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The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche: Chen Hui's Commentary on the *Yin Chih Ju Ching*

by Whalen Lai

It is often said that the early Chinese Buddhists misunderstood the doctrine of anātman (no-soul); that they subscribed to a notion of an indestructible soul (*shen pu-mieh*)^a instead. In this essay, we want to investigate to what extent this is true to the time of An Shih-kao^b and the tradition that developed out of his translations.¹

An Shih-kao is the first major translator of Buddhist scriptures in China. It was he who introduced dhyāna practice and Hīnayāna texts and the basic teachings.² It was at a time prior to the rise of *ko-i*^c Buddhism, which “matched the concepts” of Neo-Taoist reflections on nonbeing and Mahāyāna notions about śūnyatā (emptiness). The Sino-Buddhist conversation was then conducted more between Han Taoist reflections of the art of *yang-ch'i nien-shien*^d (nurturing the breath and refining the soul) and the Hīnayāna catechism of the five heaps (skandhas), the twelve chains of causation (*nidānas*, *pratītya-samutpada*, both rendered as *yin-yüan*^e in Chinese at times), the six faculties (*āyatanas*), the eighteen fields (*dhātus*), etc. The concept of *shen* (soul, psyche) was one cultural bridge mediating the two systems. This indestructible soul transmigrated from one life to the next as the carrier of karma that would effect retributions.

An important text attesting to this early Sino-Buddhist encounter is the mid-third century commentary on the *Yin-chi'ih-ju ching*^f (*Sūtra on the Heaps, the Faculties, the Fields*).³ The writer is Chen Hui,^{g4} a disciple of K'ang Seng-hui^h of the state of Wuⁱ

in the Three Kingdoms. Chen Hui's understanding of *yin, ch'ih, ju*, i.e., *skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas*, is recognized as an important landmark in early Chinese Buddhism.⁵ The *Yin-ch'ih-ju ching* itself is an important text and was recognized as such by Tao-an,¹ who later contributed a preface to it.⁶ This sūtra belongs to the same class of texts as another of An Shih-kao's translations, the *Jen-pen yu-sheng ching*.^k Both seek to explain the doctrine of the skandhas and the *nidānas*.⁷ As Chinese exegeses go, Chen Hui's commentary on one compared favorably with Tao-an's commentary on the other.⁸

Chen Hui's commentary gives us a good indication of Chen Hui's thought, better in fact than his other important commentary, on the *An-pan shou-i ching* (*Ānāpāna-smṛti Sūtra*), which was the most popular *dhyaṇa-sūtra* introduced by An Shih-kao at the time. Unlike this other commentary, which contains a mix of opinions, Chen Hui's, K'ang Seng-hui's and more, the present text reflects Chen Hui's thinking more, even though it also cites, now and then, a certain "master's opinion." It seems that the master here is Chih Ch'ien^m and not K'ang Seng-hui, as once thought.⁹ Although indicative of Chen Hui's thoughts on many topics, for our more limited purpose, the text will be regarded as representing a general third-century Chinese response to the Hīnayāna concept of mind, *citta*.

I. Chen Hui on Shen as Mind and as Spirit

The Chinese Buddhists of the time had accepted the use of the word *shen*. *Shen* covered a multitude of functions and the uses of it by Chen Hui were no exception. The question is whether the Chinese or Chen Hui intended the term *shen* (soul) to mean:

- (a) a permanent ātman, soul or self, or,
- (b) just a continuity of personality or identity.

If it is the former, then it was a mistake; but if it is the latter, without implying the former, then it is not illegitimate. Most scholars eager to find Chinese distortions of the anātman ideal have chosen to highlight the former. However, it is interesting to note that Chinese Buddhists who said *shen pu-mieh* (the *shen*

is not destroyed [at death]) never said, in this period, *shen ch'eng-chu*ⁿ (the *shen* is ever-abiding [permanent]).¹⁰ Thus, we must not jump to the conclusion that the Chinese assumed the *shen* to be like the permanent ātman.

In the specific case under study here, Chen Hui clearly and readily uses *shen* in his exegesis. He never hesitates to call the *viññāna* (consciousness) *shih-shen*^o (consciousness-spirit). Though *shih* is the more standard term to render *viññāna*, the use of the *shih-shen* compound, or even just *ching-shen*^p (sublime spirit), is not impermissible—the word *shen* does cover the meaning of “psyche.” *Hsin-shen*^q well describes consciousness in general. One also must make certain allowances for poetic license. The fact that Chen Hui lavishes certain traditional attributes of *shen* upon the subtle workings of the *viññāna* may not be philosophically consequential.

(Consciousness-spirit) is subtle. It comes and goes without leaving any trace. Secretly it goes; silently it comes—so leaving and returning with no break in between. Because it cannot be seen, it is called *yin*^r (dark, hidden; a pun on *yin* for *skandhas*).¹¹

Such poetics is harmless; it enriches and does not distort the discussion.

