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OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
BUDDHIST STUDIES

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ERNST STEINKELLNER  
WIEN

*Volume 6*

*1983*

*Number 1*

# CONTENTS

## I. ARTICLES

1. Enlightenment in Dōgen's Zen, *by Francis H. Cook* 7
2. The Place of the Sudden Teaching within the Hua-Yen Tradition: An Investigation of the Process of Doctrinal Change, *by Peter N. Gregory* 31
3. Morality in the *Visuddhimagga*, *by Damien Keown* 61
4. Contemporary Lay Buddhist Movements in Japan, with Special Reference to the *Lotus Sūtra*, *by Tsugunari Kubo* 76
5. Before the Prajñā Schools: The Earliest Known Chinese Commentary on the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, *by Whalen Lai* 91
6. The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment in Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature: Some Notes on *Jātismara*, *by Gregory Schopen* 109

## II. BOOK REVIEWS

1. The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhism, edited and introduced *by Leslie S. Kawamura* 148
2. Contributo allo Studio Biografico dei Primi Geronimi, *by Ramon Pratz* 151
3. Gedatsukai: Its Theory and Practice (A Study of a Shinto-Buddhist Syncretic School in Contemporary Japan), *by Minoru Kiyota* 154
4. A Study of the Twenty-two Dialogues on Mahāyāna Buddhism, *by W. Pachow* 157

5. Zen and Christian: The Journey between, *by John Dykstra Busden* 159

### III. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

1. Presidential Address Given on the Occasion of the Fifth Conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Hertford College, Oxford, England, August 16–21, 1982, *by Walpola Rahula* 162

### IV. NOTES AND NEWS

1. A Report on the 5th Conference of the IABS, Hertford College, University of Oxford, Oxford, England, August 16–21, 1982 167

Contributors 180

# The Place of the Sudden Teaching within the Hua-yen Tradition: An Investigation of the Process of Doctrinal Change

by *Peter N. Gregory*

One of the best ways in which we can assess the process of doctrinal change within Chinese Buddhism is by a comparative analysis of the various schemes of doctrinal classification (*p'an-chiao* 判教) devised within the different scholastic traditions. *P'an-chiao* served Chinese Buddhists as a convenient hermeneutical device by which the confusing array of teachings believed to have been taught by the Buddha could be systematically organized into a coherent, internally consistent doctrinal whole. At the same time, by classifying the Buddha's teachings within a hierarchically articulated framework, it also functioned as one of the primary means by which the different Chinese traditions legitimized their sectarian claims. *P'an-chiao* thus represents in schematic form what doctrines a particular tradition took to be the most important for defining the main characteristics of its teaching. The investigation of how such formulations change within a tradition should, accordingly, provide us with a useful index for gauging the process of doctrinal change.

The process of doctrinal change, moreover, must be understood from two interrelated points of view. On the one hand, it must be understood within the particular doctrinal context of the tradition in question—a context that has its own tensions and trajectory, which define both the parameters within which innovation can take place and the directions in which such innovation is most likely to occur. On the other hand, while we must respect the integrity of a tradition, we must bear in mind that traditions do not develop within a vacuum. The

process of doctrinal change must also be understood within the larger historical context that shaped the lives and thoughts of the individual figures who constitute a tradition. The investigation of the different *p'an-chiao* schemes evolved within a particular tradition should both reveal the underlying problematic of that tradition and reflect broader changes within the Chinese Buddhist world.

The Hua-yen tradition, along with T'ien-t'ai, is one of the crowning achievements of Chinese Buddhist scholastic thought. It is also worthy of our attention as representing one of the major expressions of what Yūki Reimon has characterized as the New Buddhism of the Sui / T'ang Period—that is, it is a prime example of a form of Buddhism that can be said to be at once authentically Buddhist and uniquely Chinese. The classical formulation of Hua-yen doctrine is often taken as having been best articulated by Fa-tsang 法藏 (643-712) in his *Treatise on the Five Teachings* (*Wu-chiao chang* 五教章). A comparison of the doctrinal classification scheme outlined in that work with that elaborated by Tsung-mi 宗密 (780-841), traditionally reckoned as the fifth Hua-yen "patriarch," in his *Inquiry into the Origin of Man* (*Yüan-jen lun* 原人論), reveals that there were a number of profound changes that had taken place in the evaluation of the basic tenets of Hua-yen doctrine in the almost century and a half that separated the composition of these two works.

Fa-tsang divides the Buddha's teachings into five categories. The first and most elementary of these is the Teaching of the Lesser Vehicle (*hsiao-sheng chiao* 小乘教). The second is the Elementary Teaching of the Great Vehicle (*ta-sheng shih-chiao* 大乘始教), which Fa-tsang subdivides into two categories, corresponding to the particular brand of Yogācāra introduced to China by Hsüan-tsang and the Mādhyamika teaching of emptiness. Fa-tsang refers to the third category in his classification scheme as the Advanced Teaching of the Great Vehicle (*ta-sheng chung-chiao* 大乘終教), which is exemplified by the Tathāgatagarbha doctrine, especially as it was elaborated in the *Awakening of Faith* (*Ta-sheng ch'i-hsin lun* 大乘起信論). The fourth category is the Sudden Teaching (*tun-chiao* 頓教). The fifth and highest category of Buddhist teaching is the Perfect Teaching (*yüan-chiao* 圓教), as represented by the totalistic vision of

the unobstructed interrelation of all things, taught in the *Hua-yen (Avatamsaka) Sūtra*.

Tsung-mi also divides the Buddha's teachings into five categories. His first category, the Teaching of Men and Gods (*jen-t'ien chiao* 人天教), is not found in Fa-tsang's classification scheme. His second category, the Teaching of the Lesser Vehicle, corresponds to the first category of teaching in Fa-tsang's scheme. Tsung-mi then makes what were the two subdivisions of Fa-tsang's second category—the Elementary Teaching of the Great Vehicle—into the third and fourth categories in his own scheme, which he refers to as the Teaching of the Phenomenal Appearances of the Dharmas (*fa-hsiang chiao* 法相教) and the Teaching which Negates Phenomenal Appearances (*p'o-hsiang chiao* 破相教). The fifth and supreme teaching in Tsung-mi's classification scheme, which he refers to as the Teaching which Reveals the Nature (*hsien-hsing chiao* 顯性教), corresponds to the third teaching in Fa-tsang's scheme. Tsung-mi does not include either the Sudden or the Perfect teachings, the last two categories in Fa-tsang's arrangement, as separate categories in his classification scheme.

One of the most significant differences between Fa-tsang's and Tsung-mi's *p'an-chiao* schemes is that Tsung-mi omits the Sudden Teaching from his fivefold classification of the Buddha's teachings. This paper will investigate the changing assessment of this teaching within the Hua-yen tradition. Such an endeavor should reveal some of the tensions inherent within the tradition, and highlight some of the changes that had taken place within Chinese Buddhism in the eighth century, the most notable of which, in the present context, are the rise of Ch'an and the revival of T'ien-t'ai, two movements that left an important mark on Tsung-mi's revision of Hua-yen.

### *I. The Sudden Teaching According to Fa-tsang*

Unlike much of the *p'an-chiao* tradition that preceded him, Fa-tsang does not identify the Sudden Teaching with the *Hua-yen Sūtra*.<sup>1</sup> Rather, the teaching of the *Hua-yen Sūtra* supersedes the Sudden Teaching, and is accorded supreme pride of place as the Perfect Teaching, the fifth and final teaching in his clas-

sification scheme. Fa-tsang associates the Sudden Teaching—insofar as any teaching that transcends all methods of teaching can be linked with a particular scriptural teaching—with the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*. A good example of what Fa-tsang means by the Sudden Teaching can be found in the first definition of this category of teaching that he gives in the *Treatise on the Five Teachings*:

In the Sudden Teaching all words and explanations are suddenly cut off, the nature of the Truth is suddenly revealed, understanding and practice are suddenly perfected, and Buddhahood [is attained] upon the non-production of a single moment of [false] thought.<sup>2</sup>

As canonical authority, Fa-tsang then goes on to quote the passage from the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* which says that the purification of beings can be spoken of as sudden “just as images in a mirror are reflected suddenly, not gradually.”<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in this definition the Sudden Teaching is explicitly contrasted with the former two teachings in Fa-tsang’s *p’an-chiao* scheme, those of the Elementary and Advanced Mahāyāna, which are characterized as gradual because

the understanding and practice within them lie within words and explanations, the stages [of the Bodhisattva’s path] are sequential, cause and effect follow one another, and one proceeds from the subtle to the manifest.<sup>4</sup>

