

TAO-SHENG'S COMMENTARY ON THE  
SADDHARMAPUNḌARĪKA-SŪTRA: A STUDY AND TRANSLATION

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ON THE  
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By

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation provides a comprehensive study and complete translation of Tao-sheng's Commentary on the Saddharmapundarīka-sūtra (CSPS). This document occupies an important place in Chinese Buddhist literature. Its significance in the study of Chinese Buddhism can be described in two ways. Firstly, the CSPS was the first commentary ever written on the Lotus Sūtra, which was to become a scripture of fundamental importance on the Far Eastern Buddhist scene, especially for the later Chinese Buddhist schools. Furthermore, it was the first commentary on any Buddhist scripture that was written in Chinese and structured in fully developed commentarial form. The CSPS set a pattern in many ways for later Buddhists to follow in terms of both structure and ideology.

Secondly, the CSPS is a rich source of Tao-sheng's seminal ideas. Tao-sheng (ca. 360-434) has been regarded, both in his time and subsequently, as a uniquely creative and prophetic thinker. The CSPS, the only writing of Tao-sheng preserved in complete form, is essential to any study of Tao-sheng's own original thought. Most of his theses and arguments, which were controversial in his day, were

originally propounded in his other writings, but the commentary may provide at least the general structure of Tao-sheng's thought.

The thesis is composed of two main portions: "Study" (Part I-IV) and "Translation" (Part V). Part I sets out and clarifies the problems involved in the study of Tao-sheng, the aims and method of the present study. Part II as the introductory step to the main task involving the CSPA extensively examines Tao-sheng as a whole as reflected in other sources, in terms of his background, historical and biographical, his works, his doctrines, and his influence. Part III is devoted to a critical examination of the CSPA proper. Here I undertake an in-depth analysis in several different ways in respect with both form and content, or language and ideology. The analysis focuses on how Tao-sheng renders, successfully or otherwise, the ancient Indian system of religious thought into the current Chinese language, which was already laden with indigenous philosophical connotations. Here I also trace and reconstruct Tao-sheng's thought incorporated in the commentary in accordance with his distinct themes. Part IV reviews the findings and significance of the study conducted. In brief, the thesis is the first full-scale study of Tao-sheng and the commentary.

Finally, a complete translation of the text is presented along with detailed annotations including the

classical sources of Chinese philosophical terms used and numerous corruptions of the text. In light of the significance of Tao-sheng and the CSPA, the translation answers the need for a complete translation of the text into a modern language and will serve as a basis for further study.

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## PART I

### AIMS AND METHOD

History records Chu Tao-sheng 竺道生 (c. 360-434) as a Buddhist thinker par excellence on the Chinese scene. Recognized as a seminal scholar with prophetic acumen, Tao-sheng is known especially for his original, creative mind, revealed in a number of doctrines<sup>1</sup> which at the time seemed unorthodox and revolutionary. Unfortunately, all expository writings relating those doctrines are lost; we have, therefore, only an indirect way of knowing the exact substance and background of Tao-sheng's arguments, let alone reconstructing his entire system of thought.

Under such circumstances, it is necessary for us to make the most of what is now left and to try to see the whole through the fragments. The staple of the material is Tao-sheng's commentary on the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra or Lotus Scripture. Hence the subject of the present thesis. This commentary is in fact Tao-sheng's only extant work preserved in full. And it is of substantial size, sufficient for drawing out something tangible without losing sight of the context. Furthermore, the work was composed toward the end of Tao-sheng's life (in 432), and stands as a product of his mature scholarship, presumably incorporating the doctrines pronounced earlier throughout his life.

Any data based on fragmentary statements gleaned from second-hand sources, or even the direct information from the commentaries themselves obtained without consulting the contexts, may be incomplete and open to arbitrary understanding and appropriation.<sup>2</sup> This can be all the more true when the statements are collected and grouped in accordance with certain methods of classification and translated into another language. Ideally, the original may be best served when it is rendered into a modern language, with the least intervention and mediation of the translator's philosophy or beliefs. In the case of Tao-sheng's writings, the translation of the isolated statements into English, as well as the way the material is lumped together by, for example, Walter Liebenthal--despite the latter's great service of opening our eyes to Tao-sheng--fails to give full justice to Tao-sheng's mind, possibly on account of Liebenthal's misguided presuppositions.<sup>3</sup> A translator can easily fall victim to the mistake of reading his own ideas and knowledge into the text instead of letting the text speak for itself.

The aims of the present study are two: (1) to prepare a literally faithful, undistorted translation of the commentary in its entirety, in order to provide, hopefully, a basis and vantage point for further study and understanding of Tao-sheng; and (2) to attempt to illuminate Tao-sheng's system of religious knowledge by examining the commentary in

conjunction with other doctrines and writings, and thus to evaluate Tao-sheng's contribution to the implanting (or transplanting) of the alien religious system in Chinese soil. Of course, the two objectives are not to be seen as separate tasks; they are closely bound up with each other.

Apart from its value as a means to our set goals, the commentary as such has its own significance.<sup>4</sup> As the first commentary ever written on the Lotus in Chinese, the sūtra which would become possibly the single most important scripture for the full-fledged Chinese Buddhist schools, especially for the T'ien-t'ai school, Tao-sheng's work has set the tone for the forthcoming commentators to follow, modify, or diverge from, including the ever-important schema of the classification of teaching (p'an-chiao 判教).<sup>5</sup>

In pursuit of our aims, however, we are naturally faced with some difficulties and problems. As a rule, a commentary by nature tends to confine the range of the commentator's activity within a certain boundary, i.e., the general direction and motifs of the sūtra concerned. A commentator may select and concentrate on certain words and expressions without paying much attention to their contexts in order to support his own philosophical presuppositions, but it can be generally assumed that the commentator chooses to stay within the scope of the foundational scripture. A commentator confronts an insurmountable barrier when dealing



with a religious scripture, for any criticism regarding the document of the founder's testimonial (sabda) might be seen as sacrilegious. One should add, therefore, a fundamental qualification to Tao-sheng's "unorthodox" and "revolutionary" reputation. Furthermore, there is certainly more than one tradition involved in the commentary, with many specifically Chinese philosophical terminologies and presuppositions found in the text, creating exegetical and hermeneutical complexities. Nevertheless, a sūtra the size of the Lotus, containing a variety of concepts and phrases at the commentator's disposal, may still provide a versatile thinker such as Tao-sheng some room to maneuver. The Lotus in fact revolves around the motif of three Vehicles dialectically turning into One Vehicle, a form of the diversity-in-unity principle, which seems to accommodate what some of Tao-sheng's contemporaries regarded as unorthodox and idiosyncratic patterns of his own thought. After all, he elected to compose or compile a commentary on the sūtra before anyone else.

To what extent has Tao-sheng left an imprint of his own thinking and wordage on the commentary? From a different point of view, perhaps peculiar to the commentary, a lead for that question may be found in the commentary's preamble in which Tao-sheng speaks as if he had acted merely as the editor or compiler of the text using input from various

sources. If that is the case, the text would amount to no more than an upshot of some collective thinking, or a compendium of some sort. This might also reinforce the view that an individual person is the product of an era and to that degree his work is, in the final analysis, not so much a product of personal labor as the fruit of a collective process.<sup>6</sup> This question, viewed from a different perspective, parallels the problem of language. The commentary, as it turns out, is fraught with Taoist and other Chinese concepts and terminologies. But the borrowing of language is not a trait unique to Tao-sheng. It is a common phenomenon found among the writings of his contemporary Buddhists. Even if his acknowledgement of his "editorship" is not dismissable as a kind of self-effacing mode of expression, Tao-sheng probably could never have eschewed the form of language in current use as a tool for both communication with others and for accommodating and expressing the elements of his own thought. There is no evidence that his language as found in other documents, including the remains of two other commentaries, is markedly different from the language of this work. Then the problem boils down to this: Where does Tao-sheng's identity as an independent person and thinker lie? Where is his originality?

In the case of Tao-sheng and his contemporaries, part of a thinker's identity has to do with whether he is to be

regarded as a Buddhist, a Taoist, some kind of hybrid, or something else altogether. Does the label "Buddho-Taoist",<sup>7</sup> by which many of Tao-sheng's contemporaries were known, apply without qualification to Tao-sheng? If so, what exactly does the label mean? Put differently, what system is Tao-sheng's primary frame of reference?<sup>8</sup> The different lines of thinking involved here can be reduced to two: Buddhism and Neo-Taoism. But since the latter is really a syncretism of Taoism and Confucianism as interpreted by such systematizers as Wang Pi and Kuo Hsiang, the question deserves more than a simplistic, single-term answer can provide. Tao-sheng was, therefore, like anyone in that period, exposed to the major components of the Chinese tradition and his individual imprint may be found in the way he assimilated the foreign concepts with the existing patterns of thought.