If that should suggest granting to *shen* an omnipotence once associated with the spirit, we should remember that the Chinese Buddhists, then as well as later, took the opening verse in the *Dharmapada* to heart: the *Dharmapada* also grants the *citta* an omnipotence of thought—even though it only means by it the mind's authorship of karmic good and evil. Chen Hui says:

When the mind thinks of good, good arises. When it thinks of evil, evil follows. This is because the mind is the basis of all reality. So the *Dharmapada* says, “The mind is the basis of all realities.”¹²

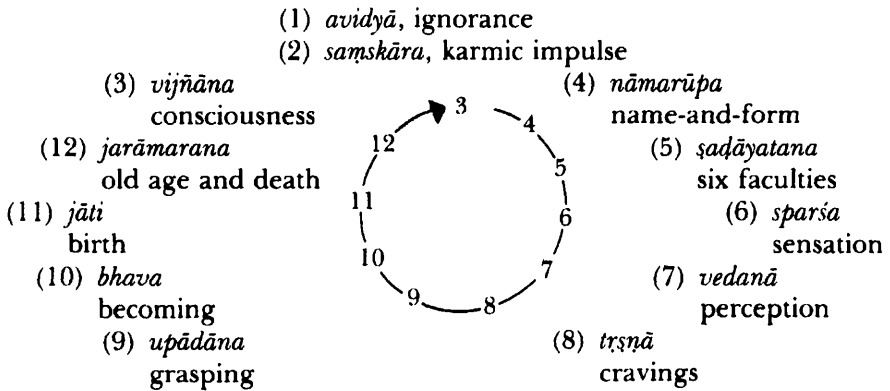
Such “moral idealism”—not to be confused with philosophic Idealism—is in keeping with the text and the spirit of the tradition.

When we examine Chen Hui's discussion of the “indestructible soul,” we find that this *shen-pu-mieh* doctrine pertains to the survival of the *viññāna* at death and its qualified continuance into the womb of its next rebirth:

Avidyā (Chinese: *wu-ming*,⁸ “no-light”) means darkness. It involves *saṃskāra* (*hsing*:¹ karmic impulse). The *shih-shen* (consciousness-spirit) of sentient beings is drowned in that ignorant darkness. Blinded, the spirit cannot distinguish safety from harm and thus would forsake fortune (the good) for misfortune (the evil). This consciousness-spirit is basically ignorant; it delights in bodily pains (of the senses; sensation) as if they were (desirable) pleasures. Not knowing that parents should be respected as one’s elders, it goes forward and thereby takes on a body.¹⁵

Chen Hui is describing here the sequence of rebirth in accordance with the twelve chains of causation.

The Twelve *Nidānas* in terms of Rebirth



When Chui Hui talks of ignorance and the karmic impulse, he is pointing to the resilient nature of items (1) and (2). This pair remains operative until the person attains wisdom and *nirvāṇa*. By *shih-shen pu-mieh*, Chen Hui means the survival of item (3), the *viññāna* (consciousness) surviving the corruption of the body during old age and death, or item (12). It is this entity which, being carried along by ignorance (1) and the karmic impulse (2), is being reborn, that is, conceived in the new parental womb to take on once more name and form, or item (4) in the diagram above. Name-and-form is attached to the pain of the senses (6 “of” 5). In craving after what it perceives (8 “of” 7), the process of suffering is rekindled (9, 10, 11, 12).

We can be sure that Chen Hui intended the *shen* to describe this process of the rebirth of the *viññāna* in the new parental

womb because, being a Confucian, he added the aside about the irreverent and lusting *shih-shen* intruding upon the parents—meaning, intruding upon them in their sexual intimacy, by which the new life is conceived.¹⁴ Leaving aside whether the historical Buddha would or would not have accepted this later theory of the *viññāna* as the skandha to survive death, the fact is that Chen Hui was only following the then canonical understanding of the *nidānas* and rebirth.

No permanent ātman is assumed in this scenario. The *viññāna* disintegrates soon after conception and a new nascent consciousness is born—such that we usually cannot recall our past lives. Chen Hui knew this. Note the first sentence below:

The consciousness-spirit is dead, being lost now in the dark abyss of the three poisons and the five heaps, yet it will once more be receptive to the six feelings. The six deviances will adhere to it and will corrupt it. This is what is known as “seeing darkly in the dark.”¹⁵

The rest describes the sequence from item (4) to item (7) in the twelve chains of causation.