While Fa-tsang discusses the Sudden Teaching in different ways from a variety of perspectives throughout the *Treatise on the Five Teachings*,<sup>5</sup> his overall characterization, as the definition just cited suggests, can be analyzed as having two aspects, the first having to do with its doctrinal content and the second with its practical application.<sup>6</sup> According to the first, the Sudden Teaching is described as abandoning all words and concepts because there can be no dichotomous discrimination in the apprehension of the ultimate nature of reality, which ineluctably defies all attempts to verbalize or conceptualize its essence. The canonical paradigm to which Fa-tsang refers most frequently to illustrate this aspect of the Sudden Teaching is Vimalakīrti’s resounding silence, which marks the climax of the ninth chap-

ter of Kumārajīva's translation of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*.<sup>7</sup> The chapter begins with Vimalakīrti's request that all of the Bodhisattvas present express their understanding of the Dharma of nonduality. After each of the thirty-two Bodhisattvas, culminating with Mañjuśrī, the very embodiment of wisdom, has taken his turn, Mañjuśrī then calls upon Vimalakīrti to express his understanding, whereupon Vimalakīrti remains silent. Mañjuśrī then exclaims: "Excellent! Excellent! To be without words and speech! That is called the true entrance into the Dharma of non-duality!"<sup>8</sup>

No matter how profound or eloquent their replies, the answers of all of the Bodhisattvas still fall within the province of either the Elementary or the Advanced Teaching, for they still rely on words to try to express the inexpressible. Only Vimalakīrti succeeds in directly expressing the ineffable nature of ultimate reality by his refusal to enter the realm of dichotomous discourse. Fa-tsang aptly indicates the qualitative difference in their responses by saying that the thirty-two Bodhisattvas merely "spoke about" (*shuo* 說) the Dharma of non-duality, whereas Vimalakīrti "revealed" (*hsien* 顯) it.<sup>9</sup>

As this example from the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra* also indicates, what Vimalakīrti succeeds in revealing through his silence and what the other Bodhisattvas try, but ultimately fail, to express in words is the same ineffable reality. The difference between their responses lies in the manner in which they express, or try to express, the true nature of this reality. When Mañjuśrī says:

"In my opinion, to be without words, without speech, without indication, without knowing, and beyond all questions and answers in regard to all things—that is entering the Dharma of non-duality!"<sup>10</sup>

he merely says what it is. Only Vimalakīrti's silence succeeds in directly manifesting the true import of Mañjuśrī's words.

If Vimalakīrti's silence is taken as the paradigm upon which Fa-tsang establishes the Sudden Teaching, then the Sudden Teaching does not differ in content from the Advanced Teaching, which Fa-tsang identifies as the Absolute Mind of Suchness (*chen-'ju i-hsin* 真如一心) in another passage in the *Treatise of the Five Teachings*:



According to the Sudden Teaching, all things are nothing but the Absolute Mind of Suchness, wherein all discriminations have utterly ceased. It transcends words and concepts and is ineffable. The Dharma of non-duality as spoken of by the thirty-two Bodhisattvas in the *Vimalakīrīnīrdeśasūtra* refers to the harmonious interfusion of the pure and impure without duality in the previous teaching of the Advanced [Mahāyāna], while the non-duality which transcends words that was revealed by Vimalakīrti refers to this [Sudden] Teaching. Because all pure and impure characteristics have been utterly brought to an end and there are no longer any two things which can be harmonized with one another, the ineffable is non-duality.<sup>11</sup>

This passage is of further interest in that it makes clear that what Fa-tsang has in mind when he discusses the content of these two teachings is the Tathāgatagarbha as expounded in the *Awakening of Faith*. The following passage from the *Treatise on the Five Teachings* makes this connection with the *Awakening of Faith* even more explicit.

Within the *Awakening of Faith*, it is in connection with the Sudden Teaching that the Suchness which transcends words is revealed and in connection with the Gradual Teaching that the Suchness which is predicated in words is expounded, and, within [the Suchness which is] predicated in words, it is in connection with the Elementary and Advanced Teaching that the empty and non-empty [aspects of] Suchness are expounded.<sup>12</sup>

Fa-tsang is here basing himself on a passage in the beginning of the *Awakening of Faith* that distinguishes between Suchness which transcends words (*li-yen* 離言眞如) and Suchness which is predicated in words (*i-yen* 依言眞如).

What is referred to as "the Nature of the Mind" is neither born nor dies. It is only on the basis of false thoughts that all things become differentiated. If one is free from false thoughts, then there are no phenomenal appearances of any objects. Therefore, from the very beginning all things transcend all forms of verbalization, description, and conceptualization and are ultimately undifferentiated, unchanging, and indestructible. Because they are nothing but the Absolute Mind, they are referred to as Suchness. Be-

cause all verbal explanations are merely provisional designations without any reality and are merely used in accordance with false thoughts and cannot denote [Suchness], the term "Suchness" is without any [determinate] characteristics. This means that it is the limit of verbal expression wherein a word is used to put an end to words. . . . Because all things are ineffable and inconceivable, they are referred to as "Suchness."<sup>13</sup>

This passage refers to the Suchness which transcends words, which is Suchness in its true (*shih* 實) aspect, as distinguished from the Suchness which is predicated in words, which is only provisional (*chia* 假).

The *Awakening of Faith* then goes on to introduce the Suchness which is predicated in words, which it says has two aspects. The first is termed "the truly empty [如實空] because it is ultimately able to reveal what is real" and the second is termed "the truly non-empty [如實不空] because it is in its very essence fully endowed with undefiled excellent qualities."<sup>14</sup>

As these various passages make clear, the Sudden Teaching is represented for Fa-tsang by Vimalakirti's silence and is based on the *Awakening of Faith's* Suchness which transcends words; while the Gradual Teaching—denoting, in this context, both the Elementary and the Advanced Teaching—is represented by the replies of the thirty-two Bodhisattvas, and is based on the *Awakening of Faith's* Suchness which is predicated in words. Moreover, the Sudden and Gradual Teachings do not differ in content, only in the way in which they express that content.

However, as the initial definition of the Sudden Teaching cited above indicates—and as Fa-tsang makes clear in other contexts—there is also another aspect to his characterization of this teaching, one which bears on the nature of religious practice. That is, the Sudden Teaching is the teaching that it is possible to attain Buddhahood suddenly, in a single moment of thought, without having to progress step by step through a long and arduous succession of stages on the Path. As Fa-tsang says in the *Treatise on the Five Teachings*:

According to the Sudden Teaching, all stages of practice are without exception ineffable because they transcend all

forms, because Buddhahood [is attained] upon the non-production of a single moment of [false] thought, and because, if one perceives forms such as distinctions in the stages of practice, then it is an erroneous view.<sup>15</sup>

The three scriptural passages that Fa-tsang quotes as canonical authority for this characterization of the Sudden Teaching<sup>16</sup> are:

1. *Viśeṣacintabrahmapariṣcchā*:

If someone hears of the true nature of all things and diligently practices accordingly, then he will not advance stage by stage, and, if he does not advance stage by stage, then he will not abide in either saṃsāra or nirvāṇa.<sup>17</sup>

2. *Laṅkāvatāra*:

The first stage is identical with the eighth stage. . . . Since there are no [stages] which exist, how could there be a sequence [of stages]?<sup>18</sup>

3. *Daśabhūmika*:

The ten stages are like the traces of a bird in the sky. How could there be differences that could be attained?<sup>19</sup>

The Sudden Teaching for Fa-tsang thus not only indicates a superior way of revealing the true nature of reality, but also contains a specific teaching about the true nature of religious practice. The second aspect of Fa-tsang's characterization of this teaching grows out of the first, both being based on the *Awakening of Faith*. Just as the true nature of Suchness lacks all determinate characteristics and any attempt to express it in words is therefore merely provisionally true at best, so also the distinctions among the various stages of religious practice are only provisional and do not obtain in the realm of Suchness. It is therefore possible, by realizing their empty nature, to transcend them. The second aspect can thus be seen as an extension of the first to the realm of practice, and, as such, it seems to intimate the teaching of sudden enlightenment that was to become so important for Ch'an Buddhists, although Fa-tsang does not use the term "sudden enlightenment," nor does he

refer to the Ch'an school. It is only when we come to Ch'eng-kuan 澄觀 (737-838), who took the further step of identifying the Sudden Teaching with Ch'an, that the second aspect of this teaching assumes primary significance. In the context of the *Treatise on the Five Teachings*, however, it is the doctrinal aspect of this teaching that is emphasized.

