in early Chinese Buddhism and well-integrated into Sinitic Mahayana, gradually came to dominate Chinese Buddhist understanding.

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<sup>1</sup>The diagram of the alayavijnana, in Chapter Three below, p. 216, shows this yin-yang motif.

<sup>2</sup>"Host" and "client" are terms used by the Ts'ao-t'ung Zen sect later. Strange as it may seem, modern Chinese usage has associated "subjectivity" with the "view of the host," chu-kuan, and "objectivity," k'e-kuan, with the "view of the client."

<sup>3</sup>See Yanagida Seizan et al., Mu no tankyū (Bukkyō no shisō), ed. Tsukamoto et al., VII; Tokyo: 1969), pp. 119-124.

### 3. The AFM as Superior to the Nirvana School

#### a. A basic difference: latency and reality

Despite the similarity between the thinking of the Nirvana School and the contents of the AFM, there is little doubt that the AFM surpasses earlier speculations on the Buddha-nature. There are two clearly new elements: one, a deeper understanding of consciousness, drawn from the Lankavatara sutra; and two, a fine system of correlation between mental states, spiritual stages and types of defilement or illusions drawn from the Dasabhumika sutra and the T'i-lun tradition. These new additions aside, the AFM's approach and treatment is more powerful, as it addresses itself to the similar problems.

The basic difference lies with the more direct style of the AFM. Whereas the MPNS designated the Buddha-nature as the seed leading to enlightenment, the AFM posits universal a priori enlightenment or omnipresent bodhihood. The AFM begins where the Nirvana school ends, namely, with the idea of a core-self which is grounded in the ultimate principle, li. According to the MPNS, enlightenment was latent, i.e., man's endowed Buddha-nature will become enlightened (pen-yu), yet the AFM affirms that man's enlightenment is an a priori fact or reality (pen-ch'üeh).

Whereas the Nirvana school locates the Buddha-nature somewhere in man, generally as one sacred divine spark within a larger profane samsara reality, the AFM posits a comprehensive One Mind that embraces all realities, sacred or profane, within itself. The AFM's formulation of the world of life and death (samsara) is, in contrast with that of the Nirvana school, that a small aspect (the surface waves) of the larger reality of the Suchness Mind (the body of water) constitutes the phenomenal world.

Wonhyo, the Korean monk who wrote a commentary on the AFM, understood the difference mentioned above very well. Basing himself on the AFM, he reviewed and criticized the Nirvana school, and provided a more comprehensive understanding.

b. Wonhyo on the partial understanding of the Nirvana school

In his treatise Nieh-p'an-tsung yao (Essentials of the Nirvana school), Wonhyo summarized the achievements of the Nirvana school.<sup>1</sup> There were, according to his

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<sup>1</sup>The treatise is in T. 38, no. 1769. This is not as exhaustive a summary of the Nirvana school as that by Chi-tsang and others; see T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, p. 678.

neat resume, six basic positions taken on the nature of Buddha-nature. They are:

1. Buddha-nature seen as something to be obtained in time as a matter of course.
2. Buddha-nature identified as sentient beings themselves; all men are "basic cause" of enlightenment.
3. Buddha-nature identified as the mind of sentient beings, the mind that desires after bliss and that loathes suffering.
4. Buddha-nature identified as the innermost core of the mind which is indestructible.
5. Buddha-nature identified as the alaya-vijnana, the eighth consciousness or storehouse-consciousness.
6. Buddha-nature identified as the amala-vijnana, the untainted or pure ninth consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

The six positions outlined by Wonhyo may not exhaust the possibilities of interpretations of the Buddha-nature, but they are fairly representative of the key positions within the range of options.

Wonhyo finds that the six positions, as he outlines them, can be categorized in terms of the intensiveness or extensiveness of their definitions of what constitutes the Buddha-nature. The first position is the least "radical." According to the first position, the Buddha-

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<sup>1</sup>See T. 38, p. 249b. I have summarized the positions.

nature is not something given but something to be achieved. That position falls under the category of gradual or, as the AFM puts it, incipient enlightenment. The other five positions support in one way or another a priori enlightenment, since all affirm the existence of Buddha-nature in all men. Within these five, however, there are two major groups: the group that interprets the Buddha-nature in terms of the "higher truth" and the group which formulates its insight from the perspective of "mundane truth."<sup>1</sup> The sixth position which sees the Buddha-nature in its absolute purity as the untainted consciousness represents the first group by itself. The remaining four, the second to the fifth positions, show varying degrees of accommodation to the mundane, that is, they locate Buddha-nature somewhere within the phenomenal realm. The most generous and loose position is the second: all sentient beings are Buddha-nature. A more specific or refined position is the third: only the mind of sentient beings which desires after bliss is Buddha-nature. Still more specific is the

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<sup>1</sup> Wonhyo adapted the idea of the Two Truths from Nagarjuna here but followed the then current Chinese practice of regarding them as the noumenally true and the phenomenally common realities in ontological, instead of epistemological, terms. See T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 273-274.

fourth: only the indestructable spirit or mind is Buddha-nature. The most refined position, still at the mundane level, is the fifth: the storehouse-consciousness lying at the core of sentient existence is Buddha-nature. Wonhyo considers the fifth position to have intuited to the working of the pure bijas (seeds), subtle germs that lead to nirvana. The third and the fourth positions represent a still greater function (yung) of the mind in the samsaric world.<sup>1</sup> Wonhyo's categorization can be summarized in a diagram below:

Positions:

- |    |                         |                      |                                      |
|----|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Incipient enlightenment |                      |                                      |
| 2. | A priori enlightenment  |                      |                                      |
|    | A) mundane truth        | i. broadly defined   | all men                              |
| 3. | ( <u>yung</u> )         | ii.                  | ↑<br>aspiring mind                   |
| 4. |                         | iii.                 | ↓<br>indestructable mind             |
| 5. |                         | iv. narrowly defined | <u>alayavijnana</u> ( <u>bijas</u> ) |
| 6. | B) higher truth         |                      | <u>amalavijnana</u>                  |
|    | ( <u>t'i</u> )          |                      |                                      |

In other words, Wonhyo maps the location of the Buddha-nature in man in terms of an ascending order of specificity and refinement from one to six. Having done so, he says that all six are valid but each by itself is incomplete. Considered as partial perspectives, they are "not false." Seen from the whole, they are "not true" either.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 38, p. 249b.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

c. Wonhyo on the Totalistic understanding of the AFM

Wonhyo considers the AFM to be superior in understanding. The partial understandings of the six positions given earlier are not yet the whole or totalistic understanding. The Buddha-nature is neither caused nor effected; it is truly ultimate yet truly mundane, simultaneously self and other, a transcendental entity which fully participates in samsara. The Buddha-nature comprehends all six positions because the One Mind allows itself to dip into causative phenomena.<sup>1</sup>

The One Mind has two aspects. It is "pure and yet not pure, tainted and yet not tainted."<sup>2</sup> The tainted aspect allows the Mind to be involved in the six paths of existence, but the untainted aspect grounds it firmly in the quiet and the unmoving absolute. The Mind of the untainted aspect is what the sixth position within the Nirvana school considered as the amalavijnana, the untainted consciousness. The tainted Mind, on the other hand, is that upon which the other five positions speculated.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 38, p. 249b.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

The One Mind may be pure in itself, but in its involvement with the world, it cannot help generating realities. When this Mind is not yet perfumed, it can still generate the good seeds (bijas) according to the Dharma. When it is tainted but not so much as to lose its sublimity, the Mind becomes the indestructable spirit. However, further defiled, it produces karma and the surviving spark manifests itself only as the desire for bliss and the abhorrence of suffering. Finally, the Mind takes on mundane existence itself and becomes sentient beings. By so describing the fall of the Mind into sentiency, Wonhyo recapitulated the second to the fifth positions held by members of the Nirvana school. The One Mind in descending order is the alayavijnana, the indestructable mind, the karmic mind that nevertheless desires nirvana, and sentient beings themselves. The first position--Buddha-nature as something obtained in time--merely introduces time into the consideration of the Buddha-nature.<sup>1</sup>

In this analysis of the One Mind, Wonhyo actually anticipated what Fa-tsang later called the Ju-lai-tsang yüan-ch'i (tathagatagarbha causation) philosophy.

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<sup>1</sup>T. 38, p. 249b.

Wonhyo's characterization of the One Mind as "pure yet impure, impure yet pure" became a favourite phrase used by Fa-tsang to describe the tathagatagarbha. In postulating the ability of the One Mind to take on life itself to become sentient beings, Wonhyo produced a philosophical idealism generally foreign to Indian Yogacara--tathata, Suchness, became an active principle that dynamically creates phenomenal realities.<sup>1</sup> Above all, Wonhyo described the totalistic vision of the AFM and in so doing, subsumed the insights of the Nirvana school within the new perspective provided by the AFM.

d. Summary: the Buddha-nature and the tathagatagarbha

The superiority of the AFM over the Nirvana school has been demonstrated in the sense that AFM does have a more comprehensive or all-inclusive notion of the Suchness Mind. The latent germ of enlightenment, the Buddha-nature of the Nirvana school is surpassed by the encompassing tathagatagarbha. One may therefore regard the superiority of the AFM to be due to a deeper appreciation of the tathagatagarbha notion.

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter Three below, pp. 204-208.

The contrast between the Nirvana school and the AFM, however, should not be overdrawn. This is because the MPNS identifies the Buddha-nature with tathagatagarbha and has as inclusive a view of the Buddha-nature as the AFM has of the One Mind. Furthermore, as has been shown earlier, the Chinese term fo-hsing (Buddha-nature) actually refers to Buddha-dhatu (Buddha-realm) and Buddha-garbha (Buddha-womb) in Sanskrit. Buddha-garbha is synonymous with tathagatagarbha (womb of the Tathagata or Buddha). Perhaps the relatively partial understanding of the Nirvana school was due to a lag in understanding produced unintentionally in the process of transmitting Indian concepts into Chinese. A basic motto of the Nirvana school is that "All sentient (sheng) beings have (yu) Buddha-nature (fo-hsing)<sup>1</sup>." In Chinese, that reads naturally like: essentially all beings possess some Buddha-entity within themselves. The interest in the locale of the Buddha-nature inside man was therefore reinforced. However, the human possession of Buddha-nature is only one side of the picture. Buddha-nature, being the Buddha-realm, the

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<sup>1</sup>The Chinese word "yu" 有 in that phrase 衆生皆有佛性 is natural and necessary in the translation.

Dharmakaya etc., also encompasses and possesses men and all other sentient beings.<sup>1</sup>

The southern Buddhists who speculated upon the Buddha-nature were gentry humanists. In their humanistic anthropocentrism they probably overlooked the simple fact that it was equally important to realize that although man may have Buddha-nature in him, man too is possessed by, enveloped within, the womb or the realm of the absolute.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps some time prior to the emergence of the AFM this second aspect of "being-possessed-by" was driven home to the Chinese Buddhists. In the north, the important Ratnagotravibhaga was translated. In the south, Paramartha made available a work known as Fo-hsing-lun (Treatise on the Buddha-nature) attributed to Vasubandhu. I will focus at present only on the Fo-hsing-lun.

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<sup>1</sup>In the AFM, man is also urged to take faith in Mahayana but then Mahayana (the absolute) is also said to induce faith in man through the power of the tathagata-garbha. This paradox is not uncommon within human religious experience or expression. Religion is man's Ultimate Concern but man can be so concerned only when he is grasped by the ultimate concern itself.

<sup>2</sup>The anthropocentric view sees man finding God: the theocentric view sees God finding man. Zen puts it this way: Deluded, man seeks out the Dharma. Enlightened, the Dharma runs after man. The Zen phrase is from the essay 安心法門 an-hsin fa-men; see T. 48, p. 370b.

Paramartha was informed of the doctrine of alaya-vijnana as well as that of the tathagatagarbha and earnestly tried to introduce the new teachings to the Chinese in the south. Yet the jealousy of the Nirvana school at the southern capital as well as the political disturbances denied Paramartha an audience.<sup>1</sup> Apparently, Paramartha tried to make himself heard. A commentary attributed to Vasubandhu on a sloka (verse)<sup>2</sup> in the MPNS supposedly translated by Paramartha was probably a forgery aimed at attracting the southerners. Perhaps in a similar attempt to lure the southerners Paramartha chose to translate alayavijnana in the unconventional form of mu-mieh-shih, the undying consciousness. Was that choice motivated by an attempt to harmonize the new theory of a storehouse-consciousness with the southern fixation on an immortal, undying, soul or a permanent Buddha-nature?<sup>3</sup> Paramartha's

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<sup>1</sup> See the comprehensive study of his life in T'ang, Fo-chiao-shih, pp. 855-867.

<sup>2</sup> The sloka was on the theme that a new positive (yu) philosophy (about Buddha-nature) supercedes the old negative (wu) philosophy.

<sup>3</sup> There are still scholars who defend or rationalize Paramartha's reading of the word "alayavijnana"; e.g. Yamakami Sōgen, Systems of Buddhist Thought (Calcutta: 1912).

translation of the Mahayana-samparigraha is the only version that mentions the tathagatagarbha alongside the alayavijnana.<sup>1</sup> Was he trying to bring the Yogacara school's philosophy to the southerners by way of the concept of tathagatagarbha which was known to the Nirvana school since Fa-yao through the Srimala sutra? Was he again accommodating himself to the southern delight in a pure mind when he initiated the doctrine of the amalavijnana, the untainted consciousness, as the ninth consciousness? Similarly, did he compile the Fo-hsing-lun himself, drawing upon the Ratnagotravibhaga but intentionally choosing the term "fo-hsing" to call attention to its contents?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Vasubandhu and Asanga are known to avoid the term tathagatagarbha, preferring to philosophize on the alayavijnana; see parallel texts in Fukaura Seibun, Yuishiki gaku kenkyū, I, pp. 283-290. It should be noted that both "alaya" and "garbha" have been translated by the same Chinese character "tsang" (store, womb) 藏.

<sup>2</sup>See Hattori Masa'aki, "Busshōron no ichi kosatsu," Bukkyō shigaku, IV, No. 3-4 (1955), pp. 16-30; Mochizuki ed. Bukkyō daijiten, V, p. 4457. The fact that Paramartha uses the term "fo-hsing" in this treatise whereas the AFM avoids this term suggests that the AFM could not have been translated or authored by Paramartha or his circle.

Though less successful in his other enterprises, Paramartha seems to have left some lasting influence by way of his Fo-hsing-lun. This treatise gives an analysis of the three meanings of tathagatagarbha. The analysis is still oft-quoted to this day and was a good corrective to the one-sided understanding of "man's possession of Buddha-nature" at that time in the sixth century A.D. in China. The meaning of "tsang" (store, womb) in "Ju-lai-tsang" (tathagatagarbha) has three aspects: (1) that the tathagatagarbha is "stored" in all sentient beings, (2) that all sentient beings are "stored" within the womb of the Tathagata and (3) that the tathagatagarbha "stores" itself away, i.e., hides itself or is being hidden behind defilements.<sup>1</sup>

This fuller understanding of the nature of the tathagatagarbha probably influenced the AFM and gave to the AFM a more "all-inclusive" image of the omnipresence or immensity of this "hidden womb." The One Mind embraces and creates all.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 31, p. 796a. See p. 179 below.

<sup>2</sup>The sense of "create" will be analyzed below in section 4-c. The term might be somewhat misleading, because of the English connotation of "create." If so, it should be understood as "making the phenomenal world out of Suchness itself" i.e., not ex nihilo. Even when the Chinese seem to say that the world out there is a creation of the mind, the Chinese usually do not question the

4. The Problem of Indian Scriptures as Preludes to the AFM

a. The tathagatagarbha tradition<sup>1</sup>: A basic mystery

The discussion so far has stressed the Chinese contribution to the AFM. Even when Indian scriptures like the MPNS are involved, it has been shown that the Chinese analysis of these scriptures led to new interpretations. This closing section of the chapter will look into a still more shadowy area: namely, whether or not there was not a "third tradition"--the tathagatagarbha tradition--in India which anticipated the AFM developments.<sup>2</sup> We will begin the discussion with the assumption that there is a discrete third tradition and temporarily leave the issue of how this third tradition was uncovered by Fa-tsang.

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objective existence of phenomena. Objects are "natural extensions" of the mind, are the functions of a substance. See T'ang Chun-i, "The Individual and the World in Chinese Methodology," The Chinese Mind, ed. Charles A. Moore (Honolulu: 1967), pp. 264-285.

<sup>1</sup>This is more in the nature of a survey because it requires more extensive study than is possible at the moment.

<sup>2</sup>The main source I am using is Takasaki Jikidō, A Study of the Ratnagotravibhaga (Rome: 1966), together with Uj Hakuju, Hoshōron kenkyū (Tokyo: 1959).

b. The concept of the innately pure mind

The Chinese showed a tendency to absolutize a "pure mind," whether it be identical with the Buddha-nature or with Suchness. This "pure mind" is dangerously close to the Upanisadic notion of the atman. Indian Buddhist sects being so numerous, it can be expected that some schools would come up with precisely such an idea.<sup>1</sup> Actually, there is such a concept--the innately pure mind, visuddhi cittaprakrti--which appears repeatedly in Mahayana sutras. The roots of the idea go back to the days of sectarian Buddhism prior to the rise of Mahayana. Even the Pali canon recorded this sermon ascribed to Gautama:

In a similar manner, all the component elements (of the Phenomenal Life classified into) 5 elementary groups, 18 component elements, or 12 bases of cognition have their support in the Active Force and Defilements. The Active Force and Defilements are founded on the Irrational Thought and the latter has its support in the Innate pure Mind. Therefore, it is said: the Mind is radiant by nature (but it) is polluted by occasional defilements.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For example, there was a pudgalavada school stressing the "personality" (pudgala).