Elsewhere, Chen Hui recapitulates the whole (3) to (12) series as follows:

Consciousness (*shih*: in Chinese, “to know”) means knowledge. The *hun-ling*^u (lit., the animus or male soul, but here, it probably denotes the psychic skandhas) receives (or is conceived into) the body (as the *rūpa-skandha*)¹⁶ and immediately knows likes and dislikes, producing the mind of love and dislike (discrimination) By name (*tzu*)^v is implied *rūpa* (form).¹⁷ (The skandhas of) sensation, perception, will and consciousness constitute *nāma* (because they are psychological); earth, water, fire and wind (the four great elements), being visible, are called *rūpa* (material form) [A description of the flourishing or activism of the heap follows.] As the skandhas are already deluded, then because of lust or desire, the consciousness-spirit [in turn] conceives another body (i.e., in the next cycle of life, commencing with the chain of *bhava*: becoming) and life (*jāti*: birth) resumes again (Concerning *jarāmarana*, old age and death, the last link of the chain,) old age is when the four great elements wither and death is when life ends and the spirit (*viññāna*) flies off (again).¹⁸

If the law of dependent co-origination innate to this chain is what proves the case of anātman, then Chen Hui can hardly be said to be ignorant of the doctrine of no permanent self or soul.

II. Chen Hui on the Skandhas

Truly to appreciate Chen Hui's understanding of Buddhism, we should therefore turn away from a singular interest in *shen-pu-mieh* to the larger issue of how the basic paradigm of person-ality comes across in Chen Hui's exegesis. In other words, how well did Chen Hui understand the skandhas, which the Buddha had used to counter the notion of a self (ātman)? The following is a list of the five, with the rough English equivalents, the Chinese used by An Shih-kao to render the five, and the rough Chinese meanings of those borrowed Chinese terms:

The Five Heaps and Their Renditions

Sanskrit	English	Chinese	Ch. Meaning
1) <i>rūpa</i>	form, matter	<i>se</i>	色 "color"
2) <i>vedanā</i>	sensation	<i>tun</i>	痛 "pain"
3) <i>saṃjñā</i>	perception	<i>hsiang</i>	想 "think"
4) <i>saṃskāra</i>	will, volition	<i>hsing</i>	行 "proceed"
5) <i>viññāna</i>	consciousness	<i>shih</i>	識 "know"

Chen Hui's understanding of the functioning of the five is not far off the mark.

Question: What are the five heaps?

First (of the five) is form; the four great elements being visible (to the eye), they are called form.

Second is sensation (lit., pain). This is where mental intent (*chih*)¹⁹ locates what it wishes for (*yüan*).¹⁹ There, misery and fear of loss tax the emotions. For that, it is called (literally) pain.

Third is perception. To perceive is to form (a mental image). Silent reflection is called thought.²⁰ The supporting base for thought is the senses.²¹ When one looks for the source to that mental image, one finds that it slips already into the past (the last preceding moment). Therefore, is it called reflecting, (that

is) the recalling of an image (gone by).

Fourth is volition. The (special Chinese) script *hsing*^y means to do, to proceed, to go forward. The self might be over here but the mind would be dashing forward to no end, contemplating good or harboring evil, extending itself in all directions with hardly a place lying beyond its reach.

Fifth is consciousness. *Shih* (for *vijñāna*) means "to know." Witnessing the doings of the will, the mind immediately knows. Thus, it is called "knowledge."²²

Chen Hui's explanation measures well against modern textbook explanations of the same.

The basic rationale Chen Hui offers for the five is as follows: (1) Form is matter; it is the "knowables" of the solid, the congealing, the heated and the fluid, symbolized as earth, water, fire and wind (the four great elements). Because form is also the object of eye-consciousness, Chen Hui identifies it with the "visibles." (2) Sensation is what results from the faculties making contact with these, so Chen Hui locates them in the senses, a kind of outreach of the mind. The sensation may be positive or negative; Chen Hui ties that to the emotional responses to "pain," which was the Chinese term used to render "sensation" then. (3) Perception is the recognition of the objects so sensed. In referring to it as "reflection" chasing after an "image already gone by," Chen Hui perhaps shows his familiarity with the argument that the mental object (dharma) is an "after-image" of the sensed object of a split second ago.²³ We will reserve the discussion on (4) will and (5) consciousness until later.

The theory of the five heaps and the theory of the twelve chains were apparently two independent teachings of the Buddha demonstrating the anātman doctrine, such that the skandhas were not meant originally to follow any one sequential order, as some (not all) of them now do in the twelve chains. Still, the overlap is all too evident, and Chen Hui probably followed some exegetical tradition and seems to assume this sequential relationship. Put somewhat crudely, it is: forms (item 1), sensed (item 2) by the five senses or faculties are then perceived (item 3) by the mind faculty. The will (item 4) is what then runs forward and what is willed becomes known to consciousness (item 5). The items add up to the five skandhas.