## II. Hui-yüan and the Problematical Nature of the Sudden Teaching

The first to raise the issue of the problematical nature of the Sudden Teaching within Fa-tsang's *p'an-chiao* scheme was Fa-tsang's own favored disciple, Hui-yüan 慧苑 (ca.673-743). In his discussion of Fa-tsang's system of doctrinal classification in the *K'an-ting chi*, Hui-yüan delivers the following criticism of the inclusion of the Sudden Teaching in Fa-tsang's fivefold scheme:

You should know that this [Sudden Teaching] abandons the use of language [ 亡詮 ] to reveal the Truth [ 理 ]. How, then, can it be established as [a teaching which] can be expressed in words [ 能詮 ]? If it is a teaching, then what truth [ 理 ] does it express? If one were to say that the teaching is not separate from the Truth because it transcends words, then surely it must be true that the Advanced and Perfect teachings [also] transcend words. But, if one admits that [teachings which] transcend words must always be called "sudden," then why are there five teachings? If one were to claim that, even though it is [a teaching which] expounds the transcending of words, it still does not exclude the use of words, then the Advanced and Perfect teachings should also be called "sudden," because they both transcend words while not excluding the use of words.<sup>20</sup>

Hui-yüan's criticism is twofold. His first point can be restated in the following terms: In order for something to qualify as a teaching (*chiao* 教), there must be a certain content (*so-ch'üan* 所詮, *li* 理) which it is able to express (*neng-ch'üan* 能詮). However, if the "teaching" in question abandons the use of language (*wang-ch'üan* 亡詮) and thereby has no way in which to express itself, then there can be no content which it

expresses, and it consequently cannot be regarded as a real teaching. Since "the Sudden Teaching" is characterized precisely by its rejection of language to express the Truth, it is thus a contradiction in terms to establish it as a teaching. On the other hand, if it is admitted that the Sudden Teaching does succeed in expressing the Truth, then it cannot truly abandon all modes of expression, for the Truth (*li*) cannot be expressed (*so-ch'üan*) without some form of expression (*neng-ch'üan*). This brings us to the second point raised by Hui-yüan's criticism: If the content of the Sudden Teaching is the Truth which transcends words and which is ultimately inexpressible, then it hardly differs from either the Advanced or Perfect Teaching. There is thus no reason to establish it as a separate teaching.

Hui-yüan's criticism points to the question of the taxonomy of Fa-tsang's *p'an-chiao* scheme. The organizing principle according to which Fa-tsang seems to be operating in his classification of Buddhist teachings has to do with distinguishing among teachings according to an analysis of their content. Since the Sudden Teaching has the same content as the Advanced Teaching, it cannot be set up as a separate category of teaching without doing violence to the taxonomical principle according to which the other teachings are classified.

The problematical nature of the Sudden Teaching within Fa-tsang's *p'an-chiao* scheme becomes even more apparent when viewed in terms of the systematic formulation of the T'ien-t'ai *p'an-chiao* first articulated by Chan-jan 湛然 (711–782) in the middle of the eighth century.<sup>21</sup> Chan-jan, reckoned as the sixth patriarch in the T'ien-t'ai tradition, was the figure responsible for the revival of the fortunes of the T'ien-t'ai teachings in the later T'ang, after a century or more of almost total eclipse. More important in the present context, Chan-jan also seems to have been the first to make explicit the crucial distinction in the taxonomy of Buddhist teachings between the classification of teachings according to the method of their exposition (*hua-i-chiao* 化儀教) and according to the content of their exposition (*hua-fa chiao* 化法教). According to Chan-jan's creative synthesis of the various forms of doctrinal classifications scattered throughout Chih-i's works, the Sudden Teaching falls within the category of teachings that should be classified according to the method of their exposition, whereas all of

the other teachings in Fa-tsang's *p'an-chiao* scheme would have to be categorized as teachings that should be classified according to the content of their exposition. The distinction between these two ways of classifying Buddhist teachings introduced by Chan-jan—which was adopted by Tsung-mi—makes clear the taxonomical confusion entailed by Fa-tsang's inclusion of the Sudden Teaching within his *p'an-chiao* scheme.

### *III. Ch'eng-kuan's Redefinition of the Sudden Teaching*

The question of the Sudden Teaching takes on a new and extra-doctrinal dimension when we come to Ch'eng-kuan. One of the main bases for Ch'eng-kuan's attack on Hui-yüan was Hui-yüan's exclusion of the Sudden Teaching from his own fourfold classification scheme and his related criticism of Fa-tsang's scheme for its inclusion of the Sudden Teaching. After quoting Hui-yüan's first point of criticism, Ch'eng-kuan offers his own defense of Fa-tsang's inclusion of the Sudden Teaching:

“Because it suddenly expresses the Truth, it is called ‘the Sudden Teaching’” means that what is expressed is the Truth. How could it be that the sudden preaching of the Truth in this case is not able to express [the Truth]? Now, teachings which are able to express [Truth] are always established in accordance with [the truth] that they express. For instance, if it expresses [the truth of] the Three Vehicles, then it is a gradual teaching; if it expresses the unobstructed interrelation of each and every thing, then it is the Perfect Teaching. How could it be that if that which is expressed is the Truth, [Hui-yüan] could not admit that that which is able to express it is a teaching? How could he have criticized [this teaching] by saying, “then what Truth [does it express]?” That is the epitome of delusion!<sup>22</sup>

However, in arguing that the Sudden Teaching must be a teaching because it expresses the Truth, Ch'eng-kuan misses the point of Hui-yüan's criticism that, if the Sudden Teaching by definition discards all means of expressing the Truth, then there is nothing that it can be said to express. In fact, Ch'eng-kuan's attempted rebuttal only raises Hui-yüan's second criti-

cism, which Ch'eng-kuan makes no attempt to address. Ch'eng-kuan's rather lame response suggests that it is not just a question of doctrine that is at stake. Instead of attempting to show how the Truth expressed in the Sudden Teaching differs from that expressed in the Advanced or Perfect Teachings, Ch'eng-kuan comes to the real substance of his objection when he says:

Because [Hui-yüan] never penetrated Ch'an, he was utterly deluded about the true meaning of the Sudden [Teaching]. . . . The mind-by-mind transmission of Bodhidharma truly refers to this [Sudden] Teaching. If a single word were not used [ ] to express directly that this very mind is Buddha, how could the essentials of the Mind be transmitted? Therefore, using words which are without words, the Truth which transcends words is directly expressed. . . . The Northern and Southern lines of Ch'an are [both] comprised within the Sudden Teaching.<sup>23</sup>

What is really at issue for Ch'eng-kuan is the fact that he takes the Sudden Teaching to refer to Ch'an, and it is important to recall in this regard that, in addition to being honored as the fourth Hua-yen patriarch by the later tradition, Ch'eng-kuan was also closely associated with various Ch'an lines of his day. *The Biographies of Eminent Monks Compiled in the Sung* (*Sung kao-seng chuan*), for instance, credits Ch'eng-kuan with having studied the Ox-head line of Ch'an under Hui-chung 慧忠 (683-769) and Fa-ch'in 法欽 (714-792), the Ho-tse line of Southern Ch'an under Wu-ming 無名 (722-793), and the Northern line of Ch'an under Hui-yün 慧雲 (dates unknown).<sup>24</sup>

Even though it is highly unlikely that Fa-tsang could have had Ch'an in mind when he discussed the Sudden Teaching in the *Treatise on the Five Teachings*,<sup>25</sup> Ch'eng-kuan's identification of the Sudden Teaching with Ch'an does, in fact, provide a way in which Fa-tsang's fivefold classification scheme can be salvaged from Hui-yüan's criticism. As noted before, Fa-tsang's characterization of the Sudden Teaching can be analyzed as having two aspects. While Hui-yüan's critique holds against the first aspect, according to which the Sudden Teaching differs from the Advanced Teaching only in its method of exposition and not in its content, it does not hold against the second as-

pect, which has to do with religious practice. That is, even though the Sudden Teaching does not reveal any new truth about the ultimate nature of reality, it may still have something unique to say about the nature of practice, and it is in this context that it can still be considered as a *bona fide* teaching in its own right.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, in so identifying the Sudden Teaching with Ch'an, Ch'eng-kuan has given to this teaching a totally different valuation from that found in the *Treatise on the Five Teachings*, where the practical aspect of this teaching is of secondary importance.

More important, Ch'eng-kuan's identification of the Sudden Teaching with Ch'an points to the enormous impact that the rise of Ch'an had on other forms of Chinese Buddhism in the eighth century. That century witnessed the transformation of Ch'an from a little-known and cloistered phenomenon into a large scale movement whose ramifications affected the course of Chinese Buddhism as a whole. It is the presence of Ch'an that gives the Hua-yen writings of Ch'eng-kuan and Tsung-mi an entirely different cast from those of Fa-tsang.

#### IV. *The Sudden Teaching in Tsung-mi's Thought*

Tsung-mi was even more closely identified with Ch'an than was his teacher, Ch'eng-kuan. Nevertheless, Tsung-mi did not identify the Sudden Teaching with Ch'an as Ch'eng-kuan had. Nor, for a number of reasons, did he establish the Sudden Teaching as a separate category in his *p'an-chiao* scheme.