<sup>2</sup>Cited by Takasaki, op. cit. p. 240; source given as "eg. AN, I, 5, 9-10; IV, 1-2." See Pali Text Society's Anguttara Nikaya, vol. I, p. 10.

The historical actuality of this sermon cannot be ascertained. However, the liberal group, the Mahasanghika, apparently supported the idea whereas the conservative wing of the Nikaya-Buddhists were generally opposed to the idea. It is said to be the opinion of the Vibhajyavadins and also ascribed to Vatiputriya.<sup>1</sup> The idea, however, found its way into the Mahayana sutras. There seems to be some uncertainty about exactly how the pure mind was polluted or could ever be polluted. It can be and has been argued that the Mind Only school was based ultimately on this early tradition.

The term "agantuklesa", accidental defilement, was long associated with the innately pure mind. What is innately pure and untainted is somehow covered up by dirt. Nine metaphors, like the metaphor of the gold buried in the earth, were traditionally used to describe this state of things. A small sutra, the Tathagatagarbha sutra,<sup>2</sup> has essentially these nine metaphors as its content. Since the "womb" image recalled comparable "mother earth" images associated with the Dravidian south India, the feminine symbol "tathagatagarbha"

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<sup>1</sup>Cited by Takasaki, op. cit., p. 240, drawing on T. XVIIIX (sic), p. 140b and T. 28, p. 697b.

<sup>2</sup>See "Zōbun Nyoraizōkyō yakuchū" (The Translation into Japanese and Notes on the Tibetan Text of the Tathagatagarbha Sutra), Bukkyō daijaku kenkyū kiyō, XLI (1962), pp. 1-38.

has traditionally been traced to the geographic area there. Similarly, the term "prajna" ("mother of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas") has been so located.<sup>1</sup>

All sentient beings are said by the Tathagatagarbha sutra to possess the tathagatagarbha which is essentially not polluted and which is identical with the Tathagata himself. The innate mind (cittaprakrti) and the tathagatagarbha belong therefore to the same conception of a divine core in all beings. The Mahaparinirvana sutra (MPNS) further identified the pure mind and the tathagatagarbha with the Buddha-nature.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the identification of the pure mind, the Buddha-nature, and the tathagatagarbha with the absolute was already present in the Mahayana scriptures.

c. The Avatamsaka sutra

The Avatamsaka sutra is also considered to have contributed to the tradition of the "innately pure mind." One line in this sutra stands out above all others, and is implicitly cited by the AFM. It reads: "The three worlds are unreal, the creation of mind only." The earliest recorded

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<sup>1</sup>For more detailed discussions on the origin of the tathagatagarbha tradition, see Alex Wayman's introduction to his translation, The Lion's Roar of Queen Srimala, pp. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup>The MPNS comes after the Tathagatagarbha sutra and its later sections (last 30 chapters of the Dharmaksema-translated version) are more influenced by the tathagatagarbha tradition; see Takasaki, op. cit., p. 40f.

expression of this line is to be found in the Dasabhumi sutra which was later incorporated into the Avatamsaka sutra in Central Asia or China.<sup>1</sup> The philosophy of the One Mind in the AFM was in part based on this line which says that all realities are created (tso, made) by the mind, that is, according to the AFM, by the Suchness Mind.

However, the word "create" (tso) found in the Chinese translations<sup>2</sup>, was not in the original Sanskrit. The original Sanskrit, according to Tamaki Koshiro's investigation,<sup>3</sup> is "Cittamātram idaṃ yad idaṃ traidhātukam." It reads more literally, "The threefold realm / possess / the mind only" or as Hakeda gives it, "What belongs to this triple world is mind only."<sup>4</sup> A T'ang translation of the Avatamsaka sutra into Chinese follows this more literal reading and does not include the word "tso", make, create.<sup>5</sup> Tamaki

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<sup>1</sup> See notes by Hakeda in Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 49. The Dasabhumi sutra is a work of the first or second century A.D.

<sup>2</sup> T. 26, p. 169a; T. 9, p. 558c; T. 10, p. 514c.

<sup>3</sup> Tamaki Koshirō, "Yushin no tsuikyū," Kegon shisō, ed. Nakamura Hajime (Kyoto: 1960), pp. 345-356.

<sup>4</sup> See notes by Hakeda in Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 49.

<sup>5</sup> See Tamaki, op. cit., p. 358 and T. 10, p. 194a and p. 533a. The T'ang translation reads "What is possessed by the three worlds are all one mind." This translation omits the word "create" but includes the word "one." The English sense of "of the mind" is not conveyed directly in the Chinese.

concludes that the Chinese interpretation which sees the worlds as products of the mind is peculiar to the Chinese and not attested to by either the Sanskrit or the Tibetan.<sup>1</sup> Saigusa Mitsuyoshi in his essay in the same volume on Hua-yen thought lends support to Tamaki's observation, for Saigusa discovers that the so-called "Mind Only" philosophy was really tangential to the Avatamsaka sutra.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the realization that the three worlds are of the mind only comes, according to the Dasabhumi (Ten stages) sutra, to the Bodhisattva upon the sixth stage of his spiritual ascent. This realization is crucial though perhaps not as ultimate as the Chinese made it out to be. What is realized at this stage of "superior understanding (adhimukti)" is that the mind and the objects are interdependent. It is clear from the context of the sutra and from Vasubandhu's commentary on the passage<sup>3</sup> that the three worlds exist as "object" because the mind

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<sup>1</sup>Tamaki, op. cit., p. 359.

<sup>2</sup>Saigusa Mitsuyoshi, "Engi to Yuishin," Kegon shiso, pp. 201-273. Saigusa demonstrates the absence of the "Mind Only" philosophy in the Madhyamika-karika and the Ta-chih-tu-lun is shown to have no systematic theory of it. Citta (mind) is something different from the compounded realities (samskrta dharmas) but it is nevertheless empty (sunya)--and not, as the Chinese would see it, permanent i.e. the Suchness Mind.

<sup>3</sup>See T. 26, p. 169b. Tamaki documents it in op. cit., pp. 338-350.

or consciousness (vijnana) exists as a "subject." Name-and-form (namarupa) and consciousness (vijnana) coexist. In fact, the "unreality" of the three realms corresponds to a "deluded" mind. It is the desiring, craving mind who sees the desired three realms. The realization of this should lead one to put a stop to the unreal world as well as the deluded consciousness and thereby transcend the mundane to reach the higher truth. The mind does not create the phenomena of desire. Even if there is a subtle relationship between reality and consciousness, it is clear that the mind spoken here is not the Suchness pure mind but the deluded consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

How then did the meaning change from "The three worlds are of the [deluded] consciousness" to "The three worlds are created by the [true] mind"? The clearest turning point can be located in Hui-yüan. Hui-yüan explicitly states that "The three worlds are created by the true mind, chen hsin."<sup>2</sup> Hui-yüan's statement became definitive. For Hui-

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<sup>1</sup>Tamaki, however, reverses his own finding by discovering that Vasubandhu might have posited a "true mind" behind the twelve nīdanas; see Tamaki, op. cit., pp. 345-356. His findings here remain ambiguous and apologetic. The mind behind the twelve nīdanas is more than vijnana, more than samskṛta dharmas but is this mind explicitly stated as the Suchness pure mind?

<sup>2</sup>T. 44, p. 527b. Hui-yüan very likely followed his teacher, Hui-kuang, in his interpretation.

yüan, the alayavijnana is the true mind.<sup>1</sup>

From the above short study, it can be seen that the Avatamsaka sutra was indeed important for Sinitic Mahayana. ideal of "Mind Only." Yet once more, it is an Indian scriptural tradition seen through the prism of Chinese translations and interpretations.

d. The Srimala sutra

A very important work is the Srimala sutra.<sup>2</sup> The Srimala sutra developed the idea of the tathagatagarbha, identifying it with the Dharmakaya and its magnificent attributes. A key passage speaks of the following:

The tathagatagarbha is the Dharmadhatu-garbha, the Dharmakaya-garbha, the most superior garbha of the path leading to the transmundane, the innately pure garbha itself.

In a split second, the good mind is not tainted by defilements. In a split second, even the evil mind itself is also freed from being so tainted. It is a mystery how defilements never touch the mind, how the mind never touches defilements, and how the mind which was not touched by [defilements of worldly] dharmas can nevertheless become so tainted.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fukaura Seibun, in his Yuishiki gaku kenkyū (Kyoto: 1954), I, pp. 188-208 discusses the T'i-lun tradition, and on p. 190 summarises Hui-yüan's position on the eight consciousness. Hui-yüan considers the alayavijnana as true, and hsin 心 [corresponding to the seventh adanavijnana (ego-clinging consciousness)], i 意 [the sixth mental center,] shih 識 [the five senses] to be "deluded" and to be eliminated.

<sup>2</sup>See Wayman trans. The Lion's Roar of Queen Srimala.

<sup>3</sup>My translation from the Chinese, T. 12, p. 222b.

It is an utter mystery how this pure mind is seemingly trapped in the impure world.<sup>1</sup> The mind, as Wonhyo puts it in a neat paradox, is "polluted and yet not polluted, not polluted and yet polluted."<sup>2</sup>

The Srimala sutra also introduces another key concept: asunya, not-empty.

Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is void of all the defilement-stores which are discrete and knowing as not liberated. Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is not void of the Buddha-dharmas which are nondiscrete, inconceivable, more numerous than<sup>3</sup> the sands on the Ganges, and knowing as liberated.

The tathagatagarbha, the absolute Suchness in worldly bondage,<sup>4</sup> is the support, the holder and the base of all realities.<sup>5</sup> By relying upon the tathagatagarbha is there life and death (samsara). Because of the tathagatagarbha, sentient beings desire bliss and loathe the world of sufferings.<sup>6</sup> These insights into the workings of the tathagatagarbha were inherited by the Lankavatara sutra, the Ratnagotravibhaga (Uttara-tantra), and the AFM.

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<sup>1</sup>See Wayman, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>T. 37, p. 249b. Fa-tsang favoured this description.

<sup>3</sup>Wayman, ibid., p. 99; see also his discussions on pp. 50-51 and consult the Chinese in T. 12, 221c.

<sup>4</sup>Wayman, ibid., p. 98 and p. 50.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 105 and p. 44.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 97 and p. 49.

e. The Ratnagotravibhaga

The most systematic work known within the Indian tathagatagarbha tradition is the Ratnagotravibhaga. In this work, the ten grand attributes of the tathagatagarbha are outlined, showing the all-encompassing magnificance of this "treasured-jewel (ratna) germ-store (gotra)" or pao-tsang.

...it is said by the [Buddha] that all living beings are always possessed of the [Womb] of the Tathagata, Tathagatagarbha. That is to say, by the following three meanings: (1) the Absolute Body, Dharmakaya, of the Tathagatagarbha penetrates all living beings; (2) the Tathagata being the Reality, tathata (suchness) is the undifferentiated whole; and (3) there exists the germ of the Tathagatagarbha (Tathagata-gotra) in every being.<sup>1</sup>

This description of the "transcendental" nature of the womb-matrix of the Buddha is very different in nature from the Yogacara concern for the epistemological structure of human consciousness and the status of the alayavijnana vis a vis phenomenal objects. I would characterize the tathagatagarbha tradition as the "noumenalist" school, stressing the transcendental magnificance of that which abides with the absolute in some mysterious sense. I would characterize the Yogacara tradition as a "phenomenalist" school interested primarily in the nature of phenomenal becoming. The former

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<sup>1</sup>Takasaki, op. cit., p. 198. See p. 169 of this thesis for a variant of the "three meanings" given by the Fo-hsing-lun. The term "uttara-tantra" refers to this ultimate (uttara) hidden teaching (tantra), concerning the jewel (ratna) store (garbha) or germ (gotra).

leans towards a philosophy of monism as the latter delights in the analysis of the particulars.<sup>1</sup> One loves the ineffable, the mysterious and the paradoxical as the other excels in epistemology and logic.

However, since both the alayavijnana and the tathagata-garbha are, in some sense, the foundation of nirvana and samsara, it is not impossible to affiliate the two.<sup>2</sup> The confluence of the two was not there in the Ratnagotra-vibhaga nor in early Yogacara sutras. It seems that in India, the southern (tathagatagarbha) and the northern (alayavijnana) traditions developed independently. The two only came together in the Lankavatara sutra.<sup>3</sup> There is a technical problem in this wedding of two key concepts. The alaya-vijnana is phenomenally tied to the flow of mental defilement (asrava) while the tathagatagarbha is essentially pure and only accidentally defiled.<sup>4</sup> For the alayavijnana to discard its ties with samsara, a qualitative change in its innermost

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<sup>1</sup>Takasaki puts it in op. cit., p. 28: "The Tathagatagarbha theory is in one sense an inevitable result of the development of Mahayana Monism in its religious expression."

<sup>2</sup>The T'i-lun school in north China used the terms "support" (nisraya), "holder" (adhara) and "base" (pratistha) from the Srimala sutra (see p. 178 above) to describe the function of the alayavijnana.

<sup>3</sup>See Takasaki, op. cit., p. 198.

<sup>4</sup>A lucid contrast of the pair is made by Shih Yin-shün, I fo-fa yen-chiu fo-fa (Taiwan: 1961), pp. 301-361.

being is necessary.<sup>1</sup> The Lankavatara sutra suggests the idea of a sudden "revulsion", paravritti.<sup>2</sup> However, this sudden "turn-over," though appropriate to the alayavijnana, is inappropriate to the tathagatagarbha. The Mahayanasutralankara offers an alternative idea: parivritti, meaning "manifestation" and thus it clarifies the transcendental nature of the tathagata-gotra, seed of Buddha-hood.<sup>3</sup> The Ratnagotravibhaga prefers this solution.

The Ratnagotravibhaga could not employ the latter expression [paravritti] because the gotra, being asraya (support), could remain before and after, the enlightenment without changing its nature.<sup>4</sup>

The tathagatagarbha, being essentially enlightened already, requires no metamorphosis. It simply has to shed the accidental defilements.

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<sup>1</sup>For the alayavijnana "with the flow of mental defilements" (asrava) to be purified, it has to discard the asrava seeds (bijas) and cultivate their opposite, anasrava bijas "seeds without the flow of mental defilements." Yet even these "pure seeds" belong to the category of samskrita (compounded) dharmas; see Shih Yin-shün, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>D. T. Suzuki, trans. The Lankavatara Sutra (London: 1956), p. xxvi; see discussion below on p. 183.

<sup>3</sup>Takasaki, op. cit., p. 44. The Mahayanasutralankara is ascribed to Maitreya, the teacher of Asanga and Vasubandhu. It has only one mention of the tathagatagarbha. This work was not known to the Chinese until the T'ang dynasty and the distinction made here between "paravritti" and "parivritti" was probably unknown to the T'i-lun school.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. See also p. 187: Samala tathata, Suchness with defilements can, after asrayaparivritti (manifestation of support), revert directly to Dharmakaya.

The Ratnagotravibhaga probably exerted an influence upon the AFM. This Sanskrit work, translated by Bodhiruci, has the concepts of Suchness with and without defilements, innate and acquired purity, innate and achieved Buddha-germ. These concepts perhaps anticipated the AFM's notion of a priori and incipient enlightenment and the idea of the Suchness Mind with two aspects.<sup>1</sup> However, the immediate ideological precedent to the AFM is the Lankavatara sutra.

f. The Lankavatara sutra

The Lankavatara sutra synthesized the alayavijnana and the tathagatacarbha tradition and has been considered by Hui-yüan as the predecessor to the AFM.<sup>2</sup> Suzuki has studied the Lankavatara sutra and has contributed to the understanding of paravritti (revulsion) in the manas, the seventh consciousness.

Manas is conscious of the presence behind itself of Alaya and also the the latter's uninterrupted working in the entire system of the Vijnanas. Reflecting on the Alaya and imagining it to be an ego, Manas cling to it as if it were reality and disposes of the reports of the six Vijnanas (the five senses and the mental center) accordingly. In other words, Manas is the individual will to live and the principle of discrimination. The notion of an ego-substance is herein established and also the acceptance of a

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<sup>1</sup>See Takasaki, op. cit., p. 30 and also pp. 173-174.

<sup>2</sup>T. 44, p. 176a: "Asvaghosa wrote the AFM basing himself on the Lankavatara sutra."

world external to itself and distinct from itself.<sup>1</sup>

Let there be, however, an intuitive penetration into the primitive purity (prakritiparisuddhi) of the Tathagata-garbha, and the whole system of the Vijnanas goes through a revolution.<sup>2</sup>

The Lankavatara sutra identifies the tathagatagarbha with the alayavijnana. One line in the sutra as translated by Bodhiruci alone suggests that the tathagatagarbha might be superior to the alayavijnana.

The tathagatagarbha is not within the alayavijnana, because whereas the seven vijnanas go through life and death (samsara), the tathagatagarbha is beyond life and death.<sup>3</sup>

The seven vijnanas are mutable; the tathagatagarbha is not mutable. The nature of the eighth vijnana, the alayavijnana, is not clearly stated. Scholars have thought that the AFM may have taken the cue from this passage and elevated the immutable tathagatagarbha above the presumably mutable alayavijnana.<sup>4</sup> However, the Sanskrit version of the Lanka-

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<sup>1</sup>D. T. Suzuki trans., The Lankavatara Sutra, p. xiii.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. xxvi.

<sup>3</sup>T. 16, p. 556bc. My translation.

<sup>4</sup>See Mochizuki, Daijō kishinron kenkyū, p. 155.

vatara sutra gives the following line for the passage cited.

aparāvṛtte ca tathāgatagarbhaśabdasaṃśabdita  
ālayavijñāne nāsti saptāvāṃ pravṛttivijñānaṃ  
nirodhaḥ.<sup>1</sup>

"In the alayavijnana that is not [yet] revulsed  
and that is called the tathagatagarbha,  
there is no cessation of the seven active  
consciousnesses."