In thus granting to will (*saṃskāra*) the function of primary

action,²⁴ Chen Hui has this comment on the will being “the seed of form”:

To delight is to love. To seed is to plant. So, as the six desires are aroused, the body (self) will by itself give birth to life. It will take form according to the saṃskāra (will-to-be). All living things exist because of will, for that it is known as the seed (of form).²⁵

It is not known whether the “seed” imagery was or was not indebted to the Sautrāntika notion of the *bījas*, but it is clear that it led Chen Hui to associating it with the Taoist idea of an *élan vital*:

This process is comparable to seeding below (ground) followed by the sprouting of the self above (ground). Or, it is like the primordial breath (*yüan ch'i*)² known to be born in spring, to bloom in summer, to wither in fall and to die in winter. As the hundred plants, grass and trees die on earth, the primordial breath hides itself once more underground, only to emerge again in spring. When the spring weather is mild and the times are harmonious, it bestirs below and the body (of plants) appears (above) anew. All beings sentient or nonsentient are encompassed by this primordial ether. They will rise and fall, grow and wither, dying only to be reborn again, round and round in the three realms seeing neither beginning nor end. Thus is the seed of consciousness called the seed (of the five heaps).²⁶

In this case, the poetic license of this aside has philosophical ramifications, for it brings into the discussion of the skandhas the Han cosmogony of the one ether as the progenitor of all things. This moves Buddhism back towards *satkāryavāda*.

At one level, this is harmless. For example, the following open reference to the philosophy of change in the *I-ching*^{2a} only lends support to the Buddhist notion of impermanence:

Ch'ien and *k'un*^{ab} (in the *I-ching*) are the basic trigrams; they mark the beginning and the end. Accordingly, too, myriad things rise and fall. The accomplished will fail; the lush will fade. Such is impermanence. Birth, old age, sickness and death, slave of evil and receptacle of sin, constitute suffering.²⁷

At another level, though, the Han cosmological assumption

could lead to an important sinitic theory and a significant departure from the original. We will consider this below.

III. *Chen Hui on Emptiness and Shou-i*^{ac}

The above reference to the *I-ching* made by Chen Hui ends with this additional note:

All sentient beings have only subsequent existence (*mo yu*).^{ad28}
By returning to the origin (*pen*),^{ae} they would naturally be empty (*wu*).^{af29}

This theory of “original nothingness, subsequent existence” was derived from Han thought—not to be confused with Wei-Chin Neo-Taoist metaphysics. It also shows a synthesis of Hīnayāna *anātmavāda* and Mahāyāna *śūnyavāda* in the thought of Chen Hui himself. A word of explanation is called for here.

Though known for his commentaries on the works of An Shih-kaō, Chen Hui was also a student of Chih Ch'ien, the first major translator in China and the person who apparently re-worked an earlier Chinese translation of the *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*, the *Ta-ming-tu-ching*.^{ag} Chih Ch'ien used the term *pen-wu*^{ah} to render *śūnyatā* (emptiness). Chen Hui took over his reading of an original nothingness, which he saw as lying behind the skandhas.

Though young now, it will become empty when it is finally completed; emptied once more, this is called emptiness. The body is of the four great elements, but each of these will return to the origin. As they are never ours,³⁰ it is called not-mine (*fei-hsin*:^{ai} literally not-of-the-body or not-self, the current Chinese for no-soul).

Deeply perceiving the origin of the four matters and fully understanding the end of its aspiration, i.e., how it transmigrates in the three realms, forsaking one body at death only to take up another, accumulating only more suffering to no end; keeping your mind (hence) on the right meditation, making the three realms empty, and aspiring to attain the original nothingness in which all suffering would cease to exist—that is wisdom.

The *Ming-tu* says, “The fool mistakes what is impermanent,

painful, empty and without self to be permanent, joyful, existing and with self." As the transcendental wisdom, *prajñā-pāramitā*, can transform this, therefore it is known as *Ta-ming*,³¹ the Great Wisdom.³¹

Because of the sinic interest in some primal "one source" (*i-pen*),^{ak} Chen Hui also incorporates the Han Taoist meditative technique known as guarding the *i* (*shou-i*), wherein the word *i* (intention) means that "initial stir of thought," the first moving away from the primal, passive, one-source mind, the nascent mental form prior to "words taking on form."³² Guarding the *i* is the best means of preventing its going astray; eliminating this *i* is often deemed the way to recovering that primal psychic unity and harmony. By coincidence, *i* was then associated with *saṃskāra* or *cetanā*, then considered the root of good and evil. Since Buddhism also taught the technique of "mindfulness" as a means to purify the mind, the two *shou-i* traditions merged, possibly even in the Chinese title to the *Ānāpāna-anusmṛti-sūtra* itself, the *An-pan shou-i ching*. Chen Hui's reflection on how to terminate the *skandhas* through the contemplation of breath reflects that synthesis:

Mysterious is the consciousness-spirit and hard to detect are the various heaps. However, by being in tune with truth and understanding the principle, one can see the working of the five heaps in one single breath.

In the initial count (of breath), the breath is wind, that is, the heap of form. Reflecting on it and anticipating the pain, that is the heap of sensation. Together, these two constitute the heap of perception. Between the two (the initial breath and the arousal of perception) lies volition. Knowing that breath's intention is consciousness. Thus, in one breath can be found the five heaps.³³

The first half of the passage reflects the Taoist ideal of *shou-i*, the second half the greater analytical acumen of Buddhist mindfulness. Though there is an infusion of sinic motifs, this does *not* mean the abrogation of the Indian insights. The real sinicization occurs in a more subtle and hitherto unnoticed area.