First of all, Tsung-mi could not make the kind of blanket identification that Ch'eng-kuan had made in subsuming different Ch'an lines together under the Sudden Teaching. When Tsung-mi formulated his *p'an-chiao* scheme in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*, almost half a century had elapsed since Ch'eng-kuan had written the *Yen-i ch'ao*, a period of time in which Ch'an had become even more influential and the differences among the various Ch'an lines had become even more apparent, especially the difference between the Northern and Southern lines. As a successor to the Ho-tse line, whose founder, Shen-hui, had championed the cause of Southern Ch'an as teaching sudden enlightenment and had disparaged



Northern Ch'an as teaching a gradualistic form of practice, Tsung-mi could not have placed the two lines of Ch'an in the same category. Rather, Tsung-mi makes a point of distinguishing between the two lines. For instance, in the *Ch'an Chart* (*Chung-hua ch'uan-hsin-ti ch'an men shih-tzu ch'eng-hsi t'u*, 中華傳心地禪門師資承襲圖),<sup>27</sup> a work that seeks to clarify the different historical and doctrinal roots of the major Ch'an lines of his day, Tsung-mi says:

The Southern Line is the true line in which the robe and Dharma have been uninterruptedly transmitted over successive generations from the time when the Great Master Hui-neng of Ts'ao-ch'i received the essence of Bodhidharma's teaching. Later, because Shen-hsiu widely spread the gradual teaching in the North, it was called the Southern Line to distinguish it [from the Northern line of Shen-hsiu].<sup>28</sup>

After the Priest Hui-neng died, the gradual teaching of the Northern line was greatly practiced and thus became an obstacle to the wide-scale transmission of the Sudden Teaching. . . . In the beginning of the T'ien-pao era [742-756] Ho-tse [Shen-hui] entered Loyang and, as soon as he proclaimed this teaching, he made it known that the descendants of Shen-hsiu were collateral and that their teaching was gradual. Since the two lines were being practiced side by side, people of the time wanted to distinguish between them; therefore, the use of the names "Northern" and "Southern" began from that time.<sup>29</sup>

Moreover, as Tsung-mi makes clear elsewhere in the *Ch'an Chart*, the teaching of Ho-tse Shen-hui is referred to as "sudden" because it advocates sudden enlightenment. In contrast to the Southern line of Ch'an, the Northern line founded by Shen-hsiu is referred to as "gradual" because it merely teaches gradual practice, ignoring sudden enlightenment altogether.<sup>30</sup>

Given Tsung-mi's deep personal identification with the Ho-tse line of Southern Ch'an and his characterization of the teaching of that line in terms sharply contrasting with those of the Northern line, it would have been impossible for him to have included both the Southern and Northern lines of Ch'an together in the same category, under the rubric of the Sudden

Teaching, as Ch'eng-kuan had done. If, in fact, Ch'eng-kuan was associated with both the Northern and Southern lines, we can assume that he would have wanted to minimize the differences between them. Moreover, if Ch'eng-kuan's Ch'an allegiance was to the Ox-head lineage, as Kamata has argued, it would only have been natural for him to have minimized the differences between the Northern and Southern lines, especially if the Ox-head line of Ch'an arose as an attempt to bridge the sectarianism that had become rife among Ch'an Buddhists as a result of the rivalry between the Northern and Southern lines in the eighth century.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, it would have disrupted the integrity of his *p'an-chiao* scheme for Tsung-mi to have established the Southern line alone as the Sudden Teaching, incorporating the Northern and other lines of Ch'an into categories of gradual teachings. But, more importantly, Tsung-mi did not regard the Ch'an lines as espousing teachings that were separate from the teachings of the more scholastic traditions of Chinese Buddhism. In fact, the efforts of the last years of his career were devoted to overcoming the separation between Ch'an and the more scholastic teachings (*chiao* 教). Tsung-mi went to great pains in the *Ch'an Preface* (*Ch'an-yüan chu-ch'üan-chi tu-hsü* 禪源諸詮集都序) to link the major lines of Ch'an prevalent in his day with the scholastic traditions that had preceded them. Thus, he links the teaching of the Northern line of Ch'an with the Fa-hsiang/Yogācāra tradition; the teaching of the Ox-head line of Ch'an with the San-lun/Mādhyamika tradition; and the teaching of the Southern line of Ch'an with the Hua-yen tradition. It would thus have violated the very intent of this work to have established Ch'an as a separate teaching. Clearly, as far as Tsung-mi was concerned, the various Ch'an lines did not differ from the major scholastic traditions in terms of the content of their teaching; the innovation and contribution of the Ch'an lines lay in the way in which they applied these teachings in the sphere of religious practice.<sup>32</sup>

Tsung-mi's thought in regard to the Sudden Teaching is elaborated most fully in the *Ch'an Preface*, which, with some slight alteration in terminology, employs the same *p'an-chiao* scheme that he developed in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*. The only difference between the two schemes is that whereas

Tsung-mi uses a fivefold scheme in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*, he uses a threefold one in the *Ch'an Preface*. This difference, however, is more apparent than real, as Tsung-mi includes the first three teachings of the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man* in the first category of teaching in the *Ch'an Preface*, which thus treats the same five teachings that he deals with in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*. This means that what he refers to as the three categories of teaching in the *Ch'an Preface* includes the five categories of teachings elaborated in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*, and what he refers to as the third category of teaching in the *Ch'an Preface* corresponds to the fifth category of teaching in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*.

In response to the question:

Previously you said that the Buddha expounded the sudden and gradual teachings and that Ch'an opened up the sudden and gradual gates [of practice]. It is still not clear what is the sudden [teaching] and what is the gradual [teaching] within the three categories of teaching.

Tsung-mi replies:

It is only because the style [ 儀式 ] of the World Honored One's exposition of the Teachings varied that there are sudden expositions in accordance with the Truth and gradual expositions in accordance with the capacities [of sentient beings]. Although they are also referred to as the Sudden Teaching and the Gradual Teaching, this does not mean that there is a separate sudden and gradual [teaching] outside of the three teachings.<sup>33</sup>

This passage makes clear that Tsung-mi, like Chan-jan, understands the terms "sudden" and "gradual" to refer to methods by which the Buddha taught, not to separate teachings. Since the teachings included within Tsung-mi's *p'an-chiao* scheme are classified according to their content, it would thus have entailed a confusion of taxonomical principles for Tsung-mi to have established the Sudden Teaching as a separate category.

Tsung-mi goes on to distinguish between two types of sudden teachings, a distinction that he does not make in the *Inquiry*

into the *Origin of Man*. Tsung-mi's explanation of the Sudden Teaching in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man* corresponds to the account that he gives of the first type of this teaching in the *Ch'an Preface*, which he refers to as *chu-chi-tun-chiao* 逐機頓教, the sudden teaching which was expounded in response to beings of superior capacity, in contrast to what he refers to as *hua-i-tun-chaio* 化儀頓教, the sudden teaching as a method of exposition.

Tsung-mi illustrates the first type in the *Ch'an Preface* by saying that "whenever [the Buddha] encountered a person of superior capacity and keen insight, he would directly reveal the True Dharma to him," and that this person, "being instantly enlightened upon hearing [the Buddha's words] would attain Buddhahood at once, just as the *Hua-yen Sūtra* says, 'When one first raises the thought of enlightenment, he immediately attains supreme perfect enlightenment.'"<sup>34</sup> Tsung-mi goes on to say that only after such a person has suddenly awakened to his True Nature does he then gradually begin to eliminate the residual effects of his past conditioning, a process which he compares to the ocean which has been stirred up by the wind: even though the wind ceases suddenly, the movement of the waves only subsides gradually. Tsung-mi then identifies this type of sudden teaching with the teaching of those sūtras that expound the Tathāgatagarbha, such as *Hua-yen*, *Yüan-chüeh*, *Śūramgama*, *Ghanavyūha*, *Śrīmālā*, and *Tathāgatagarbha*. He concludes his discussion by saying that since this type of sudden teaching was expounded in response to beings of superior capacity, it was not taught during a set period in the Buddha's teaching career, adding that it is the same teaching as that found in the third and highest category of Ch'an teaching, that which directly reveals the Nature of the Mind.<sup>35</sup>

The first type of sudden teaching is defined in contrast with the gradual teachings—i.e., the first four of Tsung-mi's five teachings—which the Buddha expounded to beings of medium and inferior capacity and by means of which he progressively deepened their capacity to understand the Truth until they were ready to hear the teaching of ultimate meaning (*liao-i* 了義, *nītārtha*), such as that contained in the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa* sūtras.<sup>36</sup> As Tsung-mi writes in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*:

In the case of [beings of] medium and inferior capacity, [the Buddha] proceeded from the superficial to the profound, gradually leading them forward. He would initially expound the first teaching [i.e., that of Men and Gods], enabling them to be free from evil and to abide in virtue; he would then expound the second and third [teachings; i.e., those of the Small Vehicle and the Phenomenal Appearances of the Dharmas], enabling them to be free from impurity and to abide in purity; he would finally expound the fourth and fifth [teachings], negating phenomenal appearances and revealing the Nature, subsuming the provisional into the True, and, by practicing in reliance upon the Ultimate Teaching, they attained Buddhahood.<sup>37</sup>

The second type of sudden teaching that Tsung-mi discusses in the *Ch'an Preface*, the sudden teaching as a method of exposition, refers exclusively to the *Hua-yen Sūtra* and the *Daśabhūmikasūtra-sāstra*.<sup>38</sup> The basis on which Tsung-mi distinguishes this type of sudden teaching from the first seems to be chronological. Whereas he says that the first type of sudden teaching was not taught during a set period of the Buddha's teaching career (不定初後),<sup>39</sup> he says that the second was "suddenly" taught by the Buddha "on one occasion" (一時) immediately after he had attained enlightenment.<sup>40</sup> Like the first type, which was expounded in response to beings of superior capacity, this type of sudden teaching was also expounded "for the sake of those followers who possessed superior capacities as a result of the conditioning of past lives."<sup>41</sup> After noting that the second type of sudden teaching is also referred to as the Perfect Sudden Teaching (*yüan tun chiao* 圓頓教), Tsung-mi then goes on to catalogue under this heading such cardinal Hua-yen doctrines as the universe being contained within each speck of dust, the unimpeded interidentification and interpenetration of each and every thing, the Ten Profundities, etc., all of which fall under the category of what Fa-tsang designated as the Perfect Teaching.<sup>42</sup>

When viewed in terms of content, however, Tsung-mi's second type of sudden teaching seems to collapse into the first. Tsung-mi, after all, includes the *Hua-yen Sūtra* in his enumeration of sūtras that exemplify the first type of sudden teaching. Nor, at first glance, does his distinction between the two seem to add anything to his discussion of the Sudden Teaching. In

order to understand why Tsung-mi introduces this second type of sudden teaching into his discussion in the *Ch'an Preface*, we must digress briefly to consider the impact that the T'ien-t'ai revival of the second half of the eighth century had on Hua-yen thought.

The term that Tsung-mi uses to designate this second type of sudden teaching, *hua-i* 化儀, derives from the terminology used by Chan-jan in his *p'an-chiao* scheme of Five Periods and Eight Teachings (*wu-shih pa-chiao* 五時八教).<sup>43</sup> Chan-jan divided the Eight Teachings into two sets of four, each of the two representing a different perspective according to which the Buddha's teachings could be analyzed: what he referred to as the Four Teachings according to the Method of their Exposition (*hua-i-ssu-chiao* 化儀四教) and the Four Teachings according to the Content of their Exposition (*hua-fa-ssu-chiao* 化法四教).<sup>44</sup> The Sudden Teaching was represented for Chan-jan by the Buddha's preaching of the *Hua-yen Sūtra* immediately after his attainment of enlightenment. The Buddha's preaching of this sūtra was termed "sudden" because it was a direct and unadulterated exposition of the Truth that made no recourse to a graduated method of teaching more suited to the still immature capacities of the great majority of his audience. Thus, according to Chan-jan's analysis of the different ways in which the Buddha's teaching could be classified, "sudden" referred exclusively to the method the Buddha used when he expounded the *Hua-yen Sūtra*; the Sudden Teaching was accordingly classified as a *hua-i* type of teaching, that is, a teaching to be classified according to the method of its exposition.

Tsung-mi's use of the term *hua-i-tun-chiao* (the Sudden Teaching as a Method of Exposition), as well as his overall explanation of the Sudden Teaching, shows that he is in agreement with the taxonomical distinctions introduced by Chan-jan, at least insofar as they apply to the classification of the Sudden Teaching. Moreover, his use of the term "Perfect Sudden Teaching" to characterize the second type of sudden teaching, that which is limited to the *Hua-yen Sūtra*, reflects his awareness of a point of doctrinal contention that became a much bruited issue between T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen scholars in the second half of the eighth century. The debate centered around the classification of the *Hua-yen* and *Lotus* sūtras *vis-a-*

*vis* one another and was important because it bore directly on the question of which of the two traditions was superior to the other. The crux of the debate stemmed from a passage in the introductory section of the *Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra* (*Fa-hua hsüan-i*), in which Chih-i cryptically referred to the *Lotus* as being a “Gradual-Perfect Teaching” (*chien-yüan chiao* 漸圓教)<sup>15</sup> and, a little further on, as being “Gradual-Sudden” (*chien-tun* 漸頓).<sup>16</sup> This passage was later used to demonstrate the superiority of the *Hua-yen Sūtra*, which was accordingly classified as Sudden-Perfect and Sudden-Sudden, over the *Lotus*. Chih-i’s statement became a particularly sensitive point for Chan-jan, who went to great pains to try to explain it away.<sup>17</sup>

In order to appreciate the urgency that this issue had for Chan-jan, we must consider the adverse situation in which the T’ien-t’ai tradition found itself in the middle of the eighth century, recalling that the T’ien-t’ai teachings had been almost totally eclipsed during the first half of the T’ang dynasty. The reasons for this are not hard to determine: the T’ien-t’ai tradition had become stigmatized in the eyes of the T’ang ruling house because of its close association with the ruling house of the preceding Sui dynasty (589–618). The T’ang rulers turned elsewhere to bestow their favors, first patronizing the new Yogācāra teachings introduced by Hsüan-tsang (600–664), and later patronizing the Hua-yen teachings systematized by Fa-tsang.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, from a doctrinal perspective, the most important event in setting the course for Chinese Buddhist scholarship after the death of Chih-i in 597 was Hsüan-tsang’s return from India in the middle of the seventh century. The great number of translations of Buddhist texts produced under his direction in the next two decades, together with the impact of the new form of Yogācāra teachings that he introduced to the Chinese Buddhist world, redefined the central issues which subsequent Chinese Buddhist scholars had to address.<sup>19</sup> A newly formed tradition such as Hua-yen, whose teachings were systematized in response to the challenge posed by the new Yogācāra teachings, made the earlier T’ien-t’ai writings of Chih-i look out of date. Furthermore, the eighth century witnessed the rise of Ch’an as a self-conscious movement asserting its own unique and forceful claim to represent the authentic

teaching of the Buddha, an event that heightened the sense of sectarian consciousness among other Chinese Buddhist traditions, such as T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen.<sup>50</sup>

For Chan-jan, intent upon reviving the fortunes of the T'ien-t'ai tradition, it was the prominence of Hua-yen as the major form of scholastic Buddhism that presented the most serious obstacle. In order for him to reassert what he believed to be the superiority of the T'ien-t'ai teachings, it was necessary for him to clarify and strengthen the basis for their authority. He thus identified those teachings much more closely than had Chih-i with the *Lotus Sūtra*. The whole thrust of his Five Periods and Eight Teachings scheme was to assert the paramount supremacy of the *Lotus* above all other teachings of the Buddha, thereby demonstrating the superiority of T'ien-t'ai above all other traditions. Chih-i's remark in the beginning of the *Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra*, that the *Lotus* was a Gradual-Perfect or Gradual-Sudden teaching, accordingly proved to be a particularly irksome problem for Chan-jan. Without going into the details of his argument, suffice it to point out that Chan-jan's strategy was to declare that the teaching of the *Lotus* transcended the Eight Teachings ( 超八 ), thereby lifting it out of the realm of debate entirely by placing it above such categories as sudden and gradual. However, it should be pointed out that Chan-jan clearly departed from the more characteristic position of Chih-i, which classified the *Lotus* as a Perfect-Sudden teaching.<sup>51</sup>

The resurgence of T'ien-t'ai as a self-conscious tradition of Chinese Buddhism asserting its own claim for being recognized as the most exalted expression of the Buddha's teaching sharpened the need for the other forms of Chinese Buddhism to reassert their identity as distinct and authentic traditions, bearing their own claims to superiority. The mounting sectarian consciousness among Chinese Buddhists throughout the eighth century is reflected in the use of the term *tsung* 宗, by which particular teaching traditions came to designate themselves. *Tsung* can refer to the progenitor of an ancestral lineage and, in the context in which it was adopted during this time, it specifically connoted a teaching lineage. It first seems to have gained widespread use in this sense by Ch'an Buddhists in connection with their claim that Ch'an represented the true teaching of the



Buddha, which had been passed down through an unbroken line of patriarchal succession. Chan-jan was the first to apply the designation *tsung* to the T'ien-t'ai tradition,<sup>52</sup> and Ch'eng-kuan, following suit, applied the term to Hua-yen for the first time.<sup>53</sup> Ch'eng-kuan's use of the term *tsung* to refer to the Hua-yen tradition should thus be seen as reflecting not only his intimate connection with Ch'an, but also the increasing sectarian consciousness among Hua-yen scholars occasioned by the newly-formulated doctrinal claims of T'ien-t'ai to represent the superior tradition.