At a glance the titles of Tao-sheng's expositions propose what could sound bizarre and shocking, certainly thought-provoking, to the contemporary Buddhists. From this we can gather that perhaps Tao-sheng was either far ahead of his time in grasping the essence of the Buddhist doctrines, or that he deviated from the traditional Indian Buddhist way of presentation and thinking. In the first case he remained a Buddhist in every sense of the word. In the second case, he may turn out to be a Taoist in disguise or a Buddho-Taoist at best. Rather than seeing him from a single-angle

perspective, one might prefer to view him from the perspective of comparative religion as a kind of harmonizer or syncretist of the two traditions involved. Tao-sheng seemed to insist upon seeing beyond external structures and symbols.<sup>9</sup> His biography in the Kao-seng chuan tells how he came to realize through illumination the limit of exigencies and symbols and proceeded to write the two propositions, "The good deed entails no retribution", and "By way of sudden enlightenment one achieves Buddhahood." Such an intent is also explicit in the commentary. Hence we might conjecture that Tao-sheng may have intended either to transcend the external forms of the religious systems involved, or to see the common properties behind the expressions. Or he may have merely borrowed the language of one system to explain another.

Whatever the case may turn out to be, the key to determine the hypotheses seems to lie in the language of the text, which has more to do with the Neo-Taoist philosophy than with anything else as the chronologically most recent development and system in vogue. Right from the beginning of the text the reader cannot pass virtually any statement of philosophical significance without encountering one or more terms of non-Buddhist origin, terms which certainly are not found in the text of the Lotus translated by Kumārajīva and other sūtras rendered into Chinese so far. Perhaps Tao-sheng

had no choice but to resort to the current philosophical language to express his ideas and to address the general public, whether converted or not. Such style of expression and diction may also reflect exactly the way Tao-sheng's own process of thinking took place. Thus the question is whether Tao-sheng's terminology as found in the commentary has to do with patterns of expression or with patterns of thinking; or both, insofar as they are interrelated.

The problem of the language will be properly examined as the central theme of Part III. Our analysis will be carried out in several different ways. The part of critical analysis will be highlighted by three major analytic approaches. First, a general examination of the philosophically significant concepts and expressions of Chinese origin; second, a comprehensive survey of the usage of the term li; third, a structural and content analysis of three selected chapters in connection with the counterparts of the sūtra.

In the first approach, some fifteen terms and concepts that stand out as clearly recurrent rather than casual will be identified and sorted out for examination of their roles in Tao-sheng's vocabulary. Some of them are closely associated and will be discussed in connection with the "Sage". Their original meanings and implications as found in the Chinese texts will be drawn to be collated with the

implications suggested by Tao-sheng in the contexts of the commentary and the related parts of the sūtra. This will help clarify whether the borrowed terms retain the structure of their original meaning, or whether they underwent some transformation to take on new connotations, as with the word wu-wei or non-doing, a Taoist concept, which before Tao-sheng had already been transformed into the symbol for the Buddhist term for "the unconditioned" (asamskrta). Whether the terms concerned function merely as the new symbols for certain Buddhist concepts without any remnant of conceptual content remains to be seen. There is also the possibility, and it is also our hypothetical position, that Tao-sheng could not escape being a syncretist on the matter. In that case, precisely in what fashion are the two traditions blended or converged, with or without losing original content?

Reliance on the existing form of expression or terminology, however, for interpreting and introducing a new tradition would not be unnatural, nor does it seem to be an uncommon trend among Tao-sheng's contemporaries. And so it would merely add another dimension of difficulty to the complexities in our search for Tao-sheng's identity. Yet there may be room for an individual's mark in the very process of borrowing, in the choice of vocabulary, in the way both the existing form and new input are reconciled, that is, the mode of transfusion or assimilation. Depending on who

uses the old symbol, there can be a variety of difference in its expanse of denotation and connotation; a thinker's distinctly personal imprint may well lie in the manner and extent of his borrowing of existent symbols or concepts.

One glaring example in that sense is the concept li, rendered variously as "principle", "reason", "norm", "order", or "noumenon". One could not afford to overlook the omnipresence of the term in the text, recurrent throughout more than any other abstract noun including tao, an already established term. Li was to become probably the most significant and pregnant philosophical concept in Chinese philosophy, especially in Neo-Confucianism and in Hua-yen Buddhism.<sup>10</sup> Tao-sheng picked up the term li when still in its nebulous stage of evolution to make it a functional term; this can be considered an immeasurable contribution. Indeed, one could devote a separate study to Tao-sheng's appropriation of this one significant term li.

Here, I take li as a medium through which Tao-sheng's apprehension of the Buddhist doctrine as represented in the Saddharmapundarika, and possibly the inner structure of Tao-sheng's own mind, can be manifested. Any expressions or statements of the sutra worthy of commentary seem to be filtered down and reduced to li. What underlies such statements is represented symbolically in miniature, as it were, being encoded and stored in li. Li can thus be regarded as a

key to Tao-sheng's understanding of the sūtra. But its importance does not lie just in its role as a convenient tool for interpreting the sūtra and as the principle underlying its statements; li in its own right stands for an ontological entity or the ultimate reality. Li can be both particular and universal. What has remained a problem arising from the coexistence of several systems apparently in harmony may therefore find an explanation or even a solution in the structure of li.

There is a concept that merits a scrupulous review in connection with li. It is the process of enlightenment. Tao-sheng is noted for the theory of sudden enlightenment. The text nonetheless teems with expressions that apparently contradict Tao-sheng's alleged position. Tao-sheng's original theory is believed to be analytically based on the idea that li, by its very nature, is ontologically unpartitionable. Now we are confronted with what seems to be the antithesis of the theory while li remains the key term. How can we account for the discrepancy?

These two analyses encompassing the entire text will be followed by an in-depth textual examination of selected sample chapters. Aspects such as the structure, themes, length, and vocabulary of the chosen chapters will be closely examined in conjunction with the appropriate chapters of the sūtra. In length alone, there is an obvious imbalance and



discrepancy between the two. The first four chapters take up the first roll (ch'üan), while the second half is made up of the rest, i.e. twenty-three chapters. Can that be taken as an indication that Tao-sheng made too liberal use of the sūtra to build his own case? Is there any controlling principle, coherency, or logical sequence, in the topics and phrases selected?

In addition to the three-way analysis of the text, the third part on the CSPA proper will be further reinforced by other facts and data related to the CSPA. Starting with how Tao-sheng came to get familiar with the Lotus (III, A.) they will include: structure and style of the text (IV, B); basic ideas to be collated with the tenet of the sūtra (IV, C); any traces otherwise, and any new development of his thought identifiable in the text (IV, E); finally, a brief review regarding the significance of the CSPA for the study of Tao-sheng and other Buddhist schools to come.

In order to help illuminate the text and Tao-sheng, it also becomes necessary to identify where historically Tao-sheng stood and to sketch other facts such as his works, influence and doctrines. Thus, as a prolegomenon to the study of the CSPA, general surveys of Tao-sheng's background and relevant facts will precede the textual study.

Against this background information Tao-sheng's position in history and line of thinking may be more clearly

delineated. Included in the first section will be a sketch of Tao-sheng's doctrines under three major theme-groups based on all the available sources, direct or indirect, with the CSPS as the last source to draw on whenever possible. The sketch will provide a miniature yet comprehensive view of Tao-sheng's thought per se in its own right. It will serve also as the base for tracing (in the following sub-section) Tao-sheng's influence on the thoughts of other Buddhists to come, as well as for identifying (in the following section) the traces of the doctrines, figured in this way, in the text itself.

Finally, the fourth and last part consists of the translation of the text to be offered as the chronicle and end result of the foregoing investigation and analysis. Every effort will be made to render the fifth-century writing as literally as possible unless the situation dictates otherwise.<sup>11</sup> Apparently the safest way to keep the writer's intended meaning and purport intact, the literal, straightforward approach would call for every letter, word, and idiom of the text to be taken in the sense that would have been taken in the days of its composition, particularly in the literary or religious circle to which our author belonged, rather than in the sense that would have been meant in other times or in current usage.

As is the case with the term tao when it occurs alone

(and non-technically), the pregnant term li will be left untranslated throughout for the obvious reason that it is taken as a symbol of too many connotations to define or fix in one word or two. Apart from consistency, our intent is to acknowledge the fact that li usually stands as a substantive in Tao-sheng's vocabulary.

The best way to illuminate the expressions concerned and to find their most appropriate meanings is to trace and identify them in the classical sources, which as it turns out can be mostly related to Neo-Taoism. Then we will determine if the meanings drawn from the classical contexts are applicable to the commentary or are adjusted in compliance with the Buddhist sense of the equivalent terms or the general intent of the appropriate passage or phrase in the sūtra.<sup>12</sup>

Precaution should be taken in reading the text since it abounds with corrupted letters, undecipherable letters left omitted, and especially copying errors, both homophonous and homographic. One must also be wary of the text's punctuations.

Every chapter of the translation will be preceded by a brief synopsis of what is discoursed in the sūtra, so that the reader may be familiarized with the general setting and context in which a certain word or phrase is being interpreted.