There is no mention of the tathagatagarbha as transcending  
life and death. The other Chinese translations of the sutra  
follow the Sanskrit more faithfully, never suggesting that  
the tathagatagarbha is superior to the alayavijnana.<sup>2</sup> It  
would appear that Bodhiruci had interpolated the line that  
affirms the immutable quality of the tathagatagarbha and  
that the AFM was modelled on the Bodhiruci-translated Lanka-  
vatara sutra.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Lankavatara Sutra, ed. Nanjo Bunyu (Kyoto: 1956).

<sup>2</sup>See T. 16, p. 619c and T. 16, 510b.

<sup>3</sup>In the same section of the Lankavatara sutra (T. 16,  
p. 556bc), Bodhiruci kept the identity of the tathagatagarbha  
and the alayavijnana intact:

The alayavijnana is called the tathagatagarbha  
and together with the seven vijnanas, is like  
a sea's waves, never ending.

Without the alayavijnana, there will be neither  
birth nor death; that there is alayavijnana,  
sages and commoners experience life and death.  
[samsara].

The second passage suggests that the alayavijnana is the  
cause of life and death.

f. Summary: A bold suggestion

We have briefly surveyed the tathagatagarbha tradition on the assumption that it is a discrete tradition. There is little doubt as to the existence of the concept of the "innately pure mind" or the "tathagatagarbha accidentally defiled." The authenticity of the Tathagatagarbha sutra, the Srimala sutra and the Ratnagotravibhaga cannot be questioned. However, could this tathagatagarbha tradition have been diffused and amorphous in India until Fa-tsang transformed it into a discrete entity when he uncovered it? Here, a curious point emerges.

The name Sthiramati has been associated with the tathagatagarbha tradition. Sthiramati is said by Fa-tsang to be the author of the Ratnagotravibhaga.<sup>1</sup> Fa-tsang obtained this information from Devaprajna who supposedly translated another tathagatagarbha text, the Ta-ch'eng fa-chieh wu-ch'a-pieh lun 大乘法界無差別論. This work which follows closely the Ratnagotravibhaga has no known Sanskrit original.<sup>2</sup> In fact, two other so-called tathagatagarbha treatises made available in the T'ang period are suspected to be Chinese fabrications, as they seem to draw

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<sup>1</sup>Takasaki, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; see Fa-tsang's commentary on the Wu-ch'a-pieh-lun, T. 44, p. 63c, where Sthiramati and Devaprajna are named.

upon the philosophy of Fa-tsang.<sup>1</sup> The AFM, considered to be a tathagatagarbha work, is suspect also. Two other works that emerged around the time of the AFM, both translated by Paramartha, are again tathagatagarbha works of questionable origin. One, the Fo-hsing-lun, seems to be compiled by Paramartha who drew on the Ratnagotravibhaga. The other, the Wu-shang-i-ching 无上依经 is a "sutra-ization" of the Ratnagotravibhaga. Takasaki suspected that these two works attributed to Vasubandhu were authored by the Paramartha circle for the "propagation of the [tathagata]garbha theory and the Vijnanavada [philosophy]." <sup>2</sup>

Reviewing the above facts, it is indeed curious that a majority of the so-called tathagatagarbha texts coming after Bodhiruci's translation of the Ratnagotravibhaga are only available in Chinese. This raises the question whether all these works were not ingenious Chinese fabrications based on the Ratnagotravibhaga? If so, did Fa-

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<sup>1</sup> Takasaki, op. cit., p. 53f.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 52. The Wu-shang-i-ching is cited only by the Fo-hsing-lun; see ibid., pp. 47-50. Only in the Paramartha-translated Mahayana-samparigraha, an Asanga-Vasubandhu work, does tathagatagarbha appear; see Fukaura, Yuishiki gaku kenkyū, I, pp. 283-290. The Samparigraha takes a line from the Mahayana-abhidharma sutra ("This realm has no beginning; all realities depend on it...as does nirvana,") and identifies the "realm" with the alaya-vijnana. The Ratnagotravibhaga takes the same line and identifies the "realm" as the tathagatagarbha; see Ui Hakuju, Hoshōron kenkyū, p. 337.

tsang create the legend of Sthiramati's association with the "tathagatagarbha school" he discovered in order to challenge the Dharmapala lineage of the "new school" of Hsuan-tsang?<sup>1</sup> Did Fa-tsang uncover a third Indian Mahayana tradition or did he fashion a Sinitic Mahayana tradition? Or, did he unravel a structure already established by others in the sixth century A.D.? I venture to suggest that there is a faint possibility that the "mature" tathagatagarbha tradition--represented by works coming after the Ratnagotravibhaga and the Lankavatara sutra<sup>2</sup>--was a Chinese creation. Fa-tsang only discovered this tradition, encouraged its further developments, and retrojected the tathagatagarbha school (tsung) as a discrete entity into the distant Indian past.

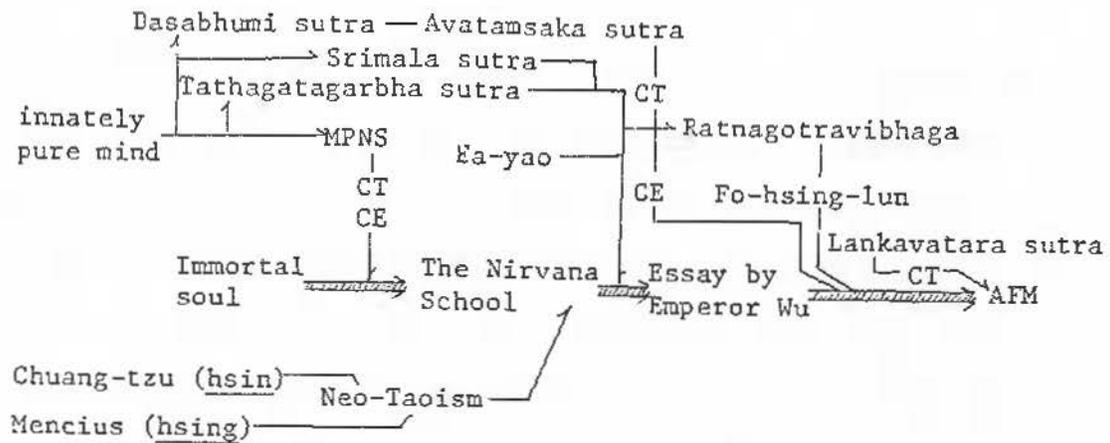
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<sup>1</sup>This is not impossible. Sutras were fabricated in the reign of Empress Wu to support her claim to the throne. Paramartha in the sixth century A.D. also tried to rally Vasubandhu behind his understanding of the Yogacara tradition.

<sup>2</sup>For a list of the tathagatagarbha works divided into early, middle and late periods, see Mizutani Kōshō, "Nyoraizō shisō shi kenkyū josetsu," Bukkyō daigaku kenkyū kiyō, XLIV-XLV (Kyoto: 1963), pp. 245-277.

<sup>3</sup>A lot hinges upon the authenticity of the AFM which occupies a pivotal position mediating definite Sanskrit works and outright Chinese fabrication.

In this chapter, the ideological roots of the AFM and specifically of those elements mentioned in Chapter One, are traced and analyzed.



Key  
 CT=inputs from the Chinese translation  
 CE=inputs from the Chinese exegesis

The above diagram summarizes the areas and issues studied in this chapter. Since the thesis is interested in the Sinitic elements in the AFM, the chapter has dwelled mostly on the Chinese inputs.

In the next chapter, the commentary tradition that came out of the AFM is analyzed.

### CHAPTER THREE

The Theory of "Dynamic Suchness" and  
the Book of Changes:  
the Awakening of Faith as  
Interpreted by Fa-tsang

What the AFM says is extremely terse. An uninitiated first reading of it might not impress the reader that much. What is said of the AFM by the classical commentaries is extremely impressive, for the commentators cleared up many ambiguous points in the text. It is in the nature of any living religious tradition that "new" insights may be derived in this way from sacred scriptures and accumulate in the growth of the tradition. The commentators do not regard themselves as innovators, or their insights as "new." (In medieval times, in Europe, the usual charge against heretics was "innovation.") Commentaries on scriptures only sought to bring out the Buddha-Dharma revealed in eternity.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T'ai-hsü, who led the Buddhist revival in China in this century, criticized the "higher criticism" of the AFM precisely on the grounds that the Dharma is transhistorically revealed. See essay in Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun chen-wei pien, ed. T'ai-hsü (Wu-cheng: 1924), pp. 50-57.

Fa-tsang's commentary is so definitive that there is almost no way to bypass it. This gifted<sup>1</sup> patriarch of the Hua-yen school literally redefined the Buddhist tradition as he systematically reviewed the past from the viewpoint of his understanding of the "true" significance of the AFM. He discovered the tathagatagarbha tradition through the AFM. He underlined the idea that the "three worlds are created by the mind."<sup>2</sup> He spelled out the implications of his theory that Suchness is dynamic, that it is both changeless and yet it participates in change. I have chosen to focus on the issue of "dynamic Suchness" in this chapter.

Whether Suchness is dynamic depends on the commentators' conception of the relationship between Suchness, tathagatagarbha and alayavijnana. The three classical

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<sup>1</sup>The word "gifted" can be exchanged with the term "charismatic" but I avoid the latter Weberian term--too vague and loaded--especially with reference to Fa-tsang, a scripturalist who broke with tradition by recalling a different tradition.

<sup>2</sup>Scholars now refer to this tradition as "Mind Only," Cittamatra as distinct from Vijnaptimatra "Consciousness Only" (viz. Yogacara), because historically Fa-tsang defeated the Wei-shih school--the "new school" of Hsüan-tsang. In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the tradition of the Yogacara school is known as sems-tsam (cittamatra). There is no "Mind vs. Consciousness" distinction. See pp. 146-149, 173-177 above and pp. 217-218 below.

commentaries on the AFM are those of Hui-yüan (523-592 A.D.), the Korean Wonhyo (Yüan-hsiao, 617-686 A.D.) and Fa-tsang (643-712 A.D.).<sup>1</sup> A brief review of the doctrinal background of these figures can help explain their differences in interpretation of the AFM. The most naive interpretation is that of Hui-yüan. Had the interpretative tradition been arrested at that point, the AFM would never have attained its eventual importance. Wonhyo added life to the interpretation, and Fa-tsang radicalized Wonhyo's insights.

The commentary by Hui-yüan seems to have been influenced by the She-lun school, because it introduced the notion of a pure ninth consciousness, amalavijnana. This ninth consciousness is identified with the Suchness Mind.

The characteristics of the Suchness Mind are of the ninth consciousness. The causative characteristics of the [One] Mind in its samsara aspect are those of the eight consciousnesses.<sup>2</sup>

The eighth consciousness is identified with the tathagata-garbha,<sup>3</sup> which is said to be different from the remaining

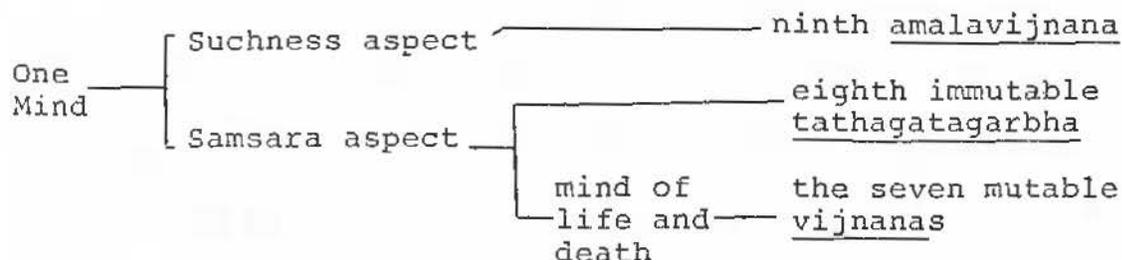
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<sup>1</sup>The commentaries are in T. 44, No. 1843, 1844, 1846.

<sup>2</sup>T. 44, p. 179.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

seven consciousnesses. The remaining seven are mutable, and make up the "mind of life and death."



The above interpretation is what I would call a "sequential" solution to the problem of the One Mind and its aspects. Suchness Mind is posited as the ninth pure consciousness and tathagatagarbha is put alongside the seven vijnanas as one more consciousness among other consciousnesses. Perhaps, this interpretation is the "proper" interpretation intended by the AFM itself. The commentary by Hui-yüan suggests that "Asvaghosa authored the AFM basing himself on the Lankavatara sutra."<sup>1</sup> This opinion is still well-received as far as the second half of the statement is concerned. If indeed the AFM tried to resolve the tension in the line cited earlier from the Lankavatara sutra translated by Bodhiruci ("The tathagatagarbha is not in the alayavijnana [for whereas] the seven vijnanas go through life and death, the

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 176a.

tathagatagarbha is beyond life and death"<sup>1</sup>), then the commentator Hui-yüan here found an easy and logical solution.

We know, however, that the writer of the Hui-yüan commentary is not Hui-yüan himself but someone who imitated Hui-yüan presumably after Hui-yüan's death and prior to when the Wonhyo commentary became known to the Chinese.<sup>2</sup> The historical Hui-yüan who wrote the Ta-ch'eng-i-chang would not posit a "ninth pure consciousness," for Hui-yüan is known to have regarded the "alayavijnana," the "tathagatagarbha," the "true consciousness" to be synonymous in that they all were used to denote the same entity. Additionally, he argued that the eighth consciousness is identical with Suchness, Dharmakaya and paramartha.<sup>3</sup> Hui-yüan suggested many radical ideas in his writings. It is he who said that the three worlds are created by the true mind,<sup>4</sup> and he who speculated

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<sup>1</sup> See p.183 above.

<sup>2</sup> The Hui-yüan commentary refers to "master Yüan" as a third person at one point; see T. 44, p. 192b. This commentary is inferior to the Ta-ch'eng-i-chang written by the historical Hui-yüan.

<sup>3</sup> See Mochizuki, Daijō kishinron kenkyū, p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> T. 44, p. 527b. See also p. 176f above. Despite his learning, Hui-yüan did not exert as much influence on the emerging Hua-yen school as did Tu-shun (557-640 A.D.); See Kamata Shigeo's survey of the Hua-yen tradition in his Chūgoku kegon shisō shi no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1965).

upon how the true and false aspects of consciousness interact to produce phenomenal reality.<sup>1</sup> He even said that all realities are established by Suchness, and that causation is based on "true consciousness." He would be a likely candidate for the originator of the theory of "dynamic Suchness," and yet Hui-yüan explicitly said that Suchness itself does not follow pratyaya (condition), pu-sui-yüan 不隨緣.<sup>2</sup> Suchness does support reality, but it is the tathagatagarbha that follows change without losing its essence.

The next commentator, Wonhyo, anticipated the more radical development to come. Wonhyo is the Korean master whose fame was and remains greatest. Whereas the commentary of Hui-yuan spoke for the T'i-lun school, Wonhyo used language more suggestive of the Hua-yen worldview. His understanding of the One Mind qua tathagatagarbha as the all-encompassing absolute clearly surpassed the timid pyramid-building style of the first commentary. We have already encountered his logic of argument in his summary of the Nirvana school in the last chapter. The following is a similar argument drawn from his commentary on the AFM:

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 192. See pp. 207-212 below.

<sup>2</sup>T. 44, p. 180a. See chap. on Hui-yüan in Kamata Shi-geo, Chūgoku Bukkyō shisō shi kenkyū (Tokyo: 1969), pp. 259-255.

The One Mind is the tathagatagarbha. This is to designate the Suchness-Mind showing the One Mind as quiescent. However, the Samsara-Mind is also to show this same [One] Mind as [active] tathagatagarbha.

Why? This is because all dharmas [realities] are originally free from life and death, inactive and of the One Mind. The essence of the One Mind is that it is Omnipresent Bodhihood 本覺 [a priori enlightened]. However, as the One Mind follows avidya (ignorance) and became actively involved in the world [samsara, life and death], its original essence as Buddhahood becomes hidden and unmanifested. It is for that reason that it is referred to as the [hidden] womb of the Tathagata (tathagatagarbha).<sup>1</sup>

The tathagatagarbha is not seen, as in Hui-yüan's commentary, as "one" in a series of consciousnesses, or as "one level" in the hierarchy of vijñanas, but properly (following the main tathagatagarbha tradition of, for example, the Srimala sutra) as the "one and all" basis of reality. Wonhyo, however, was still careful not to attribute activity to Suchness itself, only to the avidya-influenced tathagatagarbha.<sup>2</sup>

The commentary of Hui-yüan followed the She-lun style of Yogacara analysis; Wonhyo leaned more to the

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p.206. The immanence and omnipresence is emphasized.

<sup>2</sup>See Ishibashi Shinkai, "Gangyo no kegon shisō," JIBS XIX, No. 2 (1971) pp. 245-247.

intuitionist and monistic tathagatagarbha worldview. The Yogacara philosophy does not really ontologically "reduce" the five senses, the conscious mind etc. into one storehouse consciousness, even as it analyzes the organic relationship between them all. The alayavijnana is a repository of so-called bijas or seeds from the past and receives perpetual karmic increments from the present; it is not, strictly speaking, a monistic or homogeneous Urgrund or self. Wonhyo realized the difficulties of grafting the logical analytic scheme of Yogacara onto the dogmatic synthetic monism of the tathagatagarbha tradition. Wonhyo raised the following query:

Question: The Yogacara-bhumi sastra says that the dharmas of the mind in its various aspects are the same only in terms of the conditioning [pratyaya] factor. In their various manifested forms, they are not similar. These forms arise in split-moments, and there is a perpetual turnover [of such impressions from one moment to the next]. Here, in the AFM, it is said that the cognized forms are all the same. There is a contradiction here. How can the views be compatible?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44. 215b. In the AFM, shih (vijnana) is considered to be "the mind-continuum" evolved out of the mind, hsin (citta). The five senses are not "independent" sense-centers with sense-fields and not even enumerated in the AFM as such.