Tsung-mi inherited the debate from Ch'eng-kuan, who was well versed in T'ien-t'ai thought. Ch'eng-kuan had practiced under the Vinaya master, T'an-i 曇一, together with Chan-jan and had studied under Chan-jan between 775 and 776, before leaving for Wu-t'ai-shan, an important center for both Hua-yen and T'ien-t'ai studies at that time.<sup>54</sup> Ch'eng-kuan first took up the debate in the *Yen-i-ch'ao*, his massive subcommentary to his already lengthy commentary on the *Hua-yen Sūtra*, the latter work having been begun in 784, two years after Chan-jan's death.<sup>55</sup> In his discussion of the T'ien-t'ai system of *p'an-chiao*, Ch'eng-kuan cites Chih-i's authority to reassert within T'ien-t'ai doctrinal categories the superiority of the *Hua-yen* over the *Lotus* sūtra, claiming that whereas the *Hua-yen Sūtra* could be classified as either a Sudden-Perfect or Sudden-Sudden teaching, the *Lotus* merely represented a Gradual-Perfect or Gradual-Sudden teaching.<sup>56</sup>

Tsung-mi's introduction of the second type of sudden teaching in the *Ch'an Preface*, together with his reference to it as the Perfect Sudden Teaching, suggests that the debate was still a live issue in the ninth century. Further traces of the debate can be found in Tsung-mi's remarks on the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa* sūtras, both of which he regards as teachings of ultimate meaning (*liao-i, nītārtha*), but still categorizes as gradual, in contrast to other sūtras of ultimate meaning—such as *Hua-yen*, *Ghanavyūha*, *Yüan-chüeh*, *Śūramgama*, *Śrīmālā*, and *Tathāgatagarbha*—which he categorizes as sudden.<sup>57</sup>

Although Tsung-mi distinguishes between these two types of Sudden Teaching in the *Ch'an Preface*, the distinction is not a substantive one, since there is little difference in content between the two. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that he

does not make this distinction in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man*. The fact that his description of the Sudden Teaching in the *Inquiry into the Origin of Man* corresponds to the first type of Sudden Teaching delineated in the *Ch'an Preface*, moreover, indicates that the second type is clearly subsidiary to the first. Nevertheless, the second type is significant in the present context because it shows Tsung-mi's awareness of a much controverted point among Hua-yen and T'ien-t'ai scholars. Although Tsung-mi seems to introduce the second type of Sudden Teaching in order to score some doctrinal points against T'ien-t'ai, it should be emphasized that his interpretation of the Sudden Teaching as referring to a particular way in which the Buddha taught, rather than to a specific teaching *per se*, is much closer to the T'ien-t'ai than to the Hua-yen use of the term. We can also suppose that Tsung-mi's familiarity with T'ien-t'ai made him more sensitive to the problematical nature of the Sudden Teaching within Fa-tsang's taxonomy of the Buddha's teachings, although he certainly had other more pressing reasons for not including it as a separate category in his *p'an-chiao* scheme.

The Sudden Teaching was, for Tsung-mi, included within the Teaching which Reveals the Nature, a fact that underlines the importance of Ch'an in his reformulation of Hua-yen *p'an-chiao*. As it was applied to the Buddha's teachings, Tsung-mi understood "sudden" as referring to the method by which the Buddha directly revealed the Truth, without recourse to any expedients. It was thus the teaching that enabled one to gain insight into his True Nature, which was the basis for the Ch'an practice that Tsung-mi identified as the teaching of sudden enlightenment proclaimed by Ho-tse Shen-hui.

## NOTES

1. The identification of the Sudden Teaching with the *Hua-yen Sūtra* goes back to Hui-kuan 慧觀 (363–443), who, according to Chi-tsang, divided the Buddha's teachings into two general types in his Preface to the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, composed during the early fifth century. The first was the Sudden Teaching expounded in the *Hua-yen Sūtra*, which fully revealed the Truth and which was taught solely for Bodhisattvas. The second general type of teaching was the gradual, which Hui-kuan subdivided into five categories.

The first was the Separate Teaching of the Three Vehicles which was expounded for Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and followers of the Great Vehicle. The second was the Common Teaching of the Three Vehicles, which was expounded in the *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras. The third was the teaching which censured the limited understanding of the Śrāvakas and praised the understanding of the Bodhisattvas, and was expounded in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* and *Viśeṣaśāstrabrahmaṇḍaparipṛcchā* sūtras. The fourth was the Teaching of the Universal Vehicle expounded in the *Lotus Sūtra*. The fifth category of gradual teachings was the Teaching of the Eternality of the Buddha-nature expounded in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. (See *San-lun hsüan-i*, T 45.5b–14.)

Liu Ch'iu 劉虬 (438–495), Master I 岌師, Tsung-ai 宗愛, Seng-jou 僧柔, Hui-kuang 慧光 (468–537), Paramārtha (499–569), Chih-i 智顛 (538–597), and Hui-tan 慧誕 (Sui dynasty) all identified the Sudden Teaching with the *Hua-yen Sūtra* in their respective *p'an-chiao* schemes (see Kimura Kiyotaka, *Shoki chūgoku hegon shisō no kenkyū* [Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1977], pp. 76–78).

In disassociating the *Hua-yen Sūtra* from the Sudden Teaching, Fa-tsang was following the lead of his teacher Chih-yen. In fact, Fa-tsang's entire fivefold classification scheme is merely an elaboration of the fivefold scheme first articulated by Chih-yen in his *K'ung-mu chang* (see T 45. 537a19–b2 and 542c22–26). As Sakamoto Yukio (*Kegon kyōgaku no kenkyū* [Tokyo: Heirakujī, 1964], pp. 402–409) and Robert M. Gimello ("Chih-yen and the Foundations of Hua-yen Buddhism" [unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1976], pp. 367–392) have shown, Chih-yen's fivefold *p'an-chiao* scheme was developed in reaction to the new brand of Yogācāra introduced by Hsüan-tsang. In both his *Shih-hsüan men* and *Sou-hsüan chi*, early works written before Hsüan-tsang's return to China in 645, Chih-yen had employed a threefold classification scheme, which categorized the Buddha's teachings into those of the Universal Vehicle, the Three Vehicles, and the Small Vehicle. In the *Sou-hsüan chi*, moreover, Chih-yen had also made parallel use of the threefold scheme of Hui-kuang, which categorized the teachings as Gradual, Sudden, and Perfect. In his *Wu-shih-yao wen-ta*, written after Hsüan-tsang had completed his translation of the *Ch'eng wei-shih lun* in 659, Chih-yen again used the threefold scheme which divided the teachings into those of the Universal Vehicle, the Three Vehicles, and the Small Vehicle, making, however, the crucial distinction between the Elementary and Advanced teachings within the teaching of the Three Vehicles to arrive at a fourfold scheme. Chih-yen introduced this distinction to separate the earlier Yogācāra-cum-Tathāgatagarbha tradition represented by the translations of Paramārtha from the new Yogācāra tradition introduced by Hsüan-tsang, and to subordinate the latter—identified as the Elementary Teaching of the Great Vehicle—to the former—identified as the Advanced Teaching of the Great Vehicle. In his *K'ung-mu chang*, Chih-yen adds the Sudden Teaching—which he had used earlier in his adoption of Hui-kuang's threefold scheme in his *Sou-hsüan chi*—to the fourfold scheme that he had used for the first time in his *Wu-shih-yao wen-ta* to arrive at the fivefold classification scheme that was taken over by Fa-tsang.

2. T 45.481b16–18; cf. Francis Cook, "Fa-tsang's Treatise on the Five Doctrines: An Annotated Translation" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1970), pp. 174–175.

3. T 45.481b18. Fa-tsang is here paraphrasing the sūtra. The passage in question can be found in T 16.486a8 (Guṇabhadra), 525b2–3 (Bodhiruci), and 596b4–5 (Śikṣānanda); cf. D. T. Suzuki's translation, *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (London: Routledge Kegan & Paul, Ltd., 1973), p. 50.

4. T 45.481b13–15; cf. Cook, p. 174. The Teaching of the Small Vehicle would, of course, also be included within the gradual teachings.