Despite all our methods and efforts there may be many baffling phrases we will fail to understand. Tao-sheng's cryptic writing--a millenium and a half apart from us--is certain to leave many points unresolved and hypothetical solutions moot. Nevertheless, translation should be and will be attempted. We may simply hope, as Tao-sheng himself humbly stated, that the reader "may not abandon [the search for] the Tao due to [my] human insignificance (or folly)" (CSPS 396d), here "the Tao" being the path traversed by Tao-sheng.

## NOTES TO PART I

<sup>1</sup>The evaluation of Tao-sheng for his greatness and importance may be based on two grounds: historical records and theoretical analysis. For the first there are two biographies, in Kao-seng chuan, 7, Taisho, 50.366b-367a, and in Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi, 15, T55.110c-111b. There is also a eulogy by (Hui-lin) found in Kuang hung-ming chi, T52.256c-266b. In other records Tao-sheng is listed well-nigh on top of the lists of the best four, eight, or ten disciples of Kumārajīva. Among the modern historians dealing with Chinese Buddhism, T'ang Yung-t'ung in his encyclopaedic work Han Wei Liang-chin Nan-pei-ch'ao fo-chiao shih (Shanghai, 1938) encompassing several centuries from the beginning of the history of Buddhism in China up to the sixth century, devotes more space to Tao-sheng than to anyone else, comparing his place in Chinese Buddhism to that of Wang Pi in Neo-Taoism. (See Taiwan reprint, 1974, vol. II, 155). For the theoretical grounds we can cite Hu Shih, who in "Development of Zen Buddhism in China", The Chinese Social and Political Science Review, vol. XV, No. 4 (1932), 483f., calls Tao-sheng "a revolutionary thinker", considering him the founder of "Chinese Zenism" or "School of Sudden Awakening or Enlightenment". T'ang (*op. cit.*, 179) similarly refers to Tao-sheng as the "founding father" with respect to the theory of sudden enlightenment of the Ch'an school.

<sup>2</sup>Richard H. Robinson, Early Mādhyamika in India and China (Madison, 1967), p. 18 quotes S. Schayer, Ausgewählte Kapitel aus der Prasannapadā (Krakow, 1931), p. xxviii: "The danger lies in the arbitrary isolation of individual thoughts, which are only understandable in systematic connection, as elements of structural unitites." Since we deal with basically the same period of Chinese Buddhism and the "Buddho-Taoists", I will follow closely the arguments of Robinson's book, particularly Chapter II "Questions and Method", and will refer to it whenever appropriate for the sake of comparing my arguments, though we are far apart in terms of subject matter, scope, and intermediary, if not ultimate, goals.

<sup>3</sup>See Walter Liebenthal's article, "The World Conception of Chu Tao-sheng" in Monumenta Nipponica, 12 (1956). Of Liebenthal's work Robinson remarks: "At that time I supposed that it would be necessary merely to summarize existing works on early Indian Madhyamika and to do a modest amount of further research on the Buddho-Taoists on whom Liebenthal had already published his studies. But it soon became clear that the presuppositions, problems, and methods of previous

writers were such that I could not extract from them what my purpose required." (*op. cit.*, p. 3). And again: "My expectation that the Buddho-Taoists could be dealt with easily and briefly was disappointed as soon as I began to examine Liebenthal's work carefully and to probe the texts. I found that I disagreed with most of Liebenthal's philosophico-religious interpretations, as well as with his methods of translation." (p. 4). It is not clear whether Liebenthal's writings on Tao-sheng are included here, or whether Tao-sheng can be counted among the Buddho-Taoists for that matter, since Tao-sheng did not end up becoming part of the subject matter in Robinson's study; anyway, the same is not less true of the case of Tao-sheng in my view.

<sup>4</sup>A study with focus on Tao-sheng's understanding of the Saddharmapundarika and some relevant information surrounding it can be found in Ocho Enrichi's monographic article, "Jikudosho sen Hokekyoso no kenkyu", Otani daigaku kenkyu nempo, 5 (1952), 167-276, the best comprehensive study on the subject so far. See also his more recent and condensed article, "Jikudosho no hoke shiso", in Sakamoto Yukio, ed., Hoke-kyo no Chugokuteki tenkai (Kyoto, 1972), pp. 145-173.

<sup>5</sup>A certain Tao-i of the T'ang period in 760 writes in his colophon to the collection of the commentaries on the Vimalakirti-nirdesa-sutra, Taisho, No. 2777, p. 440a: "In the case of the Lotus, people took [Tao-]sheng's commentary as the basis [of its interpretation]."

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 10: "Selection and rejection, operating in individual and collective choices, are major factors in modifying traditions. This affects both native and imported elements . . . we could not wholly reduce the lives and thoughts of these men to typological generalities. We must allow for the qualitative uniqueness, and value the intrinsic worth of the outstanding men whose biographies happen to have been recorded."

<sup>7</sup>The term "Buddho-Taoism" has a wide range of application, from the early stage of conflict and interaction between the two components to the process of cultural amalgamation and synthesis of the two systems; Tao-sheng probably belonged to the last stage of the development. E. Zuercher, when using the term in The Buddhist Conquest of China (Lieden, 1972), p. 288ff., refers to the relatively earlier stage, while Robinson seems to allude to the later stage when he says: "There is not yet an adequate lexicon of the Buddho-Taoist vocabulary, which possesses a rich stock of formations that are unique to it." (*op. cit.*, p. 16).

<sup>8</sup>Cf. Robinson, *ibid.*, p. 5: "In what respects was the Buddhism of Kumārajīva's disciples Indian, and in what respects was it Chinese?"

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Robinson, *ibid.*, p. 12: ". . . I suspend judgement on the thesis that the structure of right thought and the structure of reality are identical."; p. 15: "It cannot be assumed that the structure of language corresponds to the structure of thought, or that all thoughts can be represented by symbols, or that language is the only kind of symbol-system."

<sup>10</sup>Li as a central concept associated with various canons and writings throughout the Chinese tradition is dealt with in Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept of Li as Principle", Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies, n.s., 4, no. 2 (February, 1964), 123-148, reprinted in Neo-Confucianism, Etc., Essays by Wing-tsit Chan, ed. by Charles K. H. Chen, Hanover, N. H., 1968, pp. 45-87. See also, T'ang Chün-i, "Lun Chung-kuo che-hsüeh szu-hsiang shih chung li-chih liu-i" ("Six Meanings of li"), Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao (The New Asian Journal), 1, no. 1 (1955), 45-98. In An Outline and an Annotated Bibliography of Chinese Philosophy (New Haven, 1969), p. 111, Chan calls li "the cardinal Chinese philosophical concept".

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Liebenthal, The Book of Chao (Peking, 1948), p. viii: "My translation is fairly literal, but sometimes it seemed to be impossible to render the meaning without changing the phrasing. In one or two cases the translation is so free that it almost amounts to a mere outline of the content."

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 15f., says: "If these two conditions are fulfilled, then the technical meaning of the term is understood, and whatever the term may or may not mean in Chinese texts from an earlier period is an extraneous question. However, the other meanings of a term may mislead the reader and prevent him from identifying its technical sense in the restricted context." This observation, however, may not necessarily apply to the present case, partly because the two languages involved are not identical.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Robinson, *ibid.*, p. 14f.: "The thoughts of men who lived fifteen centuries ago are imperceptible and only partially inferable. The only evidence for them is strings of written symbols representing a dead language for which only a limited corpus of texts now exists. This means that the writer's mood, his irony and humor, the triteness or

novelty of his expressions, cannot be known with certainty, because the sample is defective. Not only are the lineaments of his literary mask discernable imperfectly, but the mental events that accompanied the composition of the text are even more inscrutable."



## PART II

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Tao-sheng's Pre-history: the State of Buddhist Studies in China

Tao-sheng stands at a particular crossroad in Chinese history, a critical and somewhat complex turning-point which involves not only temporal but also geographical, multicultural and inter-civilizational factors. Knowledge of these factors is essential to an investigation into Tao-sheng's identity; they provide the necessary background against which he may be clearly delineated in terms of his originality, creativity, and contribution to the advent of Chinese Buddhism. In order to get an approximate picture of the watershed Tao-sheng crossed, the following survey of the period will be presented, apropos the dominant lines of thought as represented by some prominent Buddhist and non-Buddhist figures to whom Tao-sheng was exposed or had encountered in one way or another.

Tao-sheng's life (ca. 360-434) lies mainly within the period of Eastern Chin (317-419), extending a little further to that of the Sung Dynasty (House of Liu) (420-477). The Chin era witnessed the development of a peculiar form of Buddhism called "gentry Buddhism", an upshot product of

interchanges between the monks and the intellectuals who, having been conquered by the alien nationals, fled from the north and helped found the dynasty in the south. Yet there was something more to it than what that form of Buddhism may suggest, thanks largely to Kumārajīva's efforts. Not to be overlooked in this description is the Chinese effort to learn and the Indian missionaries' efforts in transmitting the Buddhist doctrines from India. "Gentry Buddhism" refers to the class of people involved and their tendency to focus on philosophical rather than religious issues.