What Wonhyo refers to is this: the classical Yogacara doctrine asserted that the various sense-fields corresponding to the various senses, produce discrete, separate "impressions." Only the conscious mind (the sixth vijnana) integrates these impressions" into a whole as they come "simultaneously" from moment to moment, through the senses to the conscious mind. The AFM, however, says that these "impressions" and all phenomena are homogeneous just as all waves are "wet." Thus, all forms (hsiang 相 ) of consciousness are identical in essence.<sup>1</sup> A more detailed discussion on the AFM borrowing and "distortion" of the water-wave metaphor from the Lankavatara sutra will be given later. The AFM scheme did away with the usual analysis of sense-fields and senses, the classical analysis of the various consciousnesses, and even the key idea of interdependent causation as interpreted in Yogacara.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The forms are identical with the mind too, the mind being the water. See p. 220 below.

<sup>2</sup>Paratantra, the self-nature that arises dependent upon another ( 依他性起 ) is not an issue in the AFM. See p. 235f below: Fa-tsang challenged the doctrine of interdependent causation with his own doctrine of Suchness autogenesis--hsing ch'i, essence-arousal.

Wonhyo, however, answered the hypothetical inquirer in the following manner.

When ignorance ceases, the motion-forms will also cease. The mind then follows incipient enlightenment and returns to its basic origin [in Suchness].

There are some who say that the first half [of the above expression] reflects the insights of Yogacara, whereas the second half the position of the AFM.<sup>1</sup>

Repeatedly we find the commentators saying: the Yogacara or the Lankavatara discoursed upon the effable, thinkable 可思議本 (read "logical") whereas the AFM revealed the incomprehensible mystery.<sup>2</sup> What the commentators say may be true. Additionally, what they say explains in part why Buddhist logic so central to late Mahayana philosophy in India and encouraged by the Yogacarins never found a home in Hua-yen-influenced Chinese Buddhism.

Wonhyo's sensitivity towards the problematical nature of the AFM alerted Fa-tsang to the pending debates between the interpretation of the "old school" and that

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44. 215b, i.e. Yogacara illusionism versus AFM "ontologism."

<sup>2</sup>This is a familiar self-legitimization commonly used in Mahayana sutras. See Hui-yuan's usage in T.44 p. 532-533 cited later.

of the "new school" represented by Hsüan-tsang. The "new school" was hardly compromising in its attacks on past misunderstandings. Wonhyo tried to smooth out the differences from afar, but within a tense cultural atmosphere in China around 700 A.D., polarization of opinion probably necessitated Fa-tsang's radical defense of the AFM and of the "old school," resulting in his critical denouncing of the "new school." Added to the ideological debates were the political turnovers. Hsüan-tsang was the protege of the Li house of T'ang as Fa-tsang was the protege of Empress Wu who usurped the throne and founded her own empire.<sup>1</sup> I suspect Fa-tsang rallied Sthiramati to his own defense and dethroned the Dharmapala lineage of the "new school" which for not accepting the possibility of the icchantika of becoming enlightened, was and still is regarded as less than authentic Mahayana.

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<sup>1</sup>See Stanley Weinstein, "Imperial Patronage in the Formation of T'ang Buddhism;" Perspectives on the T'ang, ed. Wright and Twitchett (New Haven: 1975)pp 265-306. This is a traditional historical resume with emphasis on the political function of religion and is not too sensitive to the actual ideological evolution involved. Empress Wu was the most powerful female ruler in Chinese history, innovative, supportive of lower power groups (against entrenched powers) and pious as well as political. Piety and opportunism, spiritual meekness and earthly hunger for power often met in medieval monarchs and are not contradictions.

The line in the AFM which began the process that eventually led to a grand structure in Fa-tsang's commentary is very simple, although it requires explanation. The AFM has just finished describing how illusion or samsara comes to be, i.e., illusion is due to the nine causes which agitate the mind out of its original passivity and the perfuming ("influence") of avidya which gives rise to defilements. The AFM then goes on to talk about the reversal of this process.

How does the perfuming give rise to pure dharmas and continue uninterrupted? It may be said that there is the principle of Suchness and therefore it can perfume Ignorance. Through the karmic forces of this perfuming, the deluded mind may be caused to loathe the suffering of samsara and aspire for nirvana.<sup>1</sup>

The tathagatagarbha according to the Srimala sutra is able to promote the loathing of suffering and the desire for bliss. The AFM stresses the asunya (not empty) aspect of the tathagatagarbha in rescuing men from the jaws of delusion. The Ratnagotravibhaga admits the function of "pure karma" generated by the tathagatagarbha for that purpose.<sup>2</sup> Even Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty had popularized in his days the idea of "pure karma"

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<sup>1</sup>See Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>Takasaki trans. Ratnagotravibhaga, p. 221.

in his essay on that topic.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the Yogacara tradition speaks of the generating of pure, that is, anasrava, dharmas in the alayavijnana, which are bijas or germs conducive to nirvana. Given all these traditions that were familiar to the author of the AFM, it seems hardly unusual for the above passage to appear.

The term "perfuming" (vasana), which Hakeda has translated as "permeation," is explained by the AFM just prior to the above mentioned section.

The meaning of [perfuming.] Clothes in the world have no scent in themselves, but if man permeates them with perfumes, then they come to have a scent. It is just the same with the case we are speaking of. The pure state of Suchness certainly has no defilement, but if it is permeated by ignorance, then the marks of defilement appear on it. The defiled state of ignorance is indeed devoid of any purifying force, but if it is permeated by Suchness, then it will come to have a purifying influence.<sup>2</sup>

Here the AFM gives a short explanation of the action of "vasana." Our everyday mind as such is subtly influenced by lingering, misguided, habitual ways of perception rooted in past experiences preventing the mind from seeing what

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<sup>1</sup>T. 52. No. 2013, p. 335, 淨業賦 .

<sup>2</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 56. This remains the general reference among oriental Buddhists.

reality is. Concepts, names, clouding our mental apparatus, leave such traces that the insubstantiality of all phenomena is kept from our knowledge. The term "vasana" was thus used to explain our sad plight. Ignorance, defilements (klesa), vikalpa (subjective notions) perfume.

However, can Suchness "perfume" a nonentity like avidya?<sup>1</sup>

It is very likely that, if the AFM was a work influenced in any way by Chinese interpolation or authorship, the writer or interpolator may have inserted this passage for symmetry's sake and drawn upon the tradition which said that the tathagatagarbha can perfume.

The remarkable fact is that the discrepancy did not escape the notice of the commentators. The "pseudo-Hui yüan" of the Hui-yüan commentary paused precisely at this point, wondering why after a rather detailed discussion on how illusion arises, the AFM has only a sentence or two on this logically very important counterthesis. He remarked:

...somehow the text ended here (or was destroyed here), and the meaning of how Suchness perfumes is absent.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The mind may be perfumed but avidya, ignorance, being a negation of vidya, knowledge, is not a logical "something" to be clouded. See p. 206 below.

<sup>2</sup>T. 44, 533c.

And it was at this point that he turned to "Master Yüan" (i.e., the historic Hui-yüan) and looked for a guideline. In effect, he quoted directly from the Ta-ch'eng-i-chang to supply the needed explanation.<sup>1</sup> The "missing portions" were then supplied.

What "perfumation by Suchness" gives rise to are these two: first, it gives rise to ignorance, and second, the deluded mind.<sup>2</sup>

According to the historic Hui-yüan, followed here by the psuedo-Hui-yüan, Suchness itself is supposed to produce its archenemy, avidya. Indian philosophers would find this illogical and intolerable. However, in the Chinese context this is not impossible. In fact, we shall see how Hui-yüan actually duplicated the argument of Emperor Wu of Liang in a slightly different fashion.

This is so because Suchness is undifferentiated, and therefore it can give rise to wu-ming. Its cognizing ability can know [objects] and therefore it [can be] covered by false views. So covered, the deluded mind is born.<sup>3</sup>

If we supply the Taoist logic derived from our earlier analysis of the essay by the Emperor, the sequences here involved

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 192b.

<sup>2</sup>T. 44. 533c.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

are totally explicable:

1. The undifferentiated suchness is dark and mysterious in the sense of hsüan.
2. That means wu-ming (not-lit, avidya, ignorance) can be.
3. The pre-cognitive Suchness (mind), leaving behind its self-sufficient mysterious state, comes to cognize objects.
4. So doing, it discriminates, becoming "listless" and finally "deluded" by the eternal colors.

Actually, what is said above has already been suggested by none other than the AFM itself but under the section on "perfumation by ignorance" where the same Sinitic "logic" was at work.

It may be said that on the ground of Suchness, ignorance appears. Ignorance, the primary cause of the defiled state, permeates into the Suchness. Because of this permeation, a deluded mind results.<sup>1</sup>

Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty would have used the term "shen-ming" for Suchness, and the result, according to Emperor Wu, would have been the deluded consciousness shih arrested by transient nien, thought-moments. The Sinitic elements here are too obvious to be denied.

Wonhyo was much more cautious and did not consider the "perfumation by ignorance" series along with the

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<sup>1</sup>Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 56.

discussion of the "perfumation by suchness." Instead, he initiated the theory of "internal perfumation" that was followed by Fa-tsang and others.<sup>1</sup>

The line about the power of Dharma that perfumes refers to the power of Suchness to perfume internally. Relying on this power, one can cultivate practices and accumulate [good roots], follow the path of perfections, [paramitas], from the initial [Bodhisattvic] stage to the final pure [Buddha-] field [bhumi] and be replete with upaya. [One can thereby] break through the realm of samsaric phenomena, which is produced by the mixed [pure-and-impure] consciousness and reveal the eternal [Buddha-] nature that transcends life and death.<sup>2</sup>

It is said, therefore, that when the samsara aspect of the mixed [pure-and-impure] consciousness [alayavijnana] is destroyed and the Dharmakaya is revealed, then at that time, the karmic and changing aspects of the perpetuating consciousness [mind-continuum] perishes and the mind of a priori enlightenment will return to its original state and become Pure Wisdom.<sup>3</sup>

Wonhyo, in so describing internal perfuming, follows fairly orthodox lines of interpretation. The deluded aspect of the alayavijnana has to be eliminated and the accumulation of good deeds will retrieve the original mind from the karmic stream.

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<sup>1</sup>See note in Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>T. 44. p. 211; for Fa-tsang's follow-up, see T.44. p. 271c.

<sup>3</sup>T. 44, p. 211a.

However, Wonhyo was a learned scholar and realized that, according to the Mahayana-samparigraha (She-lun) what is "beyond life and death" cannot be perfumed.

Question: the She-lun has said that perfuming can only occur when four conditions are met. It is said that the permanent Dharma cannot be perfumed. Why is it that here [in the AFM] ignorance is said to actually perfume Suchness?

Answer: that treatise [She-lun] speaks of the thinkable and therefore it says that the permanent Dharma cannot be perfumed. The work [AFM] speaks of the incomprehensible and therefore it is said that there is the perfuming of Suchness by ignorance and vice versa. The meaning of "perfuming" differs [in the two contexts]. The two (views) need not conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Wonhyo drew on the tradition that recognizes that the permanent tathagatagarbha is somehow mysteriously tainted. He reconciled the apparent differences.

However, Suchness in Indian Mahayana thought was the Unborn Absolute; Dharmata was generally seen as the support of realities. Conceivably, Suchness can, through the tathagatagarbha, act upon the human mind. However, can Suchness interact with Ignorance? Conversely, Ignorance may conceivably cloud the mind and therefore obscure Suchness. However, can Ignorance perfume Suchness itself? The She-lun says "no" but the Srimala sutra

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 239a. The She-lun specifies that only the alayavijnana can be perfumed; see T. 31, p. 165 c. and Ui Hakuju, Shōdaijōron kenkyū (Tokyo: 1935), p. 282.

suggests that the tathagatagarbha mysteriously tainted or perfumed can with its wealth of Buddha-dharmas provoke and direct the self-fulfilment of the innately pure germ in sentient beings.

The interaction of Suchness and Ignorance, as if they were two primordial forces, was intimated by the structure of the AFM, naively assumed by Hui-yüan and apologized for (in the name of the utter mystery of it all) by Wonhyo. Fa-tsang finally came out, without reservation, with the theory of a yin-yang<sup>1</sup> interaction scheme of these two "ontological" entities, and defended the notion of a "Dynamic of Creative Suchness" in open confrontation with the doctrine of the total passivity of Suchness held by the "new school."<sup>2</sup> He said:

Suchness has two aspects: the Unchanging and that which goes along with [changing] condition. (不變. 隨緣) Ignorance also has two aspects: that which is non-substantive, empty and that which [nevertheless] actively functions and completes affairs [of the world]. Analyzed in terms of the "true" and the "false," the first [of the two above pairs] combine to produce the Gate (aspect) of Suchness, while

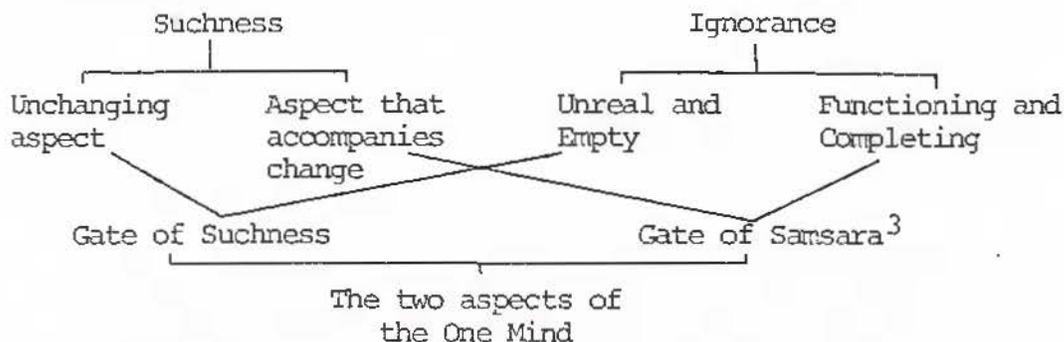
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<sup>1</sup>The yin-yang logic is implicit and it might be latent in the AFM. Hui-yuan used similar logic; see p. 194 above.

<sup>2</sup>See T. 45 pp. 500a, 481ab for sources on this difference. Fa-tsang borrowed the vocabulary of his opponents but for his own end, see for example Kobayashi Jitsugen, "Hōzo nō sanshōsetsu ni tsuite: Kegon ni okeru nyorai-zō kaishaku no mondai," JIBS, IX, No.1 (1961), pp. 237-240.

(the other two) the Gate of life and death (samsara).<sup>1</sup>

The binary division and reintegration lends itself to neat diagrammatization, which probably became popular around 800 A.D., if not earlier. Translated into diagrams, it means:<sup>2</sup>



Having spelled out this basic scheme, Fa-tsang elaborates on the structure of the Gate of Samsara, which has (as shown above) two component parts.

[The gate of samsara has two component parts:] the aspect of Suchness that accompanies change and the aspect of Ignorance that functions and completes. [These two component parts] have each two sub-aspects: that mode which negates

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 255c. The first sentence echoes ideas from Wonhyo, and the second can be traced to Hui-yüan or further back, but Fa-tsang's powerful statement should be considered as original.

<sup>2</sup>These diagrams are used still as instruction helps, cf. Takemura Shōhō, Daijō kishinron kōdoku.

<sup>3</sup>The Gate of Samsara "contains" the "real" Suchness. I would consider this formulation of a "creative Suchness" to be original. See Yamada Ryōken, "Nyoraizō engishū ni tsuite," Indogaku Bukkyōgaku ronshū (Kyoto: 1955)

its own being and affirms others, and that mode which affirms its essence and denies the others'.<sup>1</sup>

In terms reminiscent of Hegel, Fa-tsang's elaboration means that each component can be either in the mode of being-for-self/against-others or being-for-others/against-self.<sup>2</sup> From the 'one (gate of samsara) came the two (components) and from the two come the four (sub-aspects). Then come the eight:

The aspect of ignorance [that functions and completes] in the mode of "being-for-others/against-self" also can be divided into two aspects: that which is against the given state of affairs and is ready to show [others' true] nature and merits; that which can come to know [its own] superficiality of names and help the pure in its function.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, these two sub-sub-aspects represent ignorance in self-denial, either actively or passively affirming its opposite, namely, Suchness (the other). The more self-asserting sub-sub-aspects are as follows--they assert their ignorance and hide true Suchness.

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 255c.

<sup>2</sup>This coincidence is perhaps in the nature of monistic idealism.

<sup>3</sup>T. 44, p. 255c.

The aspect [of ignorance] in its "being-for-self/against-others" has [also] two aspects; that which [actively] seeks to obliterate the true principle [Suchness] and that which [more passively merely] produces a deluded mind.<sup>1</sup>

The words "active" and "passive" have been added in the translation to show what would be, again, a yin-yang type of subdivision.

Likewise, Suchness [that accompanies changes] in its "being-for-self/against-others" mode, has two aspects: that which [actively] opposes the deluded defilements and aspires to reveal its own virtue or power; and that which [more subtly] internally perfumes ignorance and arouses the pure functions [to seek for nirvana].