5. Fa-tsang discusses the Sudden Teaching from ten different points of view in the ninth chapter of his *Treatise on the Five Teachings*; see T 45.482b2–7 (Cook, p. 223), 487c24–28 (Cook, p. 255), 489b16–23 (Cook, p. 272), 491a5–7 (Cook, 291), 492b1–3 (Cook, p. 308), 495c20–25 (Cook, p. 358), 496c6–7 (Cook, p. 368), 497b4–8 (Cook, p. 378), 498b8–10 (Cook, p. 393), and 498c14 (Cook, p. 399).

6. See Ming-wood Liu, "The Teaching of Fa-tsang: An Examination of Buddhist Metaphysics" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1979), pp. 195–196.

7. See T 14.550b–551c; cf. Charles Luk, tr., *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* (Berkeley and London: Shamabala, 1972), pp. 92–100. The same chapter appears as number eight in the Tibetan translation; cf. etienne Lamotte, tr., *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti (Vimalakīrtinirdeśa)* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires and Leuven: Institut Orientaliste, 1962), pp. 301–318.

8. T 14.551c23–24; cf. Luk, p. 100.

9. See, for example, T 45.485b3–4.

10. T 14.551c23–24.

11. T 45.485b2–7; cf. Cook, p. 223. Cf. also Chih-yen's *K'ung-mu chang*, T 45.558c17–559a2.

12. T 45.481c6–8; cf. Cook, pp. 176–177.

13. T 32.576a8–18; the present translation has adapted that of Yoshito S. Hakeda, *The Awakening of Faith Attributed to Asvaghosa* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 32–33.

14. T 32.576a24–26; cf. Hakeda, p. 34.

15. T 45.489b16–19; cf. Cook, p. 272. Cf. also *K'ung-mu chang*, T 45.537c9–10.

16. Fa-tsang refers to all three of the following passages in his *T'an-hsüan chi*, T 35.115c13–17. He only refers to the first two in his *Treatise on the Five Teachings*, T 45.489b16–23.

17. See T 15.36c6–8. Fa-tsang has abridged the passage slightly.

18. T 16.509c22–24; cf. Suzuki, p. 189.

19. Fa-tsang seems to be paraphrasing rather than quoting. See T 9.544b18–19. Sakamoto (p. 260, note 37) locates the passage as coming from T 26.133c.

20. HTC 5.12a; cf. Sakamoto, pp. 248–250. The full title of this work is *Hsü Hua-yen lüeh-shu k'an-ting chi* 續華嚴略疏刊定記. It was begun by Fa-tsang as his synoptic commentary on Śikṣānanda's new translation of the *Hua-yen Sūtra*. According to Hui-yüan's account of its composition, Fa-tsang wrote

the commentary on the first through nineteenth fascicles of the sūtra (occupying the second through sixth fascicles of the present *Hsü tsang ching* version of the *K'an-ting chi*). Then, perhaps sensing that his death was near, he turned to the *Shih-ting p'in* 十定品, a chapter that did not exist in the earlier translation of the sūtra, but only finished his commentary on the first nine concentrations (*ting*) before he died (which can be found in fascicle twelve of the present text). Except for these sections, the remainder of the text, including the Introduction, was written by Hui-yüan. The fact that Fa-tsang entrusted the completion of this work to Hui-yüan indicates the esteem with which he regarded him. Unfortunately the *Hsü tsang ching* text is incomplete. See Sakamoto, pp. 18–19.

21. Sekiguchi Shindai has demonstrated that Chih-i, the systematizer of T'ien-t'ai thought, never formulated the system of the Five Periods and Eight Teachings (*wu-shih pa-chiao* 五時八教), which, beginning with the authorship of the *T'ien-t'ai ssu-chiao-i* (T #1931) by the Korean monk Chegwan in the late tenth century, has been attributed to him, and which, since the late seventeenth century, has been generally regarded as representing the essence of T'ien-t'ai thought.

It is impossible to do justice to the full scope of Sekiguchi's arguments here. Suffice it to say that he shows that not only does Chih-i never employ the term "Five Periods and Eight Teachings" in any of his writings, but also that he never systematically formulated a *p'an-chiao* scheme corresponding to that of the Five Periods and Eight Teachings. In place of the Five Periods, for example, Chih-i emphasizes the Five Flavors (*wu-wei* 五味), a metaphor of far broader range than the more narrowly chronological framework of the Five Periods. Chih-i only enumerates what were later collectively designated as the Eight Teachings twice within the entirety of his voluminous *opera* (see T 34.3b3–4 and T 46.97c21). Nor, more significantly in the present context, does Chih-i distinguish between teachings to be classified according to the method of their exposition (*hua-i chiao* 化儀教) and according to the content of their exposition (*hua-fa chiao* 化法教). Rather, Chih-i separately elaborates in different works the types of teachings which were later categorized according to these two types of classification. In his *Fa-hua hsüan-i* Chih-i discusses the characteristics of the teachings according to the threefold typology—i.e., Sudden (*tun* 頓), Gradual (*chien* 漸), and Variable (*pu-ting* 不定), which later served as the basis for the so-called "Four Teachings According to the Method of their Exposition" (*hua-i ssu-chiao* 化儀四教). While Chih-i sometimes also mentions a fourth type of teaching—the Secret (*mi-mi* 秘密), corresponding to the fourth type of teaching in the Four Teachings According to the Method of their Exposition—his use of the threefold typology—corresponding, as it does, to his three types of meditation (*san chih-kuan* 三止觀)—is much more representative of his thought. It is only in his commentary on the *Vimalakīrīnirdeśa Sūtra* and *Ssu-chiao-i* 四教義 (T #1929) that Chih-i elaborates the four teachings—those of the Tripitaka (*san-tsang* 三藏), Common (*t'ung* 通), Distinct (*pieh* 別), and Perfect (*yüan* 圓)—which were later designated as the four Teachings According to the Content of their Exposition (*hua-fa ssu-chiao* 化法四教).

While it is true that the various elements that were later brought together to form the Five Periods and Eight Teachings scheme all appear separately in different contexts throughout Chih-i's writings, they were never brought together systematically by Chih-i. This task was first accomplished by Chan-jan, and reached its most thoroughgoing expression in Chegwan's *T'ien-t'ai ssu-chiao-i*.

A good summary of Sekiguchi's views can be found in his "*Goji hakkyō no kigen*," *Taishō daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 61.1–15. This article also lists all of Sekiguchi's work on this subject written before 1976. An excellent restatement and assessment of Sekiguchi's arguments can be found in David Chappell's "Introduction to the *T'ien-t'ai ssu-chiao-i*," *Eastern Buddhist, New Series*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 72–86.

Sekiguchi's findings are corroborated by the evidence that can be gleaned from writings in the Hua-yen tradition. Neither Fa-tsang nor Hui-yūan make any reference to the Five Periods and Eight Teachings in their discussions of *T'ien-t'ai p'an-chiao*. Both discuss Chih-i's system under the heading of those former scholars who had classified the Buddha's teachings into four categories. The four categories that both Fa-tsang and Hui-yūan enumerate are those of the Tripitaka, Common, Distinct, and Perfect; neither mentions the Sudden, Gradual, and Variable. Ch'eng-kuan, who had studied under Chan-jan, is the first to mention the distinction between the teachings to be classified according to the method of their exposition and according to the content of their exposition.

22. *Yen-i ch'ao*, T 36.62a10–15; cf. Sakamoto, pp. 50–51. The quote at the beginning of the passage is from Ch'eng-kuan's *Hua-yen ching shu*, T 35.512c2, to which this passage is a commentary.

23. T 36.62a21–22 and b1–4.

24. T 50.737a18–20. The most thorough study of Ch'eng-kuan's life has been done by Kamata Shigeo in his *Chūgoku kegon shisōshi no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku, 1965), pp. 151–191. Kamata argues that the particular form of Ch'an teaching that had the greatest impact on Ch'eng-kuan's thought was that of the Ox-head lineage. He also points out that aside from Tsan-ning's assertion in the *Sung kao-seng chuan* (compiled a century and a half after Ch'eng-kuan's death), there is no other documentary evidence that Ch'eng-kuan studied Northern Ch'an under Hui-yūn. He nevertheless concludes that the possibility cannot be ruled out, given the knowledge of Northern Ch'an teachings displayed in Ch'eng-kuan's writings (see pp. 176–181). Later on in the same work, Kamata disputes the generally accepted opinion that Ch'eng-kuan received sanction from Wu-ming in the Ho-tse line of Southern Ch'an, arguing that Ch'eng-kuan exhibits a critical attitude toward both the Northern and Southern lines of Ch'an. Kamata contends, moreover, that the often-made claim that Ch'eng-kuan received sanction from Wu-ming derives from the *Ch'an Chart* written by his disciple Tsung-mi (himself a successor in the Ho-tse lineage), who, in his desire to unify the teachings and practices of Hua-yen and Ch'an, grafted Ch'eng-kuan onto the Ho-tse lineage (see pp. 475–484).