Tao-sheng had behind him about three centuries since the introduction of Buddhism to the Chinese soil, which is generally believed to have occurred around the time of the Christian era. In spite of this great length of time, Buddhism in China was not a developed phenomenon. In fact, it was only in the middle of the second century, with the influx of missionaries from the Indian subcontinent and its perimeter, including An Shih-kao, from Parthia, the first missionary ever recorded, that tangible signs (apart from legendary stories related to Buddhism) of a phenomenal process set in. The influx of missionaries yielded vast results in the introduction and translation of āgamas, sūtras, and expositions. The spectrum became more vast by the time of Tao-sheng, due mainly to the missionary zeal of Kumārajīva with whom the former studied for some time. These thinkers

were to encounter and challenge the presuppositions of the existing traditions and give rise to hermeneutical and exegetical problems.

The inevitable confrontation of two traditions has brought about diverse forms of interaction from outright rebuttal to identification of one with the other on substratum or other aspects. Increasingly discernable in these modes is an attempt to accommodate Buddhism within the framework of existing systems. In the course of assimilating Buddhism in the Chinese tradition we can assume that as much as there was a need for comparative linguistics there was some need for a perspective geared to envisioning more than one religion. Here we find an early, primitive form of comparative religion. This form of syncretism is demonstrated in the literatures ranging from a fabricated "sūtra" to highly polemical writings. Even the falsified Taoist scripture<sup>1</sup> harping on the theme that Lao-tzu became the Buddha can be put in that category for obvious reasons.

The "unity" or "harmony" was taken to be applicable to various combinations of three religions, namely, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, not only in any one pair but in all three, implicitly or explicitly. The tendency to view two different lines of thought in the same ken and on a common ground was not limited to the relationship between Buddhism and others. Tao-sheng's period had already seen the

expression of this practice in Neo-Taoism. The Neo-Taoist argued for the spiritual supremacy of Confucian over Taoist, which is an apparent antinomy for the appellation of Taoism. The tradition is assumed to have been carried into Tao-sheng's time.

Three religions represented as many alternatives that were open to any individual. A typical course for a would-be Buddhist was to study Confucianism first, switching later to Taoism and finally settling in Buddhism. This pattern is a process of spiritual evolution typically found in the careers of the Chinese Buddhists throughout all eras.<sup>2</sup> Tao-sheng was no exception; he is assumed invariably to have passed through the secular stages of training (though they were relatively brief in his case)<sup>3</sup> to arrive at Buddhism. Yet, whether the traces of secular disciplines were blotted out in his thought--and, if not, how much relevance they have in form and substance--as a central question of the present study remains to be seen.

As the religious expressions and practices became more diversified with the introduction of Buddhism, the general tendency grew into an accepted idea that the Way (Tao), which is one by nature, can be arrived at via different paths.

The view apparently became a prevalent proposition for Tao-sheng's contemporaries. Resounding in their writ-

ings, the notion was already apotheosized in the I Ching; "[In the world] there are many different roads but the destination is the same."<sup>4</sup> This is a clear declaration of the principle "unity in diversity"; we find in the dictum an early disclaimer of exclusivity for salvation by any one particular system. A system that carried the day was Neo-Taoism, or Hsüan-hsüeh (Dark-Learning), and the Buddhists at the time could not separate themselves from the predominant philosophical system in terms of terminology and concepts. They were in fact versed in both canons, distinguished as the "inner" and "outer". The "outer" canon or texts of secular studies consisted of three "profound (dark) works", viz., the Lao-tzu, the Chuang-tzu and the I Ching. It should be noted that these three are the non-Buddhist works on which Tao-sheng heavily draws in the CSPS, more than any other source for language and conceptual reference.<sup>5</sup> This syncretic tendency was evident in the practices of the advanced experimental circle at Lu-shan led by Hui-yüan, to which Tao-sheng may have belonged or where he merely stayed in 397 to 405 and briefly thereafter. Hui-yüan himself could not remain outside of the trend. He was a disciple of Tao-an, who put an end to the practice of ko-i, an expedient method of matching the Buddhist with the Taoist concepts<sup>6</sup>, although he can still be evaluated as the one who fulfilled the purpose of the method. He had to use the method on some

occasions. One of his lay disciples, Tsung Ping (375-443 or 447) in his work "On the elucidation of Buddhism" (Ming-fo lun 明佛論) maintains that Confucius, Lao-tzu, and the Tathāgata all lie in the same path [to salvation].<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, they remained the staunch defenders of the Buddhist religion in practice and debates.

A similar idea is inscribed in the poetry of Hsieh Ling-yün (385-433), the versatile lay Buddhist scholar poet. Also in the work he compiled, "Discussion of the Fundamental Sources" (Pien-tsung lun 辯宗論), the discussants talk of the theory of sudden enlightenment as advocated by Tao-sheng from the standpoint of Confucianism, arriving at the view that the Confucian and Buddhist paths are identical. We also find such statements as: "Confucianism and Taoism are identical [in their goals]"<sup>8</sup>, and that they are "compatible".<sup>9</sup> Thus the idea underlying the arguments pro and con in that anthology is that there is nothing basically incompatible in the three religious systems. It is worth noting that when a part of the PTL was presented to Tao-sheng for comment (as shown in the attached postscript), he did not register any objection to its general line of thought. Another contemporary monk, Shih Hui-lin, the author of the eulogy for Tao-sheng<sup>10</sup> and also a participant in the debate in Pien-tsung lun, wrote a treatise entitled "On White and Black" (Pai-hei lun 白黑論),<sup>11</sup> and there in a tone critical

of Buddhism in this case, he attempts to discriminate the similarities and dissimilarities. Though composed in 436, after Tao-sheng's death (434), the writing still reflects the intellectual milieu in which Tao-sheng lived.

The question was also addressed in terms of the origin (or fundamental) and end (or the non-original) (pen-mo 本末). In the debates on the question it was generally held that the Taoist scriptures, I Ching, and the Buddhist Dharma are all concerned with the search for the original source of existence. They suggest that salvation lies in returning to this "origin".<sup>12</sup> The "end" has to do with "traces" (chi 迹) and "expediency" (ch'üan 權) or extemporaneous means to arriving at the origin. The conceptual relation of pen-mo can again be translated into the better-known classical pattern of t'i 體 (substance) and yung 用 (function), which originated in the Neo-Taoist Wang Pi's commentary on the Lao-tzu (ch. 38).<sup>1 3</sup> This attitude, glimpsed in such an early period, helps explain the frame of thought expressed by Tao-sheng and others, especially the syncretic T'ien-t'ai Buddhists, who accept the Lotus Scripture and realize its motif of three vehicles dialectically evolving into the One Vehicle. Now we may ask: In what general forms was Buddhism as here represented in part transmitted and revealed to Tao-sheng? A way to approach this question is to survey the scriptures and doctrines that were first brought by the

missionaries.

The first scripture ever to be rendered into Chinese is An-pan shou-i ching 安般守意經 (Sūtra on Mindfulness Through Breathing Exercises) translated by An Shih-kao (2nd c.), the first missionary of any major significance. This text of Hīnayāna meditation helped give the Chinese a more favourable impression of what they initially considered to be an unpalatable religion from foreign parts. To say the least, this text helped minimize the effects of resistance found in the Han society, deeply penetrated by Taoism, because the text in the eyes of the Chinese apparently dealt with the same matters of hygiene, longevity, and immortality which characterized Taoist practices.<sup>14</sup>

Besides the dhyāna scripture, there arrived almost at the same time or soon after another set of texts, the series of Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras. A smaller version (in ten rolls) of the texts, called Tao-hsing Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra was translated in 181 by Lokakshema (Chih Lu-chia-ch'en), an Indo-Scythian monk, who later also translated the Pan-chou san-mei ching (Pratyutpanna-samādhi Sūtra) and 21 other works. Thus the doctrine of emptiness (k'ung 空, śūnyatā), unlike the dhyāna practice, started off the interaction with the indigenous tradition. While what An and another early missionary, Sanghabhadra (K'ang Seng-hui), propagated was identified merely with thaumaturgy, this facade of Buddhism,



as revealed by Lokakshema and a little later by Chih-ch'ien, was to become a dominant subject of Buddhist philosophy, discussed up to the time of Kumārajīva (4th c.). The Chinese counterpart that this doctrine was to encounter and contend or reconcile with was philosophical Taoism. In the early stage of interaction, the concept of emptiness was taken to be equivalent to that of wu 無, void or nonbeing. Whether or not it was considered in the nihilistic sense, this practice of inaccurately matching concepts, somewhat akin in style to the device of concept-matching (ko-i 格義) to develop a little later, had to await rectification until Kumārajīva arrived.

The study of the Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras was still further strengthened by another translation of the same sūtra (in 8,000 lines) by Chih-ch'ien about a half century later. The large "wisdom" sūtra (in 25,000 lines) was translated by Dharmaraksha (Fa-hu) in 286 and by Mokśala (Wu-cha-lo) in 291.