IV. *Chen Hui on the Hsin, I, Shih*

In making this study of Chen Hui's commentary, I came across a very terse six-Chinese-character line that turns out to be the key to more than one important Chinese Buddhist development to come.³⁴ It involves the meaning of a set phrase, *shih san pen*^{al} (or, here, *shih san shih*),^{am} the three basics (or matters) of consciousness—a central topic of discussion from the third to the fifth century in Buddhist China. However, those exchanges being lost, we have only certain titles of correspondence to go by. Thus, we find it listed in the questions posed by Chinese correspondents to Kumārajīva:

Wang Wei-yüan^{an} inquiring about whether spirit exists in nirvāṇa;
 Wang (further) inquiring about *shen, hsin, i and shih*;^{ao}
 Wang (further) inquiring about *shen-shih* (spirit-consciousness).
 Hui Yüan^{ap} inquiring about *shen*.³⁵

The *Li-tai san-pao chi*^{aq} lists even more:

Yen Yen-chin^{ar} on dissociating the *shih* (consciousness).
 Chih Tan-t'i^{as} on *shen-pen* (the basis of *shen*).
 Hsieh Fu^{at} on *shih-san-pen*.
 Chih Tao-lin's^{au} reply to Hsieh.
 Tai An-tao's^{av} threefold exchange with Hsieh on the topic.
 Hui-yüan defending *hsin, i, shih*;
 Hui-yüan's inquiry on and discussions of *shen*.
 Chu Fa-tai^{aw} inquiring of Tao-an on *shen*.³⁶

The fact that the question raged in the third and fourth centuries, only to disappear after the fifth and be forgotten from the sixth on, has to indicate that it arose as a result of an imperfect Chinese understanding of the Buddhist model of the psyche; that a Taoist mind-set had colored the reading of *citta, manas*, and *vijñāna*—that is, until Kumārajīva corrected it, for the controversy seems to disappear after his period.

But what is the meaning of this *hsin, i, shih* trio and how does it affect the Buddhist appreciation of the structure of consciousness? Normally, the Chinese-Sanskrit correlation would be as follows:

Sanskrit	English equi.	Chinese	Ch. Meaning
<i>citta</i>	thought	<i>hsin</i> 心	mind, heart
<i>manas</i>	mind (faculty)	<i>i</i> 意	intention
<i>vijñāna</i>	consciousness	<i>shih</i> 識	to know

The one-to-one correlations seem proper enough, but when we take into consideration the meaning-matrixes of the two sets, differences rise.

The difference may be illustrated by Chen Hui's discussion of the relationship of the *i* to the mind and its object.

When the eyes and consciousness meet, the latter distinguishes likes and dislikes. This is the same for the other of the six sensations. The *Lao-mo ching*^{ax} (*Old Woman Sūtra*) says, "When the eyes meet form, this is *i*, which is (now of) the same (shape) as the form." The *Liao-pen [sheng-shih] ching*^{ay} (*Sūtra Penetrating the Basis [of Life and Death]*) also says: "It is with the eye-organs following the form that consciousness is born."³⁷

As senses make contact with objects in their individual fields, the mind takes on the form of the object.³⁸ This is the Buddhist understanding of the mental functions.

In an explicit reference to the *san-shih* (a variant of *san-pen*), Chen Hui cites his master:

(My) master says, "When the eyes see form, there are three things. This applies to all six feelings."

From the context, I would assume that what the master meant was the necessary correlation of the subject, the object and the related consciousness. The eye-organ would contact form through the eye-consciousness; the ear-organ would contact sight through the ear-consciousness . . . ; and the mind-faculty (*manas*) would contact ideas (dharmas) through the mind-consciousness (*mano-vijñāna*). This would cover the "six feelings" or faculties. But Chen Hui reads it differently. He continues:

The three things [*san-pen*] are *hsin*, *i*, *shih* (in Chinese: mind, intention, consciousness; in Sanskrit: *citta*, *manas*, *vijñāna*).³⁹

This could not have been what his master, Chih Ch'ien, intended, because this set would *not* be applicable to all "six faculties." It is this discrepancy in the two sets that led to the questions for Kumārajīva, etc.

In six Chinese characters, Chen Hui reveals to us the reason for the problem:

i nien; erh tso; san chou.^{az}

The first (item) would start thinking;
the second (item) then creates;
the third (item) would seek after.

Nien (to think) belongs to mind (*hsin*); *tso* (to create) belongs to intention (*i*); neither of these is the doing of consciousness. Good and evil cannot fall outside these three matters.⁴⁰

Chen Hui is saying, more literally than a Sanskritist would deem proper:

The unitary mind somehow gives rise to thought;
the intention actually creates objects of it;
the subject-object consciousness attaches itself to them.