[So too, the same Suchness] in its "being-for-others/against-self" has two aspects: that which actually [too willingly] hides its own true nature; and that which [more passively] allows delusions to reign.<sup>2</sup>

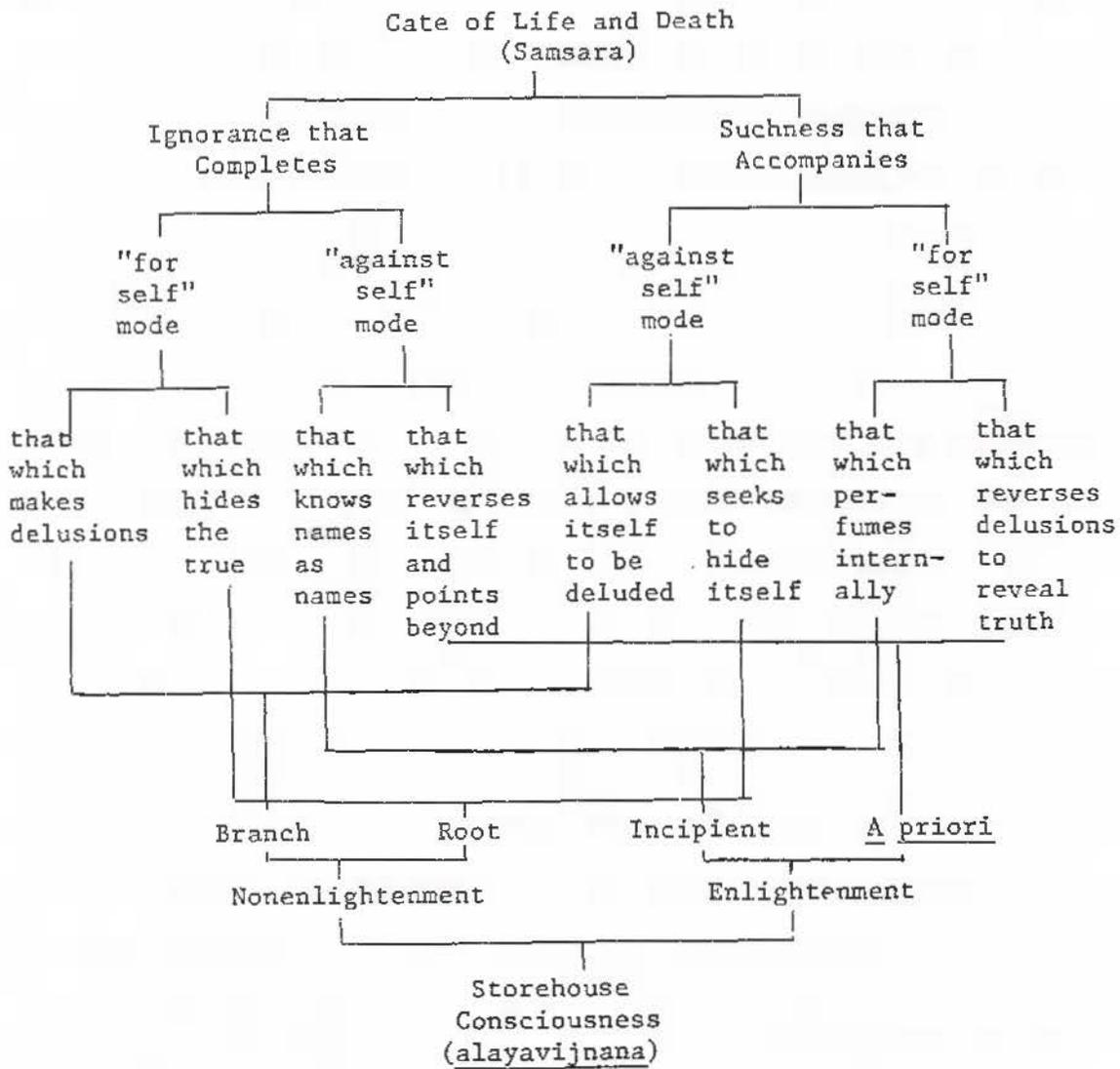
In this new scheme of Fa-tsang, which has only a vague link with the initial suggestion in the AFM, Wonhyo's idea of "internal perfuming" was subsumed as one of the four sub-sub-aspects of Suchness that accompanies change. The full "One-Two-Four-Eight" structure under the gate of samsara has been built. Fa-tsang went on to detail the recombinations of the eight back to the one ("Eight-

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 255c.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 255c-256a.

Four-Two-One"), telescoping them into the one of the alayavijnana. The following is a diagram of the involved dialectical synthesis:



The diagram above shows two movements. The top half, the expansion of one into eight, depicts the objective world of samsara and its constituents. The lower half,

the contraction of the eight into the one, shows the subjective side. Together, they show that all phenomena (samsara, at the top of the diagram) are consciousness only (storehouse consciousness, at the bottom of the diagram.) The key innovation of this scheme in the history of Chinese thought in general is that, although the expansion of the one into eight (upper half) can be anticipated by the Book of Changes (I Ching), the "telescoping" of external reality into consciousness (lower half), that is, subjective Idealism, is not in the classical I Ching tradition. The I Ching never says that the eight trigrams are "of the mind."<sup>1</sup>

Reality is made up of a positive (Suchness) and a negative (Ignorance) element. The combinations of this pair produce objectively the world of samsara and subjectively the various modes of enlightenment and nonenlightenment. Both Suchness and Ignorance can either deny itself or assert itself. The quantitative degrees of "positive" and "negative" attributes of the eight modes (in the middle of the diagram) can be "tabulated" as follows:

LEFT (Negative) Set of Four				(Positive) RIGHT Set of Four			
-3	-4	-2	-1	+2	+1	+3	+4

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<sup>1</sup>The Neo-Taoists did initiate a subjective reading of the I Ching, turning practical omenology into a spiritual guide aimed, not at mundane facts but at the metaphysical li.

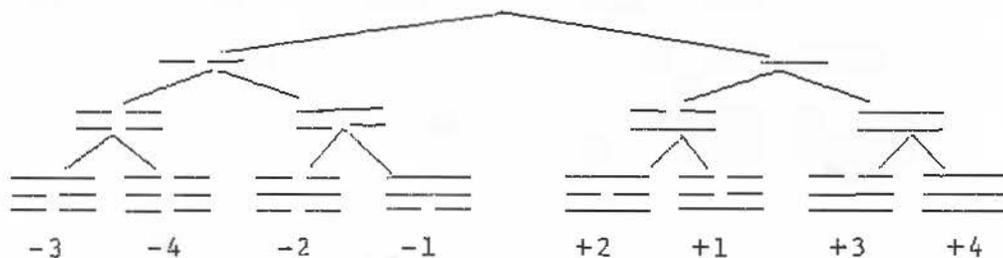
The numerical values (spanning plus to minus 4) show their relative endowment of Suchness (plus side) and of Ignorance (minus side). The mode furthestmost to the right (plus 4)--the active Suchness in its "for self (and against Ignorance)" mode--seeks aggressively to "reverse delusion to reveal truth (itself)." The fourth from the left (minus 1)--the self-effacing Ignorance in its "against self (and for Suchness)" mode--seeks to reverse its ignorant self and point beyond to the good. This pair (plus 4 and minus 1) in their union produces a priori enlightenment, their numerical total being "plus three", the best or most positive combination possible between two items from the two sets. Similarly, the other combinations can be so analyzed:

Incipient enlightenment	+3 and -2	total: +1
Branch nonenlightenment	-3 and 2	total: -1
Root nonenlightenment	-4 and 1	total: -3

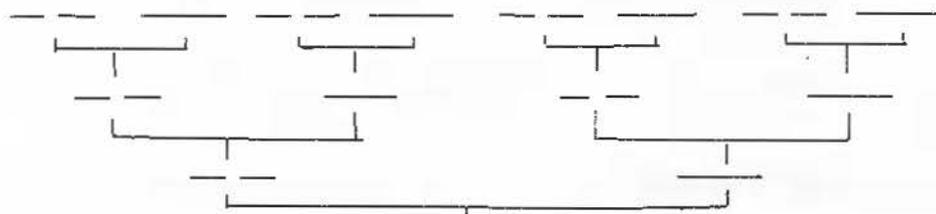
Fa-tsang's commentary on the AFM ingeniously shows that samsara corresponds to the alayavijnana and that the alayavijnana is the abode of enlightenment and nonenlightenment. Consciousness, though trapped in samsara, can seek out the Suchness elements and deliver itself from the mundane realm.

The I Ching says: From the Great Ultimate comes the two poles; from the two poles come the four forms

(hsiang); from the four forms come the eight trigrams.<sup>1</sup>  
 The diagram on p. 211 can be structurally reproduced in  
I Ching forms following the logic listed above.



The above diagram is my reconstruction showing the I Ching's influence on Fa-tsang's thinking. Actually, although the I Ching contains such an idea of evolution, the diagrammatical representation of it was not known before Fa-tsang's time. Strangely, a diagram similar to the one above was produced for the first time by the Sung Neo-Confucian, Shao Yung (1011-1077 A.D.), three centuries after Fa-tsang.<sup>2</sup>

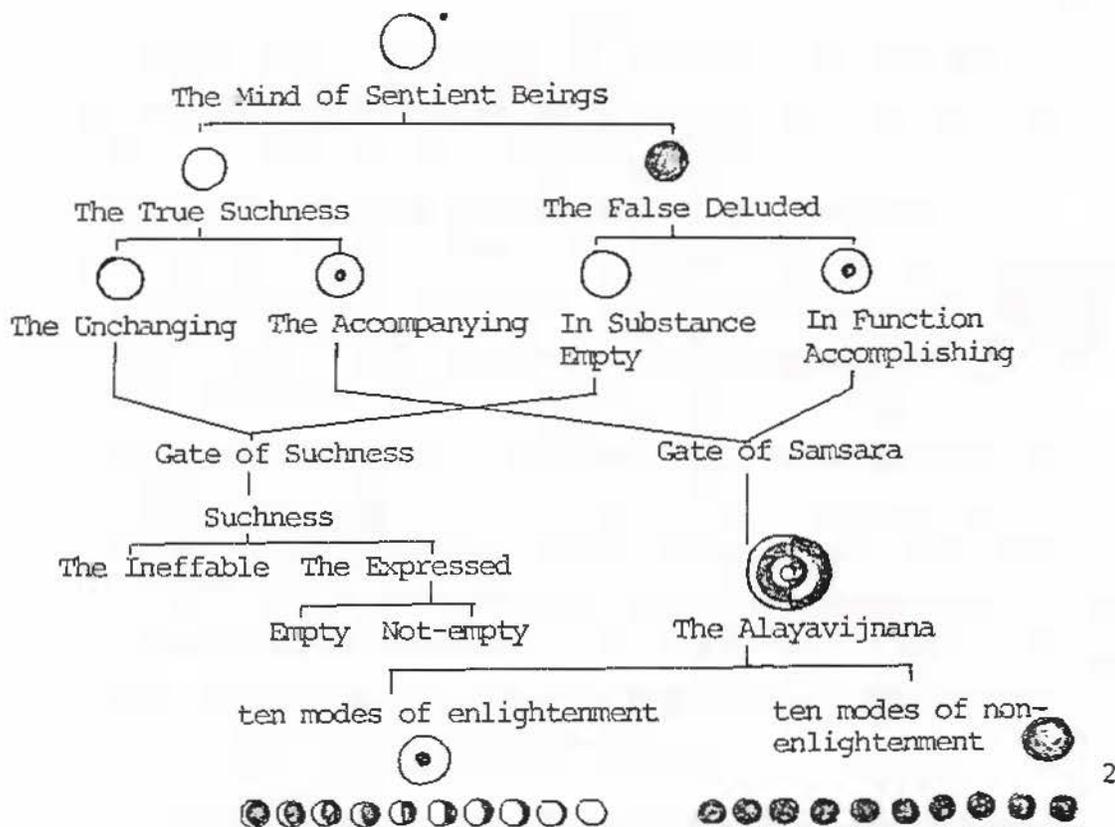


Shao Yung himself was probably influenced by Tsung-mi

<sup>1</sup>The Yi King, trans. James Legge (Oxford: 1899), p.373.

<sup>2</sup>The diagram is reproduced in Imai Usaburō, Sōdai ekigaku no kenkyū (Tokyo: 1958), p. 317.

(780-841 A.D.), patriarch of the Zen and the Hua-yen school. Tsung-mi was probably the first to summarize Fa-tsang's insights in Zen diagrams.<sup>1</sup> It was also around the time of Tsung-mi that the interest in diagrammatical teachings arose. This trend was supported by Zen, embraced by the Taoists and came to influence Neo-Confucians later.



<sup>1</sup>For a general study of Tsung-mi, see Jan Yün-hua, "Tsong-mi: his analysis of Ch'an Buddhism," T'oung Pao, LVIII (1974), pp. 1-54.

<sup>2</sup>The diagram here, much abbreviated (the commentary part has been eliminated), is based on the original in T. 48, No. 2015, pp. 410-413.

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A Digression: A Brief Explanation of Tsung-mi's diagram

The use of diagrams, especially in Zen, is a tool in itself. Ideally speaking, the diagram on the last page should speak for itself. The following is a brief explanation.

The mind is essentially pure  (white circle for purity) but there is the "accidental defilement"  (the black dot by the side of the white circle) which can taint it. This mind of sentient beings contain both Suchness  (white circle) and false delusions  (black circle). The intercourse between these two produces Suchness  (white circle) or samsara  (black center in a white circle). The unchanging Suchness and the empty falsehood produce the former as the active ignorance and the accompanying Suchness the latter.

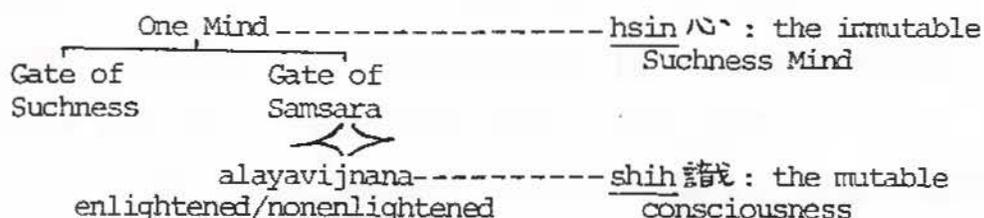
The gate of samsara corresponds to the alayavijnana. The alayavijnana is represented by its unique diagram. The left (white-black-white) concentric half-circles is really the I Ching trigram  transposed (white=yang=unbroken line; black=yin=broken line.) Similarly, the right half is the I Ching trigram of  transposed. (It should be noted that the Yin-yang circle  is a ninth or tenth century A.D. product.)

The alayavijnana has two aspects: enlightenment and nonenlightenment. The former is represented by ten circles showing the change from a crescent moon to a full moon. (A similar set is used in Zen and is known as the T'ao-shan wu-wei-t'u      .) The latter is represented by ten dark circles.

Unlike the Japanese, the Chinese had always been reading Fa-tsang's commentary on the AFM through Tsung-mi's redaction. The Taoist influence on Hua-yen increased after Fa-tsang (the third patriarch). Ch'eng-kuan (the fourth) and Tsung-mi (the fifth) explicitly harmonized Hua-yen and I Ching thought, paving the way for the revival of I Ching scholarship which blossomed in Sung Neo-Confucian circles.

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As the diagram on p. 211 above shows, there are some unique elements in Fa-tsang's understanding of the relationship between Suchness and Ignorance: (1) Suchness in its "accompanying" aspect is clearly dynamic and without its acquiescence, samsara could not exist. (2) This means that Suchness is not merely supporting phenomena but is somehow "embedded" within it. Because Fa-tsang says that chen-ju sui-yüan pu-pien 真如隨緣不變 (Suchness participates in all realities without changing its essential quality), the sense of the immanence of the absolute within every particular item in the universe is established. Li (principle) and shih (fact, particular) are identical. The Zen confidence in the "goodness" of the natural world is derived from this doctrine of immanence. Chen-ju, Suchness, tathata or reality-as-it-is merges somehow with tzu-jan, nature, "self-be," as-is-ness. A stone, a raindrop hanging from the eave, a falling petal become the carrier of the divine. (3) The diagram shows that the alayavijnana exists in an interdependent relationship only with the gate of samsara.



Samsara is (storehouse) consciousness only, but the consciousness (shih) is structurally inferior to and distinct from the One Mind (hsin), the Mind that encompasses Suchness and samsara in its being. (4) So considered, it is inevitable that the "new school", known as "Wei-shih", Consciousness Only, with its main interest in the alayavijnana, could not measure up to the Hua-yen school and its basic doctrine that the three worlds are "wei-hsin-tso", created by Mind Only. It was unfortunate that Hsüan-tsang, conscious of the "old school"'s abuse of the Yogacara philosophy, called his "new" school the "Fa-hsiang" school that expertly analyzes the phenomenal forms (hsiang 相). This emphasis on forms by the "new school" only affirmed its opponents' conviction that the insights of the "new school" remained arrested at the phenomenal or samsara level of the alayavijnana, falling short of an insight into the Suchness Mind which is one with fa-hsing 法性 (Dharmata, Suchness),

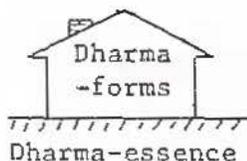
Other points of contention aside, the "new" and the "old" school disagreed on one crucial point: the nature of Suchness. The "new school" held the idea that Dharmata "supports" reality, like the ground of a house supporting the house itself. "Suchness," the "new school" says, "is not active and cannot create (tso 作) 'the various dharmas.'"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 45. 481ab summarizes the two opposing positions.