The fourth century saw these sūtras become a major subject in the Buddhist circle. The understanding of the doctrine embodied in the sūtras already rendered was yet to penetrate and emerge from the neo-Taoist pattern of thought. The comprehension based on the translations was epitomized in Tao-an (312-385) and his contemporaries, only to be supplanted by Kumārajīva and his group with fresh and more

authentic translations of the series at hand. Tao-an's interest was also extended to the works of the Sarvāstivādin school, the realists of Hīnayāna origin, whose doctrines were to be vehemently rejected by Kumārajīva and his school. Dharmaraksha covered in his voluminous translations what had been left out by Lokakshema including the Saddharmapundarīka (in 286), which was later in 406 translated anew by Kumārajīva whose version was to become the basis of Tao-sheng's commentary. The Nirvāṇa Sūtra, which made Tao-sheng famous in connection with the universal Buddha-nature and which resulted in his temporary excommunication from the church, was also translated by Fa-hsien in collaboration with Buddhahadra in 418, and again in a complete version by Dharmakshema in 421.

Even the translation of the Avataṃsaka, the basic text of the Hua-yen school to evolve later, was done by Buddhahadra in 418 to 420 well before Tao-sheng's death in 434, though there is no extant record whatsoever of Tao-sheng's encounter with or his interest in the text.

Another scripture of significance to Tao-sheng and the Kumārajīva circle, Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra, on which both wrote commentaries, received several renderings including those by Chih-ch'ien in the 3rd century and Kumārajīva in 406. Thus, before and during Tao-sheng's period so many of the major āgamas and sūtras were made

available in translation that Tao-sheng was prompted to attempt in the CSPS to devise a schema to accommodate the varied teachings of the one and same Buddha long before the T'ien-t'ai and the Hua-yen Buddhists concocted the systems of classifying the Buddha's teaching (p'an-chiao).

The foreign propositions and the doctrines conveyed by and embodied in the incoming literatures, as a matter of course in this kind of process, ran more or less a collision course with the traditional ideologies. Two of the philosophical issues current in the time of Tao-sheng were "retribution" (pao-ying 報應) and "extinction [or survival] of spirit (shen 神)". Tao-sheng, too, actively participated in the ongoing debates by committing himself to dealing with at least one of the questions in writing. The two problems are correlated. The Chinese were baffled by the alleged validity of the two postulations without contradiction: existence of karma, the agent or force causing reincarnation, and the nonexistence of spirit, as an offshoot of the doctrine of anātman or no-self. They inferred that since the subject that receives reward or punishment for the karma committed should exist, there is an obvious contradiction. The theory of no-self was a difficult idea for the Chinese to grasp. As late as the fourth century, anātman was identified in the Feng-fa yao 奉法要 (Essentials of Dharma)<sup>15</sup> by Hsi Ch'ao with the absence of physical body or constant abode,

and seen as some entity moving and changing without ceasing. The style and terminology of expressions used resemble those of the I Ching. Nurtured in such a frame of thinking, therefore, the Chinese Buddhists, later including Tao-sheng, came to embrace readily the notion of the true self,<sup>16</sup> seemingly contradicting the concept of anātman. And the related issue concerning rewards for good deeds apparently gave rise to numerous writings of Tao-sheng's contemporaries, including two essays<sup>17</sup> by Hui-yüan and one by Tao-sheng himself who offered the bold title: "good deeds entail no recompense".

The study of the prajñā texts by the Buddhists, who were already somewhat indoctrinated by the Neo-Taoist way of thought and expression, gave rise to diverse interpretations of the ontological reality. The result was the emergence of schools in a loose and nebulous pattern represented by "six houses and seven schools".<sup>18</sup> Their names reveal a peculiar blending of Buddhist and Taoist terms such as "emptiness", "non-being (wu)", "illusion", "form (rūpa)", "mind", and "causation". Classified under these schools are Tao-an, Chih Tao-lin, and Chu Fa-t'ai, who, being immediate predecessors of Tao-sheng, were directly or indirectly influential on his early cultivation and education. It was during this generation that an exegetical device called ko-i was in use to help make abstract concepts especially associated with the

prajñā doctrine more intelligible to the Buddhist neophytes and to outsiders as well. Drawing what seemed to be categorically parallel concepts from the Taoist scriptures, this technique was employed even by Tao-an and Hui-yüan in the early stages of their careers. It was soon to be abolished, as the base of the Buddhist glossary itself further developed. Yet even though the explicit method of matching concepts was suspended, there was always a need for somehow exploiting the familiar native terms and even concepts for the sake of the prospective converts to the foreign religion. In this respect there seems to be a point in the observation that Hui-yüan merely completed, not abolished, the method of ko-i.<sup>19</sup> Whether Tao-sheng furthered this ongoing practice or veered from it in order to find his own way remains to be seen.

Apart from the philosophico-religious aspect, there is another factor that should be taken into account when we examine Tao-sheng's background. It is the socio-political condition. How the philosophico-religious concepts of foreign origin were introduced and understood was not entirely unrelated to external factors. One line of demarcation drawn at this time was that between the north and the south. The rise and fall of smaller, short-lived states brought social and political instability, especially to the northern region. The partition of China proper into the north and the south

actually started with the establishment of the Eastern Tsin in 317 after the Tsin court seceded from the northern territory; the state of disunion continued, resulting in the ushering in of the era of the Nan-pei-ch'ao (Southern and Northern dynasties) which lasted until 589 when the land was unified by the Sui dynasty. The geo-political division no doubt brought about distinct cultural modes, and Buddhism as a cultural phenomenon was naturally filtered through the prevailing patterns. The period we are concerned with here is mainly the fourth century extending a little into the fifth during which Tao-sheng's thought was nurtured.

Tao-sheng was originally of southern background. Born in P'eng-ch'eng (the modern Hsu-chou in Kiangsu), one of the major Buddhist centers in Han times, he moved a little farther to the south to Chien-k'ang, the southern capital, to start his Buddhist career. He stayed there longer than any other place throughout his life, initially from 371 to 397, in part under Chu Fa-t'ai (died 387), and again later from 409 to 428. Fa-t'ai may have instilled in Tao-sheng some elements characteristic of the northern tradition, but Tao-sheng, like other converts to the new religion, must have been swayed in his religious orientation by the two dominant philosophical and intellectual trends of the era: Ming-chiao (Name-actuality) and Hsüan-hsüeh (Dark-learning). The former, representing the Confucian tradition coupled with the

Legalist precepts, provided principles for social praxis by defining the roles for individuals to play in the society. The latter as a form of revived Taoism founded on the writings of Wang-pi addressed the metaphysical question of reality in terms of being (yu 有) and nonbeing (wu 無). Both lines of thought came to find their harmony in Kuo Hsiang's speculation expressed in the commentary to the Chuang-tzu. So Buddhism had to make its way into such fabric of the society's mental and spiritual consciousness. The Buddhist centers that arose in the capital and surrounding eastern region were ideologically and politically closely connected to the imperial court. At the same time other centers came into existence in the central and south-east areas. To some of them Tao-sheng later travelled in order to stay. About those centers outside the capital, E. Zuercher writes:

Ideologically they were more independent and creative, and at the same time more open to influences from the North . . . The clerical leaders at these centres (Tao-an at Hsiang-yang, Hui-yüan at the Lu-shan) and many of their disciples came from the North. Their doctrinal views represent an amalgamation of Northern Buddhism with its stress on devotional practices, trance and thaumaturgy and based upon the translated scriptures of the archaic period of which it is a direct continuation, and the more intellectualized Southern gentry Buddhism with its peculiar mixture of Dark Learning and Mahāyāna notions and its ontological speculations based upon the Prajñāpāramitā and the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa.<sup>20</sup>

Buddhism as received in the north, as pointed out before, was carried somewhat by Tao-sheng's first mentor, Chu Fa-t'ai, who had been, along with Tao-an, under the tutelage

of Fo-t'u-teng, a monk from central Asia. The Buddhism of the northern lineage renewed its track when Tao-an was made to move to Ch'ang-an in 379, and later when Kumārajīva was taken captive in the north and brought there in 401. Again Zuercher sums up what happened there in concrete terms:

. . . a new chapter in the history of Northern Buddhism begins, characterized by a renewed influx of missionaries, scriptures and ideas from Central Asia and India, huge translation projects, state patronage and supervision, and the emergence of a body of scriptural and scholastic literature (both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna) together with a new method of exegesis and a new translation technique. In the first decades of the fifth century some elements of Northern Buddhism become gradually known in the South, especially at the Lu-shan where Hui-yüan entertained close relations with Kumārajīva's school at Ch'angan. Around 416 political conditions in the North brought about the disintegration and dispersal of the Buddhist community at Ch'angan. For the third time since the end of the Han a mass-emigration of monks to the South took place, and the propagation of the new ideas and theories resulted in a complete re-orientation of Southern Buddhism and, eventually, in the rise of Chinese schools.<sup>21</sup>

Tao-sheng stood right in the middle of such a vicissitudinous stream of the period, oscillating between the communities of different origins, including Lu-shan and Ch'ang-an as well as Chien-k'ang. He was, however, not rigidly bound by the existing communal patterns. He eventually outgrew them, becoming probably more creative and original than any other contemporary Chinese Buddhist; Tao-sheng emerged as a dynamic thinker with a host of freshly unique ideas and theses amply demonstrated in his expositions.