It is the same sinitic structure that will emerge later in the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*: a pure mind, author of the three realms, devolves into being a dualistic, subject-object, consciousness.⁴¹ The words *nien* and *tso* will be used in that later, Chinese-compiled text in a liberal fashion that a Sanskritist purist would find questionable. The *Awakening of Faith* does assume the mind as the *creator*—*tso* (creates) the three realms (*trilokas*) from out of its suchness (*tathatā*)-base—and preaches the "no-thought" (*wu-nien*) method as the means of recovering the pure mind.

This model of the relationship between *hsin*, *i*, *shih* is drawn, not from *citta*, *manas*, *vijñāna*, but from a Chinese theory of mind or psychic scheme first spelled out in the *Kuan-tzu*.^{ba}

Do not let things confuse the senses, or the senses the mind. This is what is meant by "inner *te*."^{bb} If my mind is ruled, the senses are ruled. If my mind is pacified, the senses are pacified. What rules and what pacifies is the mind. The mind, however, hides another mind. Within the mind, there is this (deeper) mind

(originally, this is the spirit *shen*). Out of that mind of mind, there is first *i*, which precedes all speech. First there is *i*, then there is form. Only as there is form, can there be thought (*ssu*).^{bc} After thoughts, come knowledge (*chih*).^{bd} Any time the form of mind proceeds beyond knowledge, it will lose its vitality.⁴²

Here, too, the *i* occupies the pivotal point that marks the passage from a passive mind to an active consciousness or knowledge (*chih*, a synonym of what would be *shih*, “to know,” in the Sino-Buddhist scheme). What is *nien* in Chen Hui would be *ssu* in the passage above (another pair of synonyms).

When we compare the meaning of the Sanskrit matrix and the Chinese matrix of *hsin*, *i*, *shih*, the discrepancy becomes obvious. Whereas in the Indic trio, there is functional continuity and virtual identity in common usage (the terms are sometimes used interchangeably), in the sinitic trio, there is functional de-
volution and hierarchy:

<i>hsin</i>		<i>i</i>		<i>shih</i>	
<i>citta</i>	=	<i>manas</i>	=	<i>vijñāna</i>	Equivalence
mind	>	intention	>	consciousness	Hierarchy

Further, when we compare the structure assumed by Chen Hui and the one found in the discussion in the *Kuan-tzu*, their correspondence is clear and the rationale for the judgement against “knowlege” suddenly makes sense:

Common Structure		
MIND	>	MENTATION > KNOWLEDGE
passive, pure <i>wu-wei</i>	what activates <i>wu-pu-wei</i>	active, impure <i>wei</i>
 “ <i>tzu-jan</i> ” nature		 <i>wei</i> as the “artificial”
inactive yet activating all		

<i>Kuan-tzu</i>			
<i>shen, hsin</i> ever divine	>	<i>ssu</i> (to think)	>
			<i>chih</i> (to know) ever mundane
Chen Hui			
<i>hsin</i> (mind) that <i>nien</i>	>	<i>i</i> (intention) that <i>tso</i>	>
			<i>shih</i> (consci.) that <i>chou</i>
pure, higher, unitary mind			ill, dualist consciousness

With the final item (“mundane knowledge”: *chih-shih*) being associated with the mind’s fallen entrapment in the world of change and things (the “artificial” in Taoism and the “dualistic” in Buddhism), there is an implied negative evaluation of that consciousness. Meanwhile, on the positive side, the inactive mind is allowed the attribute of *wu-wei*, inactive yet activating all. This is why Chen Hui says “Neither *nien* nor *tso* belongs to the doings of consciousness [which grasps, *chou*, after worldly objects].” With consciousness thus condemned as mundane and dualistic, Chinese Buddhism long opted for “Mind Only” over “Consciousness Only” long before it knew of Yogācāra (Cittamātra, Vijñaptimātra).⁴³ The fusion of Buddhist and Taoist psychology in the same passage in Chen Hui’s commentary means that it is often not easy to disassociate two different but interwoven matrixes of meanings. Take the following, for example:

By “that which the *i* thinks about” [in An Shih-kao’s translation] is meant the *i*. When it thinks of form, it becomes *hsing* [i.e., it promotes *saṃskāra* or active deeds]. Henceforth, it is plagued by *sin* [karma or unnatural action]. As there is *sin*, there is suffering.⁴⁴

Here, we see the word *i* understood as the author of good and evil, as noted by the *Dharmapada*; as the creative potential of the spirit, as noted by the *Kuan-tzu*; as the form of the object the mind perceives or projects; and as the *cetana*, or “initial stirring of mind,” of which a contemplative should ever be mindful (*shou*). In such a fusion of meanings, the Chinese exegete synthesizes the native and the foreign tradition.