25. *The Treatise on the Five Teachings* was an early work, and seems to

have been composed before 684, when Fa-tsang met the Indian monk Divākara (see Liu, pp. 24–26). The Northern Ch'an master Shen-hsiu did not enter the capital until 701, when he was given a lavish reception by Empress Wu. There is little chance that Fa-tsang would have had occasion to become acquainted with the Ch'an teachings before this event.

26. The same point is made by Liu, p. 196.

27. Since the text of the *Chung-hua ch'uan-hsin-ti shih-tzu ch'eng-hsi t'u* published in the *Dai Nippon zokuzōkyō* (2/15/5.433c–438c) is missing some sixty characters (see Ui Hakuju, *Zenshūshi kenkyū*, vol. 3 [Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1941], pp. 477–510), all references to this text will be made to the version that has been critically edited by Kamata Shigeo in his *Zengen shosenshū tojo* (*Zen no goroku*, vol. 9) (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 1971), pp. 260–347. Kamata has supplied the missing sections of the *Zokuzōkyō* text by consulting the Korean commentary, the *Popch'ip pyōryo pyōngip sagi*, by Chinul (1158–1210).

28. Kamata, p. 277.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 282.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 341.

31. See John McRae, "The Ox-head School of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism," Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory, eds., *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen Buddhism* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1983).

32. As Jeffrey Broughton has pointed out in a personal communication, this point is reflected in the way that Tsung-mi analyzes the different Ch'an lines in his *Ch'an Preface*. In discussing the teachings and practices of the various Ch'an lines, Tsung-mi distinguishes between their "idea" (i 意, sometimes he uses the term *chieh* 解 or *fa-i* 法意), which corresponds to the teaching of one of the scholastic traditions, and their "practice" (*hsing* 行), which is unique.

33. T 48.407b13–17; cf. Jeffrey Broughton, "Kuei-feng Tsung-mi: The Convergence of Ch'an and the Teachings" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1975), p. 238.

34. Tsung-mi is quoting the passage found in T 10. 89a1–2.

35. See T 48.407b21–c2; cf. Broughton, pp. 240–241.

36. See T 48.407b17–20; cf. Broughton, p. 238.

37. T 45.710b1–2.

38. See T 48.407c5–6. The *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* was incorporated into the *Hua-yen Sūtra* corpus, forming chapter 26 in the Śikṣānanda translation. It is baffling that Tsung-mi includes the *Daśabhūmikasūtra-śāstra* as a source of doctrinal authority for this type of sudden teaching, as this type of teaching otherwise seems to be tied exclusively to the *Hua-yen Sūtra* itself. Tsung-mi certainly could not have believed that this text was authored at the same time that the Buddha preached the *Hua-yen Sūtra*. Nor is there anything "sudden" about the explanation of the ten stages of the Bodhisattva path that comprises the subject of this text. Perhaps Tsung-mi felt compelled to mention this text out of a concern for symmetry, as it is customary for him to list both sūtras and śāstras when citing the sources of doctrinal authority for the other teachings.

39. See T 48.407c1.

40. T 48.407c2–3.
41. *Loc. cit.*
42. T 48.407c6–12; cf. Broughton, pp. 242–243.
43. Chan-jan explicitly uses the term *wu-shih pa-chiao* in his *Fa-hua hsiian-i shih-chien*, T 33.816c23–24, *Fa-hua wen-chu chi*, T 34.171c23–25 and 212a21, and *Chih-kuan fu-hsing chuan-hung chüeh*, T 46.292a20. Cf. also T 46.349c9.
44. See, for example, *Chih-kuan i-li*, T 46.448c22–23. See also *T'ien-t'ai pa-chiao ta-i*, T 46.769a13ff. Chan-jan's authorship of the latter work is not certain. The Taishō text incorrectly attributes its compilation to Chih-i's disciple, Kuan-ting 灌頂 (561–632). Chih-p'an attributes the work to Chan-jan in his *Fo-tsu t'ung-chi* (see T 49.206b3–8). Nakazato Teiryū argues that the work was written by Chan-jan and his disciple Ming-k'uang 明曠 (See Ono Gemmyō, ed., *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* [Tokyo: Daito shuppan, 1968], 8.139). Chappell adduces further evidence indicating that Chan-jan was the author (see "Introduction to the *T'ien-t'ai Ssu-chiao-i*," passim).
45. T 33.683c4–5.
46. 684a7.
47. Chan-jan deals with this issue in numerous places throughout his *oeuvre*; see, for example, T 33.823b, 887b–c, and 905b, and T 46.292b. His most thoroughgoing treatment can be found in his *Chih-kuan i-li*, T 46.453b27ff., especially 454a2–b6, where he addresses seven types of misunderstanding arising from Chih-i's statement that the *Lotus Sūtra* is a Gradual-Perfect Teaching; cf. Hibi Senshō, *Tōdai tendai-gaku kenkyū* (Tokyo: Sankibō busshorin, 1975), pp. 80–82. In his Preface to his commentary on the *Chih-kuan i-li*, Tsung-i (1042–1091) asserts that Chan-jan's reason for composing that work was to refute those who used Chih-i's statement to establish the superiority of the *Hua-yen Sūtra* over the *Lotus* (see HTC 99.284a).
48. For a discussion of the influence of imperial patronage on the Buddhist traditions in the Sui-T'ang period see Stanley Weinstein, "Imperial Patronage in the Formation of T'ang Buddhism," in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the T'ang* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 265–306.
49. For a brilliant analysis of the impact of Hsüan-tsang's new brand of Yogācāra on the formation of the Hua-yen tradition see Gimello, "Chih-yen," chapter four.
50. See Kamata, *Chūgoku kegon shisōshi no kenkyū*, p. 423.
51. See Ikeda Rosan, "Tendai-gaku kara enton no kannen ni tsuite," *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 22.307–310 and "Tannen ni seiritsu suru goji hakkyō ron," *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 24.268–271.
52. See *Fa-hua ta-i*, HTC 43.94a; see also Sakamoto, p. 4, note 2.
53. See *Yen-i ch'ao*, T 36.292c7–8. Tsung-mi was the first to list a Hua-yen patriarchate; see his commentary on Tu-shun's *Fa-chieh kuan-men*, T 45.684c10–13, where he names Tu-shun, Chih-yen, and Fa-tsang as the three patriarchs within the tradition (*tsung*). Ch'eng-kuan and Tsung-mi were added to the lineage sometime later (see Sakamoto, p. 1).
54. See Kamata, *Chūgoku kegon shisōshi no kenkyū*, pp. 170–174.
55. Beginning with Tsung-i's commentary on Chan-jan's *Chih-kuan i-li*



(see HTC 99.284a), T'ien-t'ai scholars have claimed that Chan-jan composed that work specifically to refute Ch'eng-kuan's assertion that the *Hua-yen Sūtra* was superior to the *Lotus* because it represented the Sudden-Perfect Teaching, as opposed to the Gradual-Perfect Teaching. Recently, however, Hibi Senshō has pointed out that, in point of fact, the *Yen-i ch'ao*, the work in which Ch'eng-kuan first makes this assertion, was written after Chan-jan's death, and that the *Yen-i ch'ao* passage could therefore not have been the target of Chan-jan's criticism. See *Tōdai tendai-gaku kenkyū*, pp. 79–80; see also the same scholar's companion volume, *Tōdai tendai-gaku josetsu* (Tokyo: Sankibō busshorin, 1975), p. 188.

56. See T 36.50a20–25; see also Ch'eng-kuan's *Hua-yen ching shu-ch'ao hsüan-t'an*, HTC 8.236a–b.

57. There are three places in the *Ch'an Preface* where Tsung-mi distinguishes between the Sudden and Gradual teachings within the ultimate teaching: 1) he identifies the *Hua-yen*, *Ghanavyūha*, *Yüan-cheh*, *Sūramgama*, *Śrīmālā*, *Tathāgatagarbha*, *Lotus*, and *Nirvāṇa* sūtras as belonging to the highest category of teaching, noting, however, that there is a difference among them in regard to sudden and gradual (see T 48.405a24–27; cf. Broughton, pp. 197–198); 2) after explaining how the Buddha used the gradual teachings to prepare his followers for his ultimate message, expressed in such sūtras as the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa*, Tsung-mi adds a note which says: "These [i.e., the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa* sūtras], together with the sudden teaching expounded in response to beings of superior capacity, combine to form the third teaching." (see 407b20; cf. Broughton, p. 238); and 3) in enumerating those sūtras which exemplify the sudden teaching expounded in response to beings of superior capacity, Tsung-mi names all of the sūtras listed in the first passage referred to above except the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa* (see 407b28–29; cf. Broughton, p. 241).