## B. Tao-sheng's Biography

### 1. Biographical Sources

As in the case of most of the contemporary and earlier masters of Chinese Buddhism, the primary source of our knowledge of Tao-sheng's education, life, and works is the Kao-seng chuan (Biographies of Eminent Monks), compiled by Hui-chiao (died 554) in 519. Tao-sheng tops the list of 32 masters in ch'üan 7 (T50.366b-367a). Another major source is the Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi (Collection of Records Pertaining to the Tripiṭaka), compiled by Seng-yu (445-518) in ca. 518, specifically ch'üan 15 (T55.110c-111b). The two records on Tao-sheng are basically identical in content, except for one episode. The account of Tao-sheng's influence immediately after his death, is found only in the KSC. It is possible that the one text derives from the other but it is more likely that both derive from a third fundamental Urtext.

The only extant contemporary writing with any biographical value is the eulogy for Tao-sheng by Hui-lin, found in the Kuang hung-ming chi (Further Collection of Essays on Buddhism) and compiled by Tao-hsüan (596-667) (T52.265c-266b). The basic biographical information contained in its first paragraph concurs with the two above sources while the second half is sentimental and subjective in style and content.

A potentially informative document of which,

unfortunately, we have only sketchy excerpts in the Ming-seng chuan (Biographies of Eminent Monks) written by Pao-ch'ang in the period of the Liang dynasty (502-557). In these excerpts (HTC, vol. 134, p.15a-b) we find six items concerning or seemingly attributed to Tao-sheng, the first of which is titled "The Story of Chu Tao-sheng at the Western Monastery on Lu-shan". The rest deal with topics advocated by Tao-sheng probably at the community. Since the first article refers to Tao-sheng's first sojourn at Lu-shan, the document seems to provide not a full-fledged biography but accounts of single incidents and arguments. It still gives very informative details of the period.

Tao-sheng is mentioned in a couple of other sources whose themes are related to him one way or another. One is the Fa-hua chuan-chi 法華傳記 (Biographies and Records Related to the Lotus) (T. nr. 2068), compiled by Seng-hsiang of the T'ang dynasty (618-907). A brief biography of Tao-sheng in ch'üan 2 (T51.56a) is based mostly on the KSC, with the additional information coming from "later commentaries" about Tao-sheng's lectures on the Lotus held in an "auspicious atmosphere" and the fact that he wrote the commentary. Another record is the Lu-shan chi (Chronicle of Lu-shan), (T. nr. 2095), compiled by Ch'en Shun-yu during the Sung period (960-1127). Although it is primarily a repetition of the KSC, the biography (T51.1040c-

1041a) nevertheless provides some new information in its last passage: the first ruler (of the Posterior T'ang) (reigned 923-926) issued a decree to dedicate a hall in memory of Tao-sheng, conferring a posthumous title "the Great Master of Universal Deliverance" (or Salvation) (P'u-chi ta-shih 普濟大師). This illustrates the esteem in which the work of Tao-sheng was held, even as late as the tenth century.

Kumārajīva's biography in the KSC (T50.332b) is another minor source of some importance.

## 2. Tao-sheng's Life

### a. Early Years in Chien-k'ang under Chu F a-t'ai

Into such a cultural milieu sketched earlier, Tao-sheng was born around 360<sup>22</sup> in P'eng-ch'eng located in the central eastern part of the mainland (in modern Kiangsu), lying approximately in the middle point between the two great rivers, Hwang Ho and Yangtze. Having been one of two major Buddhist centers during the Han Dynasty in the first and second century A.D., the place is supposed to have furnished a favorable vestige of tradition for a potential Buddhist to be raised in, though it was divested of the roles it had played before. There were in fact a few eminent figures born there or associated with the center.<sup>23</sup> With accepted tolerance toward the alien religion set in the society, Tao-sheng's father, a local magistrate, nodded assent to the boy,

barely eleven years old, to go to Chu Fa-t'ai (319-387) in Chien-k'ang, a little south of Tao-sheng's home. Tao-sheng stayed there as an outstanding disciple of Fa-t'ai for a number of years in his formative phase of his Buddhist career, probably beyond the point of his master's death. In that respect, Fa-t'ai's influence on Tao-sheng may have been greater than what one can gather from the extant record (which is hardly informative in details). Fa-t'ai had been a disciple of Fo-t'u-teng (died 349), probably a Kuchean missionary. A thaumaturge, "a great propagandist", and "the practical propagator of the faith in its most elementary form by the most simple and adequate means which appealed to the most of an illiterate population",<sup>24</sup> Fo was anything but a translator or exegete.<sup>25</sup> Unlike Tao-an (312-385), a fellow student under Fo, Chu Fa-t'ai did not establish himself as a scholarly monk in a serious sense. That line of practice and the mantle of the community presided over by him must have devolved to Tao-sheng, who adopted the master's clerical surname "Chu" ("Indian"). That factor may also account for-- and may have contributed to--Tao-sheng's scholarly career as a relatively late bloomer for such a critical mind (to be amply demonstrated later). Tao-sheng nonetheless seems to have stood on his own as he shortly emerged so young a brilliant lecturer and debator. Also, he was probably trained in and familiar with some basic texts including the

Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras. In fact, Fa-t'ai lectured at one point on the Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra (Fang-kuang ching).<sup>26</sup>

b. The First Sojourn at Lu-shan with Hui-yüan

Probably upon the death of his master (387), Tao-sheng turned an itinerant mendicant when he was in "middle age", open to more chances to meet with diverse personages and ideologies. He settled down in Lu-shan in 397, which was in the process of becoming a celebrated Buddhist center in the south. Two important figures Tao-sheng met then were, of course, Hui-yüan (334-417), the founder of the community in around 380, and Sanghadeva, a Kashmir missionary and a specialist in Abhidharma hailing from the Sarvāstivāda school of Hīnayāna Buddhism. Although there is a big difference in age between them, there is no evidence that the relationship of Tao-sheng and Hui-yüan ever developed to that of mentor-student or any intimate mutual academic relationship.<sup>27</sup> They may have shared the chores of community life and even the same compound, but they were probably separated by different living quarters (vihāras). They may have discussed some problems for which a heated debate was underway not only in the community but outside it, possibly involving the whole state. The topics included the question of karma and reward (pao-ying). Yet it seems preposterous to assume that the two

shared some views or basic approaches in any of the questions simply because they stayed in the same community. The question of retribution is a case in point. Both wrote articles on the issue, but since only Hui-yüan's writing is extant, some scholars speculate that one can deduce Tao-sheng's position from Hui-yüan's writing.<sup>28</sup> They are alike in that they struggled, on the one hand, to comprehend the Buddhist frame of thinking as distinct from the Chinese perspectives in which they had been trained, and, on the other hand, to find the way to assimilate the two ways of thinking with presumably somewhat of a different result and degree of success.<sup>29</sup> But the two are widely apart in training, subject matter, methodology, style, the scriptures they dealt with, and the substance of their understanding. In general, Hui-yüan remained more conservative, sometimes doggedly faithful and adherent to the literal meaning of the texts including monastic rules (vinaya),<sup>30</sup> whereas Tao-sheng is (as we shall see later) more liberal and sometimes aptly revolutionary with a wider perspective, often boldly rejecting the literal sense--yet remaining original and faithful to the spirit--of a text. Though his interest was not limited to one school or area, Hui-yüan can be put in the category of the Mādhyamika (as does Robinson) in terms of his training under Tao-an (312-385), and his writing including his correspondences with Kumārajīva. Tao-sheng, however, did not

specialize in one doctrine or another and the texts on which he wrote commentaries are diverse in doctrinal origin, including one of the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras. Metaphysically and practically, as Itano Chōhachi points out, Hui-yüan is more or less a dualist who distinguishes, for one thing, between the two orders, secular and sacred, while Tao-sheng's way of thinking appears to have a somewhat monistic tinge.<sup>31</sup> Tao-sheng's monistic perspective is demonstrated in, and congruent with, his stress on the identification of nirvāṇa and samsāra,<sup>32</sup> which is also a point made by the Mādhyamika,<sup>33</sup> as well as his emphasis on the dialectical identification of three vehicles and One (Vehicle), the theme of the Lotus Sūtra. From this point of view, even the "fact" that Tao-sheng was reportedly one of the "eighteen eminent savants", who participated in the worship of Amitābha at the behest of Hui-yüan for the first time in China, is highly questionable and implausible as T'ang Yung-t'ung observes on the basis of external evidence in his case.<sup>34</sup> In short, Tao-sheng was in a position subordinate to Hui-yüan in communal hierarchy and order, but Tao-sheng's vision and grasp of Buddhism may even then have been too far advanced beyond Hui-yüan's to be edified or influenced by the latter.