V. Conclusion

The present study is an analysis of certain elements in an early Chinese commentary on the *Yin-ch'ih-ju ching*. The question was posed how the intrusion of sinitic modes of thought might or might not have distorted the original. We have argued that the much publicized misunderstanding surrounding the doctrine of the "indestructable soul" may not be a mistake at all; that the use of *pen-wu*, or original nothingness, and *shou-i* may enrich the discussion without injecting alien value judgments; but that in the matter of a now-forgotten controversy over the exact meaning of *shih-san-pen* (the three factors of consciousness), a psychic structure indebted to the *Kuan-tzu* and one to emerge later in *The Awakening of Faith* turns out to be a most subtle sinicization of the Indic Buddhist essentials.

NOTES

1. I am grateful to comments and corrections from Dr. David Kalupahana in an earlier draft of this paper, which sought originally to approach the same materials in terms of the Chinese appreciation of Hinayāna as a whole. The article has since been redirected to a more manageable topic. I am also grateful to the reviewer for the JIABS, whose many corrections and suggestions I have incorporated into this final version.

2. On the translations by An Shih-kaio, see Ui Hakuju,^{1a} "An *Seikō no kenkyū*,"^{1b} in *Yakugyō no kenkyū*^{1c} (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1971), pp. 1-467.

3. In *Taishō Daizōkyō* (henceforth T.) 33, no. 1694, pp. 9b-24c.

4. His given name is Hui; see Ui, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

5. This has been recognized by Eric Zürcher in his *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, I (Leiden: Brill, 1959), p. 54, as one of the three early works that should be studied. I have dealt with another of the three, the running commentary to the first chapter of the *Ta-ming-tu-ching* in "Before the Prajña Schools: The First Chinese Commentary on the *Aṣṭa.*," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 6, 1 (1983), pp. 91-108.

6. Ui Hakuju has translated it in his *Shaku Dōan kenkyū*^{1d} (Tokyo: iwanami, 1956), pp. 73-79.

7. So acknowledged too Chen Hui in the Preface, T. 33, p. 9b.

8. Tao-an's is listed in T. 33, pp. 1b-9b, just before the Chen Hui's. Overall, Tao-an's tends to be more pessimistic (probably because of the turmoil he lived through in his life), for his commentary airs a wholesale condemnation of the *i* (intention; see later discussion), arguing repeatedly for its negation, *fei-i*.^{1e} Chen Hui would more patiently discern the good *i* and the bad *i* and

cultivate the inner life accordingly. The difference might lie in the two texts. In handling the twelve chains of causation, the *Jen-pen* text focuses on the third and fourth chain, that is, consciousness (*vijñāna*) and form (*rūpa*, or, *nāmarūpa*), whereas the *Yin-ch'ih* text focuses on the second, saṃskāra (will, karmic impulse). Tao-an repeatedly went behind the former pair to saṃskāra: thus he could readily advocate *fei-i*. But Chen Hui had to analyze the saṃskāra itself, because, as noted in his preface, it is none other than the “dark support” *yin-ch'ih* (a pun on skandhas, *āyatana*) of all reality itself (T. 33, p. 9b).

9. The master is never mentioned by name, but Chen Hui quotes three works translated or reworked by Chih Ch'ien, i.e., *Liao-pen sheng-ssu ching*, *Fa-chu-ching*^{bi} (*Dharmapada*), *Ta-ming-tu ching* (*Astasāharikā Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra*); on the earlier opinion that it was K'ang Seng-hui, see Ui, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

10. I do not find the *ch'eng-chu* association made until after the Chinese have acquired the additional idea of a “permanent Buddha-nature” from the *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* in the fifth century. After that, it seems that Emperor Wu of Liang^{bk} in the south made the connection, and Wei Shou^{bl} still later in the north, in his summation of Buddhist teachings in the *Shih-Lao-chi*^{bm} (*Treatise on Buddhism and Taoism*).

11. T. 33, p. 9c.

12. T. 33, p. 10a. Chen Hui studied under Chih Ch'ien who, working with Chu Chiang-yen,^{bn} had reworked the Vigha-translated *Dharmapada* (it is still under Vigha's name).

13. T. 33, p. 13c.

14. In the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, it is said that the attraction to the father will mean rebirth as a female, to the mother as a male.

15. T. 33, p. 14c.

16. This is derived from the later expression, *wu-yin shou-hsin*^{bn} (i.e., *pañca-upādāna-skandhas*) in which *nāma* (name) refers to the four psychic heaps and *rūpa* (form) to the physical heaps.

17. *Tzu* is as in *ming-tzu*,^{bn} which can stand for *ming-se*^{bq} (for *nāmarūpa*, name-and-form).

18. T. 33, p. 13c. The above is from a series of comments on individual lines dealing with the twelve chains. Certain punctuations and words considered corrupted are emended, and explanations added in brackets.

19. This reading is based on a splitting of *chih-yüan*^{bn} (aspiration) into *chih* (intent: what masters the mind-heart) and *yüan* (wish, hope).