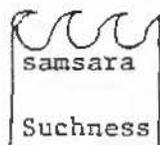
The phenomenal forms themselves are "specific." The house-ness of a house cannot be reduced to one homogeneous essence because a house is different from a tree and the two are something other than the ground that supports all phenomena. The "old school", now defended by Hua-yen, argued to the contrary. The three worlds are created by the true mind. Suchness is inactive in one respect (pu-pien, unchanging) but in another, Suchness follows pratyaya (condition, sui-yüan.) Instead of the "house-and-ground" metaphor, Fa-tsang used the "water-and-wave" metaphor. Phenomena (the waves) are created or generated out of the noumenal Suchness itself (the water); universal principle (li) and particular facts (shih) interpenetrate (like water is wave and vice versa.) The two metaphors are contrasted below:

#### House-and-ground metaphor



House (form, lakṣaṇa) is supported by ground (essence, Dharmata), but the two (form and essence, hsiang and hsing) are distinct, separate entities.

#### Water-and-wave metaphor (AFM)



Waves: the mutable phenomena/consciousness (shih); function (yung)

Water: the subsisting Suchness/mind (hsin); substance (ti)

Water and waves interpenetrate; noumena is phenomena; universal is particular.

The I Ching, the yin-yang philosophy and the Taoist paradox of wu-wei had influenced Fa-tsang's interpretation of the nature of Suchness as "changeless yet dynamic." However, Fa-tsang based his interpretation on the AFM, especially on its "water and wave" metaphor. It is therefore necessary to inquire into the nature and origin of this metaphor in the AFM. This is because the metaphor in the AFM might have been "Sinicized."

The AFM depicts Suchness (the water) turning into phenomena (the waves) when ignorance (the wind) acts as a conditioning factor.

All forms of mind and consciousness are the product of ignorance. Forms of ignorance do not exist apart from the essence of enlightenment. They cannot be destroyed and yet they cannot not be destroyed. This is like the water of the sea being stirred up by the wind. The form of water and the form of the wind are inseparable. Water is not moving when left to itself. If the wind ceases, so cease the forms of movement. The wetness, however, remains undestroyed.<sup>1</sup>

So too it is with the "innately pure mind" of sentient beings. The wind of ignorance stirs it [the water]. The [pure] mind and ignorance were [originally] formless or shapeless. The two are [now] inseparable [being defined by the wave-forms that rise and fall like samsara.] The mind is not moving when left to itself. If ignorance [the wind] ceases, then the forms of continuity [the waves, symbolizing both phenomena and their correlation, the perpetuating consciousness

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<sup>1</sup> Compare my translation with Hakeda's in Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 41. I have tried not to interpolate any interpretation in this section.

shih, alayavijnana] will also cease. All the while, however, the essence of wisdom [the wetness] remains undestroyed.<sup>1</sup>

Implied in the above passage, I think, is the t'i-yung relationship between Suchness Mind and phenomena or consciousness. Both phenomena and consciousness are the "forms of ignorance" mentioned in the preceding passage. The line "The forms of ignorance cannot be destroyed and yet they cannot not be destroyed" means this: Since the forms do not exist apart from the essence of enlightenment (waves are water nonetheless), being the function (yung) of a mind-substance (t'i), they cannot be destroyed. However, in so far as they mislead man away from seeing the eternal substance (t'i) of the Suchness Mind, these forms should be eliminated.

Wonhyo realized the magic in this paradoxical t'i-yung ("not-two") relationship, for he noted that

Although the eternal mind [the sea] moves and the mind [water] and samsara [waves] are not different, yet the eternal mind never loses its own essence as that which is beyond life and death (samsara). Therefore, [in another sense,] samsara and mind are not the same. Had they been totally identical, the mind-substance will disappear along with the destruction of the phenomenal consciousness and its forms. That would mean the heresy of annihilationism.

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<sup>1</sup>My translation with explanatory interpolations; cf. Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 41. Hakeda, overlooking the t'i-yung structure, gives a different reading of the passages.

Had they been totally different, then the mind would have no business following conditions (pratyaya) when the wind of ignorance perfumes it. And that would mean the fallacy of eternalism. <sup>1</sup>

Like Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty, Wonhyo was anxious that the mind-substance must not disappear with the phenomena to be destroyed. Like the Emperor, Wonhyo underlined the eternal substance to avoid the heresy of annihilationism (ucchedavada, the view that reality is totally fragmented). Likewise, he emphasized the functional aspect of the dynamic mind to avoid the fallacy of eternalism. However, at heart, this crypto-wu-wei paradox favours a doctrine of a permanent Suchness Mind. The "water and wave" metaphor in the AFM seems to carry a Sinitic overtone.

The metaphor is known to be taken over from a similar --but in intention, very different--metaphor in the Lankavatara sutra. The Lankavatara sutra uses the "water and wave metaphor" to explain the organic relationship between the alayavijnana and the other consciousness.

The sea of the storehouse-consciousness is permanently subsisting.  
The wind of the phenomenal realm stirs it.  
Various consciousness springs up [at the sea of the storehouse-consciousness,]  
churning out like waves [responding, moment to moment, each to its own sense-field]....

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 208b.

The way in which the sea gives rise to the waves,  
is the way in which the seven vijnanas arise  
inseparably with the mind [citta, alayavijnana.]  
Just as the sea agitates  
and various waves swell out  
so too the seven vijnanas come about  
not different from the mind. <sup>1</sup>

The metaphor of "water and wave" is used by the Lankavatara sutra to explain a psychological process in which the five senses, the mental center, the ego-conscious mind (manas) arise together with the eighth consciousness in an organic fashion, being stimulated into endless karmic entanglements by the alluring phenomenal realms of the sense-fields. The metaphor is not used to depict a theory of the ontological generation of samsara (the phenomenal realm or reality) from out of the Suchness Mind itself. The discrepancy did not go unnoticed. Hui-yüan in his Ta-ch'eng-i-chang noted:

In the Lankavatara sutra, the wind is the phenomenal realm, but in the AFM, it is said to be ignorance itself. Why is this so? This is because both phenomenal realm and ignorance, acting as wind, are involved with movement. [In fact,] we can say that ignorance, the deluded mind, or illusory realities can play the role of the wind. Therefore the AFM finds the deluded mind, the illusory realities and ignorance to be agents that perfumes. Perfuming is analogous to [the action of] the wind.... The Lankavatara sutra puts emphasis on mo 末 secondary issues [whereas the AFM addresses itself to the more basic, pen 本. Therefore the AFM designates

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<sup>1</sup>The sloka (verse) is from T. 16, p. 848b; see other versions on p. 523bc and p. 594c and compare my translation with Suzuki trans. The Lankavatara Sutra, pp. 40, 42.

ignorance as the wind, whereas] the Lankavatara sutra designates phenomena as the wind. These two views are not in conflict.<sup>1</sup>

However, there are crucial differences and the AFM's formulation is unique. In the Lankavatara sutra, the phenomenal realm is said to lure the various consciousnesses to action, but in the AFM, the Suchness Mind (influenced by ignorance) creates the phenomenal realm out of itself. The Lankavatara sutra depicts the position that namarupa (name and form) "exists" because a discriminative consciousness (as subject or ego) exists. Subject and object are "interdependent."<sup>2</sup> The AFM, on the other hand, suggests that the absolute subject, the Suchness Mind, creates the objects themselves.

There is another line in the AFM which might support the AFM's usage of the "water and wave" metaphor, but this line also poses problems of interpretation:

心生滅者 依如来藏故有生滅心

The (One) Mind in its samsara aspect (hsin-sheng-mieh):  
Relying upon the tathagatagarbha  
is there the mind of life and death (sheng-mieh-hsin).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 532cf.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 175-176 above. In Yogacara philosophy, this interdependence is described in terms of paratantra (依他性起 i-ta-hsing-ch'i), origination relying upon the selfhood of another.

<sup>3</sup>See Hakeda trans. AFM, p. 36: "The Mind as phenomena is grounded on the Tathagatagarbha."

The closest antecedent to the above passage is a line in the Srimala sutra, "Relying upon the tathagatagarbha is there life and death."<sup>1</sup> The Srimala sutra also says that the tathagatagarbha is the "support" (niraya; Chinese 依 "to rely"), the "holder" (adhara) and the "base" (pratistha) of all realities.<sup>2</sup> Whether Suchness (tathagatagarbha) merely passively "support" phenomena or actively "create" phenomena depends on the meaning of the word 依<sup>3</sup>, "relying on." The Srimala sutra's usage of the terms "niraya, adhara, pratistha" does not suggest that "dynamic and creative" quality Fa-tsang has in mind for Suchness. It seems that Fa-tsang has taken "relying upon" to mean "from out of." Suchness generates realities out of itself. Fa-tsang gives a more "ontological" interpretation to what originally was an epistemological description of the interdependence of "subject-support" and "object-phenomena."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. 12, p. 221b; see Wayman's translation, op. cit., p. 105.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Hsüan-tsang used the word "i" in his translation of paratantra as i-ta-hsing-ch'i. "I" does not mean "from out of" here. It only means "depending upon."

<sup>4</sup>It is possible that Fa-tsang was influenced by Kuo-hsiang's understanding of "dependence" 待. In his commentary on Chuang-tzu, Kuo Hsiang spoke of the Tao as that which things can rely on.

It is possible that Fa-tsang's more "ontological" understanding of the tathagatagarbha and its role in the process of Suchness' creation was influenced by another motif in the I Ching. In the I Ching, it is said that "The alternation of yin and yang is the Tao.... When yin and yang are not yet differentiated, this is called shen, [cosmic] Geist."<sup>1</sup> This cosmic spirit predates yin and yang and as Chou Tun-i (1017-1073 A.D.) describes it<sup>2</sup>, it is "active and yet not active, passive and yet not passive." This paradoxical state of being neither active like yang nor passive like yin is called "shen." The shen mediates between the (One) Great Ultimate which is most sublime, pure, passive and the (two) ethers of yin and yang. Curiously, Fa-tsang favoured Wonhyo's description of the tathagatagarbha in the paradoxical terms of "defiled and yet not defiled, not defiled and yet defiled." Furthermore, the tathagatagarbha also mediates between the (One) Mind and the (double-aspected, pure-and-impure) alayavijnana.

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<sup>1</sup> I Ching, Appendix 3. A. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Just as Shao Yung was probably influenced by Tsung-mi (see p. 214 above), Chou Tun-i's formulation of the nature of shen can also be indebted to Fa-tsang. The phrase tung-erh-pu-tung, ching-erh-pu-ching, shen yeh 動而不動 靜而不靜 神也 used by Chou in his T'ung-shu was not, as far as I can ascertain, in the Han I Ching scholarship. Unlike shen, matter (wu 物) is neither active nor passive. Because shen (psyche) has this sublime quality, it can t'ung wu 通物 (penetrate things); see Chou, T'ung-shu, chap. 16.

The ONE	<u>I Ching</u> The Great Ultimate (pure, passive)	<u>Fa-tsang</u> The Suchness Mind (pure, not mobile)
	<u>Shen</u> : "active yet not active, passive yet not passive."	<u>Tathagatagarbha</u> : "pure yet tainted, tainted yet pure."
The TWO	<u>Yin-yang</u> : passive-impure and active-pure	<u>Alayavijnana</u> : "half-pure, half-impure."

The coincidence of the two schemes outlined above might explain certain unique developments in Chinese Buddhist thought. Both the shen and the tathagatagarbha belong to the noumenal realm. Shen is not "physical", hsing-hsia, as the two material ethers are. Tathagatagarbha is not bound to the samsaric realm like the alayavijnana. Both mediate the noumenal and the phenomenal, paradoxically in and yet not of the realm of action and impurity. The Great Ultimate and the Suchness Mind have been represented by a white circle ○, while the yin-yang and the alayavijnana diagrams balance the dark and the light elements:

☯ ☯ . Change and causation touch upon yin-yang and the alayavijnana, but just barely the shen and the tathagatagarbha. Given this possible parallel pattern, Fa-tsang might indeed have fused unconsciously the cosmogonic scheme of the I Ching and the psychological orientation of the Lankavatara sutra. The AFM, having subtly incorporated Sinitic elements, eased this transition.

The Sinitic elements in the Paramartha-translated AFM allowed the Chinese commentators to further develop these Chinese modes of thought. We have not discounted, however, the possibility that these elements were included in the translation process,<sup>1</sup> nor has the Siksananda translation in the T'ang been considered.<sup>2</sup> The following is a very brief comparison of the two texts focusing on the issue of the exploration of the central metaphor.<sup>3</sup>

Paramartha version

If the water ceases to be, then the forms of the wind would also cease to be, because it would have nothing to rely on.

Since the water does not cease to be, the forms of the wind can continue to exist.

Siksananda version

If the water ceases to be, then the active forms also cease to be, because there is nothing to be relied on and nothing that relies on.

Since the water subsists, the moving forms can continue.

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<sup>1</sup>It is generally recognized that the Paramartha version reads much more smoothly, which can be due to Chinese authorship, liberal free-hand translation or a stroke of translation genius.

<sup>2</sup>The issues here are not solved yet; see one comparison by Kashiwagi Hiroo, "Shikushananda no vaku to tsutaerareru Daijō kishinron," JIBS, X No. 2 (1962), pp. 124-125.

<sup>3</sup>I follow the edition of Akashi Etatsu, Daijō kishinron, p. 29, which gives the two texts in parallel form.

Paramartha version (cont.)      Siksananda version (cont.)

It is only that the wind should cease in order that the active forms can cease.

(nil)

The water does not cease to exist in any case.

(nil)

So it is with ignorance. It has to rely on the essence of the mind to be active.

So it is with sentient beings. It is ignorance's power which sets their minds moving.

If the mind-essence ceases, then sentient beings' existence also ceases, because it has nothing to rely on.

If avidya ceases, then the active marks also cease, but the mind-substance does not cease. If the mind ceases, then sentient beings will end, because there is nothing to rely on and nothing that relies on.

As the essence [of mind] does not cease, the mind [or mental functions] may continue.

As the essence of mind does not cease, the active marks of the mind may continue.

When stupidity ceases, the marks of the mind also cease, but the wisdom of the mind never ceases.

(nil)

Comparing the above two versions, it is significant that the second version did away precisely with those radical elements essential to the Paramartha version and leaned

more towards the more "orthodox" position of the Lanka-  
vatara sutra. To enumerate:<sup>1</sup>

1. The Siksananda version avoided the issue of the wind of ignorance (despite the fact that it accepted that metaphor when it occurred in the text earlier), and limited its discussion to the psychological relationship between the essence of the mind and the marks of the mind.
2. The Siksananda version avoided also the issue of the wateriness (wetness), symbol of the non-destructable wisdom; what would be corresponding passages are absent.
3. The Siksananda version recalled the central idea of the mutual dependence of that which relies and that which is being relied upon, primarily with reference to reality and the mind. In other words, it denies the idea that realities are generated out of a subsisting mind.
4. The Siksananda version had generally a more "reserved" attitude to the mind, which is clearly more the alayavijnana than Paramartha's noumenal mind. Whereas the Paramartha text is concerned that sentient beings must continue (on the naive assumption that they shouldn't disappear), the Siksananda version really suggested the Yogacara position that the various selves (atman) would and should cease to be if only the (falsely individuated) mind also ceases to be.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The following is using the Paramartha version as the standard; see justification of this on the next page.

<sup>2</sup>Although it might not be transparent, the Siksananda version implicitly encourages the need to "let the mind cease to exist" whereas the Paramartha version is for a subsisting core on which sentient existence's continuation can depend.

The Siksananda version is more faithful to the message in the Lankavatara sutra. It is also more "logical". For example, the "wetness" was not an issue in the Lankavatara and appears to be an "extraneous metaphor" added by the AFM.<sup>1</sup> However, considering the fact that the Siksananda version did not reject the metaphor of the wind of avidya and that of wetness in the basic passage that precedes the discussion portion cited above, it would appear that the Siksananda version was--at least in this one aspect--a revised version of the Paramartha version. In trimming the excesses of the Paramartha version, the second version was perhaps an answer to the "new school" or a compromise or a critique of the "old school."<sup>2</sup> Since the present study explicitly intends only to understand how Chinese elements flowed into and out of the historically definitive Paramartha version, these finer

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<sup>1</sup>The "wetness" metaphor is somewhat irrational because the essence of wisdom, says the AFM, is there no matter whether man is enlightened or not. There are two possible sources for this additional metaphor as I see it: (1) the Indian "water-and-wave" metaphor might have been fused with the "river-and-sea" metaphor in Chuang-tzu chap. 1 "Autumn Flood", or (2) with traditions in the Ratnagotravibhaga, which recalls the metaphors of "wind of improper thoughts" and "waves of karmic defilements" (see Takasaki, op. cit., pp. 236-238) and compares the self-nature (svabhava) of the tathagatagarbha to the "texture of water" (see ibid, p. 201.)

<sup>2</sup>The background of the second translation of the AFM is somewhat confusing. Fa-tsang, who would not have liked the new edition, was supposed to have overseen it. Of course, there might be two Sanskrit Ur-texts.

controversies on authorship and the mystery of two translations need not be a key concern here. It is important to know, however, that those technical issues do exist.

A cryptic line concerning perfuming by Suchness on ignorance in the AFM generated, in time, the Hua-yen notion of a "dynamic, creative suchness."<sup>1</sup> Fa-tsang brought to bear on this issue an innovative scheme drawn from native I Ching worldviews as well as from the key metaphor of water-and-wave in the AFM. The One Mind, the innately pure mind, the tathagatagarbha created the phenomenal world when it came in contact with "the wind of ignorance." The wind acts as condition pratyaya. Suchness is the cause, hetu, and samsara is the result, phala. So far we have stressed the similarity with classical Chinese ideas: the original inactive state is activated; substance (t'i) evolves into function (yung).