At any rate Tao-sheng shared with Hui-yüan the teaching of Gautama Sanghadeva on the Sarvāstivāda and its version of the Abhidharma literature of Hīnayāna. In a sense

Tao-sheng took a right path to Mahāyāna philosophy following in the steps of Kumārajīva.<sup>34</sup> He is in fact credited for having fused together the Sarvāstivādin doctrine and Mahāyāna speculations as enunciated by Kumārajīva.<sup>35</sup>

c. Study under Kumārajīva in Ch'ang-an

After staying at Lu-shan for about seven years, in 405 or 406, Tao-sheng made a long-cherished and eagerly awaited move to Ch'ang-an to study with Kumārajīva, who had been there since 401 attracting about three thousand aspiring pupils of Mahāyāna doctrines. His sojourn there was rather relatively brief, only about two years for some unidentified reason. The brief period, however, was sufficient to demonstrate Tao-sheng's penetrating ability and to warrant him a position on the honours lists, ranging from one of the four "(great) philosophers",<sup>36</sup> to one of the fifteen great disciples, more often than not being listed first. This would indicate that he was apparently a quick learner. Tao-sheng may have sensed that any further stay might not be so fruitful and effective as the period of initial impact.

Despite his registered fame and honour, however, the specific role Tao-sheng played and how much he contributed particularly to Kumārajīva's major task, namely, translation, are not certain. Although, as mentioned before, Tao-sheng is reported by Seng-chao to have been on hand when Kumārajīva translated the Lotus, Tao-sheng does not figure prominently



in any record as a close assistant to Kumārajīva in his translation activities as does Seng-jui (352-436), who served as Kumārajīva's scribe and was perhaps his chief disciple,<sup>37</sup> or Seng-chao (374-414), who accompanied Kumārajīva from his pre-Ch'ang-an days until his death (413); both directly assisted Kumārajīva in many ways, including writing the prefaces and colophons to many sūtras under translation.<sup>38</sup> Tao-sheng's relatively brief stay may not have allowed him to leave a visible mark on the translations as such; rather, his comprehending ability and quick wit probably was demonstrated in other activities such as exposition, discussion and debate. His extraordinarily profound understanding, in fact, received an honourable mention in Kumārajīva's biography in the KSC.<sup>39</sup>

When Tao-sheng arrived in Ch'ang-an, the capital of the Eastern Chin (317-420), the massive work (100 volumes) of the Great Wisdom Treatise (Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra, Ta chih-tu lun) was almost (or just) completed. In the course of the brief period between 405-408, however, an assortment of important texts was translated. Included in these were Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-, Lotus-, and Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā- (Hsiao-p'in) sūtras. And it may not be just coincidental that Tao-sheng later in the ensuing years wrote commentaries on these three, the last of which is not extant today in any form. Tao-sheng commented on them perhaps not

only because they represented important doctrines, as they would play major roles in the Chinese Buddhist scene, but also because Kumārajīva's expositions might have inspired Tao-sheng to reflect them with his own words and views added. In fact, in the preface of the commentary to the Lotus (CSPS, 396d), Tao-sheng apparently says something to that effect. In the case of the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa, Seng-chao's commentary on the text, written between 406 and 410, prompted Tao-sheng to write his own. That might indicate that Kumārajīva's translation activity was not restricted to the mere rendering of texts as such but comprised a series of other dynamic modes of learning and exchanges, and Tao-sheng actively participated in them.

d. Return to Lu-shan

In 408 Tao-sheng returned to Lu-shan bringing with him Seng-chao's essay "Prajñā has no knowing" (pan-jo wu-chih lun) which was read widely and favorably in the community. That introduction of Seng-chao's writing can suggest that he was on good terms with his peers, and possibly with Kumārajīva himself, and so human relations or ideological differences vis-à-vis the peer group and the master did not constitute the reason for his abrupt departure, which could probably be found in his dissatisfaction with the composite surrounding involving the court and different groups, or

perhaps in any single incident.<sup>40</sup> Tao-sheng's role as a messenger of the literature also symbolizes his unique position to find a way to view, if not bridge as an intermediary, what the two centers, Ch'ang-an and Lu-shan, represent, that is, northern and southern traditions in the making, without conflict with each other, and proceed to develop his own synthetic perspective.<sup>41</sup>

e. The Second Sojourn at Chien-k'ang

Soon afterwards in 409 Tao-sheng moved to Chien-k'ang for the second time. He remained in the area more than twenty years, taking up residence in the monastery called Ch'ing-yüan ssu (later Lung-kuang ssu) from 419 on. Tao-sheng thus began to tread the path of an independent thinker in the true sense of the word, i.e. to become his own master.<sup>42</sup> While winning respect from, and exchanging friendly relations with, the court and general populace as well as the elite intelligentsia, Tao-sheng was able to examine and meditate on the status of the general social understanding of Buddhism and to identify some of the significant points to be clarified or rectified. Naturally this period, which also marks the point of his maturity as a thinker, must have entailed the most productive years in terms of his writings, most of which (with one obvious exception, namely the present commentary under study composed in 432 in Lu-shan) are presumed to have been drafted during

this period.<sup>43</sup> One of the controversial theories Tao-sheng advocated at this time, involving the entire community and beyond in debate, was concerned with the question of whether the icchantikas, regarded traditionally as outcasts in the path of enlightenment, were, too, buddha-natured like everybody else. Tao-sheng acquired a positive opinion concerning the matter while reading an incomplete version of Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra, a complete version of which was yet to come. The absolute universality of the Buddha-nature was the logical conclusion he reached by inference from the first part of the sūtra, even though it contained an explicit statement excepting the icchantikas.<sup>44</sup> That bold new interpretation, possibly amounting to challenging an authentic channel of the Buddha's doctrines, brought about his expulsion from the community sometime between 428 to 429.

#### f. The Third Sojourn at Lu-shan and Death

Lamenting that people had not been able to transcend the symbols of the translated sūtras to grasp the true meaning behind the letters, and predicting that he would be proven right and eventually exonerated, Tao-sheng retreated to Lu-shan in 430 via Hu-ch'iu-shan in 429. It was not long after the complete text of the Nirvāna Sūtra, translated by Dharmakshema, had made its way there that Tao-sheng turned out to be correct.<sup>45</sup> He was vindicated and praised for his

penetrating insight. Instead of returning to Chien-k'ang, however, he remained at Lu-shan until his death in 434.<sup>46</sup> In the meantime, in 432, Tao-sheng composed a commentary on the Lotus Sūtra on the basis of various information and lecture notes he had collected throughout many years. Hence, from the chronological point of view, this work--the subject of our analysis and translation--may represent the culminating point of Tao-sheng's scholarship.

g. Evaluation of Tao-sheng's Life

Throughout his Buddhist career Tao-sheng thus took residence at three locations in main: Chien-k'ang for some thirty-six years altogether for two periods, Lu-shan for about thirteen years for three periods, and Ch'ang-an for three years. Granted that the three locales stood for and were evolving three different patterns of tradition in apprehending the Buddhist doctrines, Tao-sheng was exposed to and provided with as many sources for his own nurture and maturity as a Buddhist thinker, a rare fortune distinguishing him from other contemporary Buddhists, though a result made from his own choice. At Ch'ang-an under Kumārajīva he studied the Mādhyamika doctrine in conjunction with the Prajñāpāramitā and other related texts as well as the Lotus under translation. At Lu-shan he learned the Abhidharma doctrine with Sanghadeva, among others. Yet Tao-sheng had already spent his formative years, some twenty-seven, in

Chien-k'ang, the first seventeen under Chu Fa-t'ai until the latter died in 387. Therefore what Tao-sheng learned at Lu-shan and Ch'ang-an might have merely reinforced and consolidated the basic knowledge he had acquired at Chien-k'ang.

Yet Tao-sheng's maturing process at the place of ordination remains largely in the dark. There are nevertheless a few things about Chu Fa-t'ai and the community that can be mentioned in that connection. Fa-t'ai, as mentioned earlier, gave lectures on a Prajñāpāramitā sūtra. Of the six "houses" and seven "schools" that arose in the period in connection with the interpretation of the concept of "emptiness", Fa-t'ai belonged to the school of Original Nonbeing, or its variant, which argues for the existence and centrality of nonbeing (wu) in the ontological map.

Fa-t'ai's community was not entirely isolated from other centers in terms of ideological exchange. Fa-t'ai shared the interpretation of the Mādhyamika view with his fellow and senior colleague under Fo-t'u-teng, Tao-an, who stayed in Ch'ang-an until his death in 385. As a matter of fact, Fa-t'ai had been sent to Chien-k'ang when the community under Teng was dispersed.<sup>47</sup> Fa-t'ai exchanged correspondences with Tao-an on the question of the three vehicles,<sup>48</sup> the theme of the Lotus, and probably on other issues too. According to Chi-tsang's commentary on the Lotus,<sup>49</sup> Tao-an and Fa-t'ai et al. lectured on the old version of the Lotus,

a translation by Dharmaraksha in the third century. Here it becomes evident that Tao-sheng's interest in the Lotus perhaps had begun earlier than when he attended the new translation by Kumārajīva, and so his commentary naturally reflects the two lines of tradition in which he was involved, as generally suggested in the beginning of his work.