20. The *Taishō* has the word “day, sun,” and Ui takes it as “daily.” But I believe that this is a corruption. Chen Hui is explaining *hsiang*^{bs} by way of the Chinese—the formation of a *hsiang* (form, image) in the mind (*hsin*). We find a similar exegesis in Hsi Chao later.

21. Excepting abstract ideas (such as numbers and the Sanskrit alphabet), the mental image we have feeds on input from the senses.

22. T. 33, p. 9c.

23. The mind does not make direct contact with form; there is a relaying and delaying between sensation and the formation of a corresponding mental image. This doctrine was more developed in the Sarvastivāda *abhidharmas*.

24. To take form eventually as either the karma of body, mind or speech.

25. T. 33, p. 10a.
26. T. 33, p. 10ab.
27. T. 33, p. 10b.
28. The *Taishō* has *mi*^{bt} for *mo*, which I take to be a corruption. If we stay with *mi*, then it would read: "When all sentient beings are yet to exist, the source and origin by itself is empty."
29. T. 33, p. 10b.
30. Emending the *Taishō* word *i* (already) for *chi* (one's own).^{bu}
31. T. 33, p. 10b.
32. See the later citation from the *Kuan-tzu*. This meaning of *i* was first pointed out to me by T'ang Yung-t'ung^{bv} in his *Han-Wei liang-Chin Nan-pei-chao Fo-chiao-shih*^{bw} (Peking: Chung-hua reissue, 1955), pp. 142–143.
33. T. 33, p. 17a.
34. Including the eventual disagreement between the Hua-yen^{bx} school (representing Mind-Only Idealism) and the Wei-shih^{by} school (representing Indic Consciousness-Only).
35. T. 55, no. 2145, pp. 83–84. The last, by the way, shows that Hui Yüan was not above using *shen* in his discourse with Kumārajīva, though *shen* is absent in the *Ta-ch'eng ta-i chang*,^{bz} T. 45, pp. 122b–143b.
36. T'ang Yung-t'ung, *op. cit.*, pp. 561–564.
37. T. 33, p. 10b.
38. In abhidharmic speculation, these forms even take certain specified, geometrical shapes.
39. For *mano-vijñāna*, the more standard term would be *i-shih*. Repeatedly, however, the Chinese glossed over this compound because of the native set that assumed only *hsin*, *i shih*.
40. T. 33, p. 10c. Text formatted for the sake of clarity. The opinion of the master should end where I punctuated it. Ui Hakuju feels that something is amiss here but confesses that he cannot decipher it. Ui's passage started my search, but now I cannot locate it.
41. On this, see my "A Clue to the Authorship of the *Awakening of Faith*," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 2, 2 (1979), pp. 34–52.
42. From *Hsin-shu* II; my translation. See Allen Rickett, trans., *Kuan Tzu* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, 1965) for his.
43. See my, "The Meaning of Mind-Only (Wei-hsin): An Analysis of a Sinitic Mahayana Phenomenon," *Philosophy East and West*, 27, 1 (1977), pp. 65–83; and "*Hu-jan nien-ch'i*: Suddenly a Thought Rose, Sinitic Understanding of Mind and Consciousness," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 3, 1 (1980), pp. 42–59. The present article, as well as others in preparation, will lend further support to my contention that the sinicization of Buddhism often occurred at a level of connotative meaning, embedded in the Chinese language, of which the users themselves might not be conscious and which some purely textual scholars fail or refuse to acknowledge.
44. T. 33, p. 11a.

Chinese Terms

a.	神不滅	aa.	易經	ba.	宥子
b.	安且高	ab.	乾坤	bb.	德
c.	格致	ac.	守一	bc.	思
d.	養氣歸神	ad.	不尚	bd.	知
e.	因勝	ae.	本	be.	守其自方
f.	陰符入經	af.	無	bf.	守其自研究
g.	陳楚	ag.	大明厚經	bg.	釋其研究
h.	厚信會	ah.	不無	bh.	得道守研究
i.	吳	ai.	非尚	bi.	非忠
j.	通安	aj.	大明	bj.	法定經
k.	人本欲生經	ak.	一本	bk.	梁武節
l.	守服守德經	al.	誠三本	bl.	龍守
m.	文謙	am.	誠三書	bm.	釋老子
n.	神符佐	an.	王維延	bn.	竺術炎
o.	識神	ao.	神心竟識	bo.	五陰受身
p.	情神	ap.	製道	bp.	名字
q.	心神	aq.	歷代三宗記	bq.	名色
r.	德	ar.	續延之	br.	之願
s.	無明	as.	文墨拆	bs.	想心測
t.	行	at.	謝傳	bt.	未
u.	魂靈	au.	交通林	bu.	己己
v.	中	av.	戴安通	bv.	湯用彤
w.	志	aw.	明法汰	bw.	馮曉向呂南北朝佛敎史
x.	願	ax.	老田玄玄	bx.	華嚴
y.	知	ay.	了本生死經	by.	性識
z.	元氣	az.	一念二作三教	bz.	大乘大義章