Hua-yen philosophy is, however, as will be shown later, more than Lao-tzu's philosophy updated, and actually there was a subtle reaction precisely against the pen-mo sequence or the implication that "activity follows upon original inactivity." That classical "cosmogonic" scheme had been

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<sup>1</sup>Chinese Buddhists regard the theory of "dynamic Suchness" as a causation theory superior to the Yogacara school's. The hierarchy of causation theories are: (i) karma causation, (ii) alayavijnana causation, (iii) tathagatagarbha or Suchness causation and (iv) Dharmadhatu causation; see Takakusu, Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, pp. 30-41.

challenged by the Buddhist idea of a "beginningless" samsara<sup>1</sup> or, in the AFM, a "beginningless" ignorance of a "sudden" deluded thought.<sup>2</sup>

These last pages of this chapter will seek to correct a possible misconception that nothing is new in Chinese Buddhist thought. Although it might carry us a bit too far from the AFM itself, yet to do justice to the innovative elements, the following brief notes are necessary.

Wonhyo was too learned and sharp a thinker to accept the idea that at first there is a calm piece of water which came to be ruffled up in time by the wind to form waves only on the surface. The original metaphor in the Lankavatara sutra itself was more dynamic than that; it depicted a ceaseless swelling of suboceanic waters being churned out into waves. That image of an endless process of change, an almost autogenetic or instantaneous generation of forms, was not missed by the master. Wonhyo insisted that "it is the whole body of water which moves,"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> T'i-yung (substance and function) has moved already somewhat away from the pen-mo (origin and end) concern for temporality to a more ontological scheme (i.e., vertical scheme).

<sup>2</sup> Hakeda trans AFM, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> T 44. 208b.

and that the "body of water" should not be considered as the fusion of samsara (life and death) and nirvana (neither life nor death). This is because the fusion of samsara and nirvana is considered by the AFM to be the alayavijnana, whereas Wonhyo saw rightly that the union of water and wave is the union of the Suchness Mind and samsara.<sup>1</sup> From this insistence on the ceaseless creation and the participation of the One Mind in all particulars came eventually the Hua-yen doctrine of "Dharmadhatu causation." The universe in every instant is continually regenerating itself in every part of its being.<sup>2</sup> In more ways than one, the Hua-yen philosophy was a kind of proto-Tantric philosophy produced in China. Whereas Indian Tantra drew upon the Dravidian lore, Hua-yen drew upon a comparable, dynamic, powerful and extravagant cosmic worldview native to China.<sup>3</sup> The AFM was a very important catalyst to that grandiose vision of Hua-yen.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> See Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 39-41.

<sup>3</sup> The Avatamsaka (Hua-yen) sutra has the Sun-Buddha, Vairocana, as its key figure and carries strong Tantric overtones. Both Hua-yen and Tantra share the interest in a basic cosmic reality (Suchness, Adibuddha), in male-female interactions (yin-yang, sexo-yoga), enlightenment in the body ( a priori enlightenment ), the power of the tathagata-garbha, cosmologies and immanence of the Absolute. The more metaphysical Taoist tradition perhaps eliminated the cruder and more mythological outlook that one finds in Indian Tantra. The Zen use of the circle-diagrams can be regarded as Sinitic mandalas.

Fa-tsang apparently was not satisfied with the theory of "Dynamic Suchness" suggested by the AFM. In the AFM, Suchness still requires an auxiliary condition (pratyaya)--the wind of ignorance--to create the phenomenal world. If indeed Suchness is the one and only reality, then it should be able to generate phenomena without depending on "the nature of another" (i-ta-hsing-ch'i). Fa-tsang did formulate a theory of Suchness' autogenesis known as hsing-ch'i (性起). Suchness can arouse itself to produce all. The term "hsing-ch'i" combines the eternalism of fa-hsing and the causationism of yüan-ch'i. Dharmata (fa-hsing法性) generates phenomenal causative realities. This ingenious use of the Chinese language was extended to an analysis of the term "ju-lai" (如来), thus-come, the Chinese for Tathagata. Ju is related to chen-ju (真如), Suchness, and lai, which suggests "coming-and-going," is related to causation. Ju-lai therefore signifies hsing-ch'i, essence arousal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A good concise article on essence arousal in Hua-yen philosophy is that of Tamaki Koshirō, "Kegon no shōki ni tsuite," Indotetsugaku to Bukkyō no shomondai (Tokyo: 1951), pp. 281-309. The hsing-ch'i theory is used by Hua-yen to oppose and negate yüan-ch'i (pratitya-samutpada) which was understood as "inferior", i.e. phenomenal causation. It is also used to negate the T'ien-t'ai theory of "essence possession" (性具) i.e. every man possesses Buddha-essence. Hsing-ch'i is supposed to "resolve" the tension between eternalism and causationism; see Chapter Four below.

Fa-tsang based this new theory on the title of chapter 32 in the 40-chaptered Hua-yen sutra, Ju-lai hsing-ch'i, benefitting from the particular choice of Chinese words used in the translation.<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit original is, as Takasaki Jikido has shown, Tathagatotpattisambhava.<sup>2</sup>

Here "utpatti" means the birth of the Buddha, i.e., the attainment of bodhi, while "sambhava" is used to show the manifestation of the dharmakaya in various forms of Buddha's activities. The former signifies Buddha's Wisdom (jnana) while the latter signifies Buddha's Compassion (karuna).<sup>3</sup>

Hsing-ch'i in its original Sanskrit has nothing whatsoever to do with a causation theory concerning the self-generated power of creation of Dharmata or Suchness.

However, Hsing-ch'i can imply the awakening of the Buddha-essence in man and it would correspond to the concept of the "arousal of the bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment." Hsing-ch'i was understood in that "subjective, meditative" format as the awakening of the Buddha-germ in man by the first patriarch of the Hua-yen

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<sup>1</sup>Another Chinese translation yields "Manifestation of the Buddha" (如来) 出現, ch'u-hsien), T. 10, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup>It is not gotrasambhava as might be construed from the Chinese, i.e., hsing (gotra), ch'i (sambhava).

<sup>3</sup>Takasaki Jikidō, "Kegon kyōgaku to nyoraizō shisō," Kegon shisō, ed. by Nakamura Hajime (Kyoto: 1960), pp. 282-288. The above quote is taken from the English summary at the back, p. 11.

school, Tu-shun (557-640 A.D.), likewise by Chih-yen, the second patriarch. Fa-tsang cosmicized and objectified this idea of "awakening the Buddha-germ," because he tended to see the tathagatagarbha in ontological terms. The arousal of one's innate germ of enlightenment, the Buddha-nature, became now the generation of the phenomenal realm from the Dharma-essence.<sup>1</sup>

All these points are beyond the concern of this thesis except for the interesting fact that the AFM, Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun, suggests by its very title, the Awakening of Faith, the awakening or the arousing of the Suchness Mind. Although the phrase "arousing the bodhi-citta" did not appear in the AFM, the general drive of the AFM treatise supports implicitly that doctrine. The arousing of the bodhicitta was central to Tantric Buddhism. The AFM, being a late Mahayana sastra indeed anticipated the Tantric tradition and helped to promote it.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter, we have studied the key concept of "Dynamic Suchness" and Fa-tsang's contribution to the understanding of the full significance of the AFM.

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<sup>1</sup>Tamaki, *op. cit.* traces this development. See also Tamaki Koshirō, "The Development of the Thought of Tathagatagarbha from India to China," JIBS IX, No. 1 (1961), pp. 378-386.

<sup>2</sup>Japanese Shingon (Mantrayana) inherited a Chinese-fabricated work, a commentary on the AFM by Naagarjuna (sic).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Legacy of the Awakening of Faith in Mahayana

Guided by Fa-tsang, the AFM fulfils its destiny as one of the crown jewels of the Buddhist Dharma in the Far East. In retrospect, the path to glory taken by this short treatise seems to be just short of miraculous. The AFM emerged as an obscure text towards the end of the "dark" age of disunity. Soon afterwards, in the Sui dynasty that reunited China in 589 A.D., the monk Fa-ching in his catalogue of sutras expressed doubts concerning the AFM's claim to be an authentic Indian work. In the T'ang period that followed, rumours charging that the AFM was a forgery circulated. The suspicion was fanned no doubt by the rise of the "new school" of Hsüan-tsang.

The AFM not only survived these controversies but rose triumphantly above its attackers in the reign of the Empress Wu (685-705 A.D.). The protege of Empress Wu, Fa-tsang (643-712 A.D.), brought his genius to bear on the text. Inspired by the AFM, the patriarch of the Hua-yen school succeeded in producing a final Sinitic Mahayana synthesis of the Buddhist Dharma. The glory attained then

by the AFM coincided with the peak of Buddhist glory in and around 700 A.D. The career of the "AFM tradition" studied in the thesis, the text itself and the three classical commentaries, spanned therefore China's "dark ages" and her "high medieval" period.<sup>1</sup> The AFM tradition so defined bears witness to the times.

In this concluding chapter, I will review the key points of the thesis and reflect on the socio-cultural milieu in which the AFM found itself and in which the AFM tradition unfolded.<sup>2</sup> Three topics will be examined:

1. From Despair to Hope: the historical fate of the AFM.
2. Astride India and China: the AFM as a catalyst to Sinitic Mahayana.
3. Beyond the Intellectual Synthesis of Fa-tsang: the Zen reaction and discontent.

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<sup>1</sup>See the periodization scheme mentioned in the footnote on p. 5 above. The AFM, appearing around 600 A.D., coincided with the general emergence of Sinitic Mahayana that came between the early medieval period (400-600 A.D.) and the high medieval era (600-800 A.D.).

<sup>2</sup>This chapter returns to the sociological concerns of the Introduction chapter which surveyed the cultural milieu up to the appearance of the AFM. "Comparative religion" issues will also be touched upon in this concluding section.

1. From Despair to Hope: the historical fate of the AFM

The career of the AFM tradition spanned a period that saw a traumatic series of events affecting the Buddhist sangha. Following the unprecedented prosperity of the sangha in the 500-550 A.D. period, the community suffered the persecution of 574-576 A.D. in the north. From out of the ashes of this fire baptism, Sinitic Mahayana arose in a burst of energy unknown since.<sup>1</sup> The age of the degenerate Dharma, that was thought to begin in 552 A.D., arrived only for those who decried the new prosperity that the sangha regained in the Sui-T'ang period of peace and general prosperity. Empress Wu's patronage of the faith marked the second peak of Buddhist expansion.<sup>2</sup>

It would seem natural that the AFM during this time might mean different things to different people. Fa-tsang had the definitive understanding, but his is only one of several possible interpretations of the AFM. One should expect that Fa-tsang, who experienced neither the 574 nor the 845 A.D. persecution of the Buddhists, brought a unique life-experience or understanding to the AFM text itself.

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<sup>1</sup>The number of eminent monks recorded is highest in the Sui period, about 4.4 persons per year; see Yamasaki Hiroshi's painstaking tabulation in his Shina chūsei Bukkyō no tenkai (Tokyo: 1942), pp. 367-368.

<sup>2</sup>The outward prosperity of the sangha was not matched by the number of eminent monks in the Chou Wu period; ibid.

The introduction chapter has suggested the theme that Buddhist ideas and insights into truth and the nature of reality affected men and societies. The Chinese were converted to the faith and they built up an alternate institution, the sangha, alongside the traditional family, clan and state. The temple as a refuge from the sea of suffering in an age of chaos became an expanding economic institution. The sangha was not, as is often one-sidedly depicted--usually by unsympathetic Confucian observers--a parasitic institution. The temple manorial system was an ascetic corporation par excellence that helped the refeudalized China to recover from her version of the "sack of Rome." As the creative minority, the Buddhist fellowship grew until in time it became a dominant group in the middle of the sixth century A.D. Buddhist piety itself underwent changes that paralleled the changes in the nature of the Buddhist fellowship.<sup>1</sup>

The institutional and spiritual crisis in the third quarter of the sixth century A.D. challenged the Buddhists

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<sup>1</sup>A systematic and theoretical analysis of the social dynamics of medieval piety cannot be attempted in the thesis. Psychologically, the Buddhist teachings precipitated changes in human personality. The ideal of "freedom" was changed; a dualistic understanding of the self led to the art of rational self-control; a philosophy provided integration at an anomic time. Numerical growth however challenged both the otherworldliness and the rationality.

to respond. It has been suggested earlier that the AFM was one such response: a contemplative's voluntary spiritual withdrawal into the security of the mind. The AFM recalled the monks to a more purist path of meditation and to shun generally the frenzied, untutored and magical devotion of the people. At a time when the physical sangha, the teachings and the Buddha-statues--the Three Jewels in their "physical" manifestations--were liable to destruction from without and corruption from within, the AFM seems to ask men to put trust in the incorruptable deep "basis", faith in the Suchness (Mind) itself.

Sinitic Mahayana that emerged around 600 A.D. represented largely a conscientious or conservative reformation --a sincere attempt on the part of soul-searching masters who turned away from the diluted gospel of the jen-t'ien-chiao and who wanted to rebuild the spiritual sangha without the old abuses. The mark of the Chinese schools that emerged then was intellectual synthesis with commitments to actual practice. The AFM followed this trend.

The well-known AFM may be regarded as the most typical work of this period. Its discussion on practice focuses primarily on two paths only: chih-kuan (samatha-vipasana, cessation and contemplation) and nien-fo (Buddha-recall, the contemplation of the Buddha Amida through constant remembrance). Zen meditation is especially encouraged... The goal is to attain Suchness

trace (tathata-samadhi)...insight into the One [unity of the Dharmadhatu] and the identity of Dharmakaya with sentient beings. This meditation is styled "one-path meditation" (ekavyuha or ekacarya samadhi).<sup>1</sup>

The Zen tradition probably adhered to this meditative understanding of the AFM.

Fa-tsang, however, gave a more "public" and "theocratic" reading of the text. His Hua-yen school is generally known to be relatively weak in practice<sup>2</sup> and strong in metaphysical speculations. Fa-tsang's commentary is more a Buddhological summa than a meditative guide. It talks more about the objective immensity of Suchness than about the inner nuances of contemplation. Fa-tsang was not a cloistered monk but a public figure. His age was not that of cosmic pessimism and fear of cosmic evil. His philosophy of immanence came at a time when Empress Wu was depicted as the future Buddha, Maitreya, incarnate. The world was consecrated, overseen by the Sun-Buddha enshrined in the capital. This great Buddha emanated into a network of smaller Sun-Buddhas enshrined in the provincial temples (kuo-fen-ssu). The suggestion was that "All

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<sup>1</sup>Yanagida Seizan, Wu no tankyū (Bukkyō no shisō, ed. Tsukamoto et al, VII), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>For a different opinion, see Unno Taitetsu, "The Dimensions of Practice in Hua Yen Thought," Bukkyō shisō shi ronshū (Tokyo: 1964). Hua-yen and T'ien-t'ai are usually considered to be the "theoretical" schools, whereas Zen and Pure Land the "practice" schools. T'ien-t'ai, however, was known for founding "Mahayana meditation."

is One and One is All." The Sun-Buddha was omnipresent. The Dharma seemed to prevail and all was well. The despair of the Six Dynasties seemed to be displaced by the aura of hope.

Man, however, has harboured the highest hope in the hour of deepest despair. The awakening of faith in the Unconditional often occurs at the time of greatest uncertainty over the conditioned world. If the introvertive elements of the AFM be considered as reflective of despair it should also be noted that the subjective idealism of the AFM reflected hope based on the awareness of the omnipresence of the Suchness mind within man. If that is so, Fa-tsang only highlighted one side of the "hope/despair" syndrome in the AFM. Fa-tsang transformed the contemplative idealism into philosophical idealism.

Originally, tathata (Suchness) in the AFM means the basic essence of the mind of sentient beings. ... The Chinese translated Suchness with "chen-ju" under the influence of the notion of tzu-jan (nature). The Hua-yen school in T'ang interprets Suchness as the "Ultimate One" at the basis of phenomenal realities, as that which activates and creates all, that is, as a metaphysical entity.<sup>1</sup>

Tathagatagarbha, in India understood in terms of a "mode of consciousness" became, for Fa-tsang, something like the cosmic womb of the mystic female, the inexhaustible

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<sup>1</sup>Yanagida, op. cit., p. 98. Chinese Zen emerged out of this "metaphysicized" interpretation; ibid.

pregnant void of Lao-tzu's philosophy, paradoxically empty and not empty.<sup>1</sup>

The Six Dynasties' Zeitgeist may be characterized as "othershorely". The world was a vale of tears, a house on fire, to be escaped from. "Transcendental dualism" characterized its religious symbol system, its lifestyle and its understanding of society and human nature. However, the Hua-yen worldview in the T'ang period is best said to be "immanental and panentheistic" in inspiration. The cosmic womb of the Buddha was omnipresent and all powerful. The infinite Dharmadhatu (Dharma-realm) was as Pascal would say: its boundary is nowhere, its center everywhere. Phenomena like waves were only the surface of an overwhelming reality, Suchness, the water. Every particular was swallowed up by the "transubstantiating" universal principle (li). Every man, as Zen put it in extreme terms, is Buddha in the here-and-now. Nirvana is in this moment. Suchness is nature.

The historical fate of the AFM is that a contemplative text from a period of crisis, coming at the end of a dark age, became a gospel of immanence in another period of outward prosperity.

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<sup>1</sup>The coincidence here between Lao-tzu's concept of the mystic female (see Lao-tzu, chap. 1 and passim) and the tathagatagarbha (also empty and not-empty) is the coincidence of two early traditions of "mother earth" cults.

2. Astride India and China: the AFM as a catalyst to Sinitic Mahayana

The thesis shows that the Sinicization process is a complicated one. The Buddhist and the Chinese traditions discovered themselves as they discovered each other. The I Ching tradition, for example, helped to uncover the tathagatagarbha tradition and in turn was nurtured by it. The AFM lies at the watershed between two general outlooks, one "Indian Buddhist" and the other "Chinese":

<u>Indian Buddhist</u>	<u>Chinese</u>
<u>asatkaryavada</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>yin-yang</u> evolution
causative model	biogenetic model
logical analysis	monistic synthesis
neither/nor <u>advaya</u>	<u>t'i-yung</u> nonduality
epistemological	ontological

The dynamic cultural interaction took place in the twilight area inbetween.<sup>2</sup> The thesis has addressed itself to some of the issues listed above. In this section, the Sinitic ontological influence is analyzed.

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<sup>1</sup>Asatkaryavada means "the view that sees that effects do not pre-exist in the cause."

<sup>2</sup>The Upanisadic tradition in India is closer to the Chinese set listed above. Chinese Buddhists were drawn to Indian Buddhist texts that show Hindu influence, e.g. the MPNS, the tathagatagarbha corpus. The Tantric tradition also shares some general traits with the Chinese set.

Indian Madhyamika and Yogacara philosophies may be characterized as "phenomenalist" in orientation, that is, they generally adhere to the anatman tradition that denies any ontological substance. Tathata, Suchness, is reality as it is phenomenally, that is, empty, devoid of any lasting being, sat. The Chinese, however, were still much committed to a permanent principle and believed that there was a noumenal entity that transcended impermanence and emptiness. Given the Chinese predispositions, Indian phenomenalist philosophy imported into China was repeatedly "recast" into a "noumenal versus phenomenal" framework. For example, Dharmata and sunyata are synonyms in India. The nature of reality (Dharmata) is emptiness (sunyata). The Chinese acknowledged this to a certain extent.<sup>1</sup> However, there are times in which the Chinese regarded fa-hsing (Dharmata, Dharma-essence) to be "higher" than k'ung (emptiness), especially when k'ung is related to k'ung-hsiang (form of emptiness), just as li (noumena) is higher than phenomena. The phrase "chen-ju shih-hsing" the true Suchness in its real (permanent) essence, in Chinese, naturally suggests something "higher" than "yüan-ch'i k'ung-hsiang" the causative empty (transient) forms.

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<sup>1</sup>It would be interesting to trace exactly when the Chinese popularly accepted fa-hsing (Dharmata) as more than k'ung-hsing (sunyata). The two were regarded as synonyms by the Wu-liang-i ching 無量義經 (a 6th cent. fabrication).

A more curious case is this: interdependent causation (pratitya-samutpada, dependent co-origination) is yuan-ch'i 緣起 in Chinese. The nuance of the Sanskrit term is often lost in Chinese usage, when yuan-ch'i is taken to mean simply "causation." Causation is viewed by the Chinese as belonging only to the shaky world of universal flux and therefore of less value when compared with a theory of noumenal permanence. Thus we find in Chinese Buddhism tendencies to characterize the Madhyamika philosophy as one which does not yet go far enough to spell out the "real" principle that is the substratum of the world of change. There is then an assumption among Chinese Buddhists that the progress of the Buddhist Dharma begins with Hinayana causation, advances to (Indian) Mahayana negation of causation (by the Madhyamika-karika's denial of sheng, birth and mieh, death<sup>1</sup>) and ends with Sinitic Mahayana discovery of the transcendental world of eternal essence. It is Fa-tsang who gave best expression to this assumption in his famous tenet-classification.

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<sup>1</sup>Sheng-mieh 生滅 is generally considered as samsara, and its opposite "neither life nor death" is considered to be nirvana. Madhyamika in denying sheng-mieh is thought to be pointing beyond to the higher reality or truth. It is significant to note that even after the introduction of the MPNS, "nirvana" still meant "extinction, mieh" and only gradually it came to mean "non-extinction" i.e. permanence; see Fuse Kōgaku, Nehanshū no kenkyū, II, pp. 322-326.

Tenet-classification of the Ten Schools by Fa-tsang<sup>1</sup>

A. Phenomenal realist schools

1. Vatsiputriya naively accepts the reality of the phenomenal self and object.
2. Sarvastivada denies the phenomenal self but accepts the reality of the three times.
3. Mahasanghika affirms only the realities of the present time.
4. Prajnaptivada affirms even more selectively only some realities of the present time.

All the above schools are fixated to phenomenal or nominal realities, but there is an ascending sophistication in bracketting more and more off mundane reality.

B. Negators of phenomenal realism

5. Lokottaravada negates all mundane realities and affirms only the transmudane truth.
6. Ekottiya sees that all realities, mundane and transmudane, are mere names.
7. Madhyamika finally intuits to the truth that all is empty.

All the above schools negate phenomenal reality, with growing sophistication until all is declared empty. Yet they have not yet affirmed a higher Reality.

C. Noumenal "Realist" schools

8. T'ien-t'ai represents "Final Mahayana". It intuits the not-empty nature of noumenal reality or principle.
9. Zen represents "Sudden Teaching". Zen attains the total identification of the true self and the absolute, the mind and Suchness.
10. Hua-yen represents "Totalistic Teaching". The phenomenal (shih) and the noumenal (li) interpenetrates each other (like water and wave) and all is one and one is all (like each wave drawing the sea into itself and the sea absorbing all waves ).

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<sup>1</sup>The diagram-summary below includes explanations and classifications (A.B.C) showing the logic of the structure; see Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

This classification of the schools by Fa-tsang is more detailed than the one he offered in his commentary on the AFM. In his commentary on the AFM, Fa-tsang gives the hierarchy of Indian Buddhism: (1) Hinayana, (2) Madhyamika, (3) Yogacara and (4) Tathagatagarbha schools.<sup>1</sup> In his more elaborated "Ten Schools" classification, Sinitic Mahayana as represented by T'ien-t'ai, Zen and Hua-yen, are placed at the top of the scale of values.<sup>2</sup> Madhyamika is considered to be on the threshold of Mahayana, and Yogacara as represented by the "new school" --for not accepting the icchantika into the scheme of enlightenment for all beings--was considered to be pro-Hinayana.<sup>3</sup> In reserving authentic Mahayana for the Chinese schools, Fa-tsang in fact declared the independence and superiority of Sinitic Mahayana schools. The term "Sinitic Mahayana" used in the introduction chapter above and throughout this thesis finds justification here.

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<sup>1</sup>T. 44, p. 243b.

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that the Pure Land school was not included.

<sup>3</sup>Actually Fa-tsang considered himself the heir to a special transmission of the Madhyamika philosophy, just as he considered that he had the better understanding of Asanga and Vasubandhu (through Sthiramati) than the "new school" had through Dharmapala." The "noumenal, transcausative versus phenomenal, causative" scheme used in the logic of his classification creates its own problems and resolutions. The theory of a "changeless yet dynamic Suchness" in Hua-yen was precisely to reunite the distinction that was created in the Chinese understanding.

3. Beyond the Intellectual Synthesis of Fa-tsang: the Zen discontent and reaction

Fa-tsang's classification is perhaps the most comprehensive, logical and daring of all Chinese tenet-classification attempts. The telos of that classification can only point to Hua-yen. In that classification also is found one of the earliest references to Zen as a distinct school. Meditation masters had always existed, but a discrete meditation (i.e. Zen) school by itself seems to crystallize only in the seventh century A.D., around the time of Fa-tsang. A strange dialectical tension existed, I believe, between Hua-yen, the most inclusive and cerebral school, and the emerging Zen school that was its opposite in many ways.

The Hua-yen worldview was proto-Tantric. Its Buddhology was "realist"--the universal (li, principle) is in every particular (shih, fact). Hua-yen provided the basis for much of the grand sacramental mysteries and liturgical beauty of cosmic rites performed. Fa-tsang was the resident philosopher of Empress Wu's court, the "Thomas Aquinas" of Sinitic Mahayana who synthesized all diverging viewpoints into one. This thinker's summa has been revered and never been outdone since. His intelligence represented the peak of high medieval Buddhist

"scholasticism."

The history of religion often sees such peaks of systematization by a rationalizing mind followed by the rise of its opposite--an impatience with reason and with neat structures. Fa-tsang, for example, loved to classify everything into perfect sets of tens. Making reality conform to such perfect patterns, however, bred anti-intellect activists or anti-intellectuals.<sup>1</sup> "Scholastic rationality," that is, the assumption or presumption that a reasoning mind can or should try to fathom all mysteries, was enough at times to turn agnostics into atheists or pietists into crypto-mystics.<sup>2</sup> The "catholic" enterprise, that is, the acceptance of different paths leading to the absolute based upon a hierarchy of needs and endowments and an organic view of traditions accumulated, only spurred its opposite: the singlemindedness of "protesting" figures who were committed then to one and only one path--often in a dogmatically zealous exclusion of all other alternatives.

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<sup>1</sup>People can be "anti-intellect" or "anti-intellectual." The anti-intellectual is an intellectual nonetheless.

<sup>2</sup>When the dominant religious symbol system is mildly "rationalist," the non-adherents tend to be mildly sceptical or "agnostic", not claiming to know. However, when the dominant religious symbol system claims to be based on reason, the opposition is similarly radicalized to become strong rational critics or "atheist" while the pious men of faith are polarized also into using irrational symbols.

We have already seen some elements of that single-mindedness during the crisis of 574 A.D. Thinkers were interested in the One when reality was most gravely divided and fragmented. The theme of the "One Mind" prevailed. The Three Period school was fanatic in its devotion, paradoxically not to the one but to the all. Its indiscriminate worship of one and all Buddhas was, in the end, equally intolerant and exclusivist. The AFM emphasized "one-path samadhi" on Suchness and Suchness alone--a last minute concession was made to Amida piety. Chih-i (538-597 A.D.) of the T'ien-t'ai school brought all teachings under one roof--the umbrella of the Lotus sutra. Chih-i's "catholic" enterprise also promoted exclusivist reaction.<sup>1</sup> Yanagida Seizan considers that around the time when Chih-i wrote the Mo-ho chih-kuan 摩訶止觀 Treatise on Maha-[yana] Meditation, the interest in "singleminded" devotion to one path, one act, or one object of meditation developed.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Chih-i produced the first comprehensive tenet-classification which still informs the structure of the Buddhist canon in China and Japan. The T'ien-t'ai classification is based on a supposedly historical sequence of Buddha's teachings; the Hua-yen scheme is based on a logical progression of philosophical contents of the schools. Chih-i, by finding unity within multiplicity in a "catholic" (i.e. inclusive) enterprise, also promoted exclusive devotion to the Lotus sutra--especially later in Japanese Tendai sects.

<sup>2</sup>Yanagida, Wu no tankyū, p. 107. Tao-cho (562-645 A.D.) and Shan-tao (613-681 A.D.) selected nien-fo, Buddha-name recitation/remembrance. Tao-hsin (580-651 A.D.) and Hung-jen (602-675 A.D.) selected Zen meditation.

In spiritual crisis, "crisis-faith" emerges.<sup>1</sup> A radical understanding of man is usually involved. The pressure of the hour dictates that there is no time to try all paths but only time to rely totally on one path alone. The mottos of such movements are often "By this or by that alone." Sola fides, faith alone, in the vows of Amida was the gospel among the Pure Land followers in the seventh century A.D. in China. This faith should preferably be in Amida and no other Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, preferably in one main vow above all other vows, preferably through one act of faith (recitation) instead of many--such radical developments, however, occurred only later in Kamakura Japan. In Loyang piety, there was the practice of endless liturgical chanting by monk and lay alike. Quality now challenged quantity; a deep inner faith, a change of heart was more important than outward display. Within the emerging Zen circle, the other main "practice-orientated" school, the cry was "By zazen or sitting meditation alone" directed at Suchness itself.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>By "crisis-faith" I mean a style of faith that explores crisis situations in human existence or the crisis of existence itself. The accompanying conversion pattern is often "volitional ego-integration" involving a conflict of wills, especially irrational will that challenges human reason.

<sup>2</sup>See Yanagida, loc. cit. Chih-i, being a synthesizer, classified meditation into four types--walking, sitting, half-walking and half-sitting, neither walking nor sitting. Of these four, Zen later chose "sitting meditation."

Just as Chih-i promoted "singlemindedness" in late sixth century A.D., Fa-tsang, the other giant in intellectual synthesis also seems to promote such reactions in late seventh century A.D. in China. Religious issues were revived as controversies: gradual cultivation versus sudden enlightenment, works versus faith, a step-by-step approach versus a leap in the dark, karmakanda and jnanakanda.<sup>1</sup> I do not intend to go into the ideological issues involved.<sup>2</sup> I will merely note that in the history of religions, there are times when these debates flared up more than other times. At those controversial times, no Erasmian common sense ("works, and, of course, faith") would placate the spiritual genius and anguish of a Luther and no jnanakarmasamuccaya ("combination of work and knowledge" as a path to liberation) would satisfy a Sankara. Similarly, no northern Zen master (who followed sudden enlightenment in his own style) would pacify Shen-hui, leader of the southern Zen group. Fa-tsang, a contemporary of Shen-hsiu (d. 706 A.D.) of the northern Zen school, might actually have helped to bring the Zen controversy

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<sup>1</sup>These issues, taken from Europe, China and India, seem to occur in the "late medieval" period according to my periodization; see p. 5 for the Chinese case.

<sup>2</sup>The opposing positions are based on different pre-suppositions and it is self-defeating to compare or contrast them. Comparison and contrast assume that the items are comparable or relative--a procedure which is not admissible to one of the two groups.

about. Philosophers like Fa-tsang seemed to legitimize the "path of knowledge" (jnanakanda) and provide a critique of the "path of merits", salvation through works (karmakanda.)<sup>1</sup> The Zen school benefitted from the clarification of the issues provided by the theory of a priori enlightenment, offered by the AFM (side by side with incipient enlightenment) and dramatized by the Hua-yen school.

However, up to the time of Shen-hsiu, Hua-yen and Zen existed side by side and in mutual support of one another. Tao-hsin (580-651 A.D.) used the AFM to instruct the first sizeable following of Zen in the East Mountain. Shen-hsiu was companion to Fa-tsang in Empress Wu's court. (Northern) Zen was Hua-yen Zen and Fa-tsang returned the complement by classifying Zen as the school closest to Hua-yen. The Hua-yen philosophy was however more "realist" and more supportive of icons, rites, sacerdotal practices than the later southern Zen school, which became increasingly "nominalist," individualistic and iconoclastic.

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<sup>1</sup> I am suggesting here an hypothesis that "scholasticism" was necessary for the emergence of "crisis-faith." "Crisis-faith" emerged in part as a result of the over-rationalization of the religious symbol system by the professional thinkers. The crisis of reason produced "anti-intellectuals" who questioned the basis of Reason itself. In medieval Europe, there were the ladders of merit, of speculation and of contemplation, fitting, in my opinion, to the "organic" division of labour between body, mind and spirit represented by the laity, the schoolmen and the contemplative. This neat Catholic scheme was challenged by the Reformers.

The rise of the southern Zen school meant the dissociation of Zen from the intellectual enterprise of the Hua-yen school. That rise also coincided with changes in society.

The brightest days of T'ang Buddhism were numbered. Ch'ang-an, the capital, was sacked in the An Lu-shan revolt of 755 A.D. The northern lineage of Buddhists was weakened and the southern Buddhist branches rose in influence. Shen-hui (670-762 A.D.), a follower of Hui-neng (638-713 A.D.)<sup>1</sup>, was rewarded for his war efforts on behalf of the crown. Shen-hui introduced a more radical Zen esprit simplisté.... By this time, Indian Mahayana was declining and except for Tantrism, little new inspiration flowed from India to China. Chinese Buddhists had to rely more and more upon themselves. Necessity to appease a ruler who favoured Taoism led to further Sinicization.<sup>2</sup> Early Taoist-Buddhists like Tao-sheng and Seng-chao were rediscovered. Sinitic Buddhist works like the Pao-tsang-lun (attributed to Seng-chao) and the Yüan-chüeh-ching were

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<sup>1</sup>Hui-neng was said to be a southern barbarian who was converted to the Dharma by the Diamond sutra. The southern Zen tradition seems to follow the more intuitive prajna-paramita philosophy than the more analytical works like the Lankavatara sutra and the AFM in the north.

<sup>2</sup>The synthesis of Taoism and Buddhism in the eighth century A.D. is from a point of strength and not of weakness as in the fourth century A.D. One represents "Sinitic Mahayana" as the other "Taoistized (ke i) Buddhism." The former does not confuse Buddhism with Taoism and can critically review the native tradition.

well-received. Tsung-mi (780-841 A.D.) commented on the Yüan-chüeh-ching extensively. He was the Hua-yen and Zen master who attempted the last medieval synthesis prior to the persecution of 845 A.D.<sup>1</sup>

In 845 A.D., the sangha suffered a crippling blow. The wealth of the temples might not have been affected as much as sometimes thought, but both institutionally and spiritually, the vitality of Buddhism was sapped.<sup>2</sup> The withdrawal of state support, the revival of Confucianism and the lack of intellectual stimulation from India curtailed the intellectual side of Chinese Buddhist activities. The faith turned more towards "practice" and Zen and the Pure Land school prospered. Buddhist piety took on a different style of expression. The grandeur of the Hua-yen philosophy, that vision of a world sanctified by the cosmic light of Vairocana and that peculiar awareness of the immanence of the infinite, belonged to the past. The legacy of the AFM that supported that vision lives on as a reminder of the glory that was Buddhism.

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<sup>1</sup>Tsung-mi's essay "On Man" (Yüan-jen-lun 原人論 ) is a landmark of this synthesis. See Feng Yu-lan, Chung-kuo che-hsüeh shih (Shanghai:1934), pp.791-799.

<sup>2</sup>The temple manorial system, a haven at one time, was breaking down. Peasants were tenantized as temples became just another "landlord" that exploited them.

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AFM	<u>Awakening of Faith in Mahayana</u>
T	<u>Taishō Daizōkyō, Taishō Tripitaka</u>
JIBS	<u>Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies; Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū</u> 印度学佛教学研究

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