The doctrine of vehicles was not the sole subject dealt with in the communities of Fa-t'ai and Tao-an. They also raised the questions of stages (bhūmi) and enlightenment.<sup>50</sup> In a way the three subject matters were interrelated. The three concepts all appear in Tao-sheng's CSPS very prominently. Tao-sheng reportedly also wrote a pamphlet entitled "Explaining the meaning [of the proposition] that in the initial [moment of] thought upon entering the eighth stage, [a bodhisattva] intends to achieve nirvāṇa". Thus a logical conclusion of the discussions on those doctrines could presuppose the nature of instantaneity in enlightenment, Tao-sheng's prominent thesis. The arguments at least paved the way for the development of Tao-sheng's theory.

The point can become more clear when another Buddhist community is brought into the picture. We are talking about Chih Tun (314-366), also called Chih Tao-lin. Developing alongside the already established centers mentioned above, this was one in the southwest region. Its central figure, Chih Tun himself, had an early connection with Chien-k'ang,

for he had stayed there after his ordination for a few years before moving to the south to settle at K'uai-chi (near modern Hang-chou). Hence it is possible that Chi somehow opened communication with the community in Chien-k'ang. Although he differed from others in the interpretation of "emptiness" by identifying form (rūpa) with emptiness, thus belonging to a different "school" for that matter, Chih Tun otherwise showed his perception of Buddhism to be remarkably similar to Tao-an and Fa-t'ai, and consequently to Tao-sheng, in terms of terminology, subject matter, and epistemological implication. He had lively exchanges with the Neo-Taoist "pure conversationalists" in philosophical speculations, and even wrote a commentary on the Chuang-tzu. It is not surprising, therefore, that he exploited the Taoist terms to a great extent. The term li especially is a case in point. To his credit Chih expanded the meaning of the term, investing it with new metaphysical meanings.<sup>51</sup> Among the attributes for li is the nature of its singularity, suggesting also the one singular act of enlightenment to li, that is, instantaneity of illumination.<sup>52</sup> On these points regarding li, interestingly enough, the same holds true for Tao-sheng as will be seen later.

As such Tao-sheng stood in the ideological intersection, a good position to synthesize and devolve the varying traditions. He may owe the basic structures of some of his



major doctrines to those masters directly or indirectly.<sup>53</sup> Yet otherwise Tao-sheng seems to have emerged from his early days on as an independent scholar in his own right. His biography in the KSC reports his fame as a talented lecturer at the age of only fifteen. Equipped with his own system of understanding related to the Buddhist weltanschauung, Tao-sheng journeyed to other centers. But his encounters with other masters and their teachings may not have had any major impact on him as far as the basic structures of his own thought as a whole is concerned, leaving no close master-disciple relationship. Nonetheless, some misconceived ideas and myths in his view were in the making in the Buddhist circles, and so he felt obliged to challenge and rectify them by screening them with his own fresh perspective, yielding a series of seemingly terse and erudite articles as will be listed in the next section.

### C. Tao-sheng's Works

Tao-sheng's works consist of commentaries (shu 疏), treatises (lun 論), expositions (i 義), a translation, letters, and other forms of writing. The main source of the works, to be listed below, refers to the Ch'u-san'tsang chi-chi (Collection of Records of Tripiṭaka), vol. 15 (T55), compiled by Seng-yu in 518, unless otherwise indicated. With the exception of some of the commentaries, Tao-sheng's works are all lost, making it virtually impossible to put them in chronological order. Apart from the Lotus Sūtra (432), no work is datable. Only rough dates in terms of terminus a quo and terminus ad quem can be assigned for some.

#### 1. Commentaries

##### a. Commentary on Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra

The translation of the sūtra by Kumārajīva, on which Tao-sheng's commentary is based, was completed in 406 while Tao-sheng stayed in Ch'ang-an with Kumārajīva. Tao-sheng must have participated in or familiarized himself with the process of translation. Tao-sheng was motivated to write his commentary by Seng-chao's commentary, which was sent to Lu-shan in 410, when he was in Chien-k'ang after a brief sojourn at Lu-shan in 408 to 409. Tao-sheng's commentary thus can be dated not long after 410. The "exegetical commentary" (i-shu) is preserved in the excerpted form in the collection entitled Chu Wei-mo-chieh ching (T38, nr. 1775) compiled by

Seng-chao (374-414) along with the commentaries by Seng-chao and Kumārajīva. The date of the commentary can therefore be put between 410 and 414. It is also found in basically the same form in the Ching-ming ching chi-chieh Kuan-chung shu (T85, nr. 2777) compiled by Tao-i in 674 (or 760).

b. Commentary on the Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra

There were two versions of the sūtra, one (6 vols.) translated by Fa-hsien, another called the "northern version" (40 vols.) by Dharmakshema. The first one, called Ta-p'an ni-heng ching (T12, nr. 376), appeared in 418; the second one, entitled Ta-p'an nieh-p'an ching (t12, nr. 374), reached Tao-sheng in 430. A revised edition (36 vols.) of the latter, called the "southern version", was compiled by Hui-kuan, Hui-yen, and Hsieh Ling-yün probably after Tao-sheng's death.

The commentary listed in the CSTCC is called Ni-heng ching i-shu (Exegetical Commentary on the Nirvāṇa Sūtra). Hence Tao-sheng is believed to have written a commentary on Fa-hsien's version. Yet we find Tao-sheng's comments, probably selectively, in the collection of commentaries to the sūtra called Ta-p'an nieh-p'an chih-chieh (71 vols.) (T37, nr. 1763), which was compiled by Seng-liang and Pao-liang (444-509) by the decree of the Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty. The commentaries of ten masters representing

the tradition of the Nirvāṇa School are collated in the collection, Tao-sheng's being placed on top. Since the collection is based on the longer version of the sūtra, that is Nieh-pan ching, it can be presumed that Tao-sheng wrote another commentary.<sup>54</sup> The first commentary could be written between 418 and 430 while the second was written after 430, probably before 432 when the commentary on the Lotus was written.

c. Commentary on the smaller version [of the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra] (Hsiao-p'in ching i-shu). The sūtra (Aṣṭasāhasrikā) (T8, nr. 227) was translated by Kumārajīva in 408 when Tao-sheng stayed in Ch'ang-an.<sup>55</sup>

d. Commentary on the Lotus (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka) Sūtra (Miao-fa lien-hua ching shu). The only writing remaining intact, this commentary (the subject of our present study) was completed in 432.

## 2. Treatises (lun)

a. "On the two truths" (Erh-ti lun 二諦論)

b. "Buddha-nature is that which one will realize in the future" (Fo-hsing tang-yu lun 佛性當有論).

c. "Dharma-kāya is formless (arūpa)" (Fa-fo wu-se lun 法佛無色論).

d. "[The Buddha's] response is expressed in [various]

conditions" (Ying yu yüan lun 應有緣論).<sup>56</sup>

e. "The Buddha has [in reality] no 'Pure Land' [in the realm of Dharma-kāya]" (Fo wu ching-t'u lun 佛無淨土論).<sup>57</sup>

3. Expositions (i)

a. "[Ethically] good deeds do not lead one to receive [religious] retribution".<sup>58</sup>

b. "By sudden enlightenment one achieves Buddhahood".<sup>59</sup>

c. "Explaining the exposition that [a bodhisattva] with the first thought upon his entering the eighth stage (bhūmi) is likely to achieve nirvāṇa".

d. "Discussing the meaning of Buddha-nature".

e. "On the 'thirty-six questions' in the Nirvāṇa". Reference is to the same number of questions raised by Kāśyapa Nalagramaka to the Buddha in the Nirvāṇa Sūtra (T37.379cf.; 619bf.).

f. "Expositions of the fourteen topics".<sup>60</sup> This writing is listed in some historical sources, and some of the topics along with the title are mentioned in several places including a sub-commentary to the Hua-yen Sūtra, the Hua-yen ching sui-shu yen-i ch'ao (T36, nr. 1736) by Ch'eng-kuan (760-820), the fourth patriarch of the Hua-yen School, and a sub-

commentary to the Nirvāna Sūtra, Nieh-p'an hsüan-i fa yüan-chi (T38, nr. 1766, p. 19a17) by Chih-yüan during the Sung period (976-1022). We can gather from the last two sources that the topics include "the doctrine of the eternally abiding [nirvāna or li]" (T36.291a), "the doctrine of the reality" (T36.400a), "the doctrine that good deeds do not entail rewards" (T36.318c), and the tenth topic, "the doctrine that sentient beings possess Buddha-nature" (T38.19a17). Thus this writing seems to contain most of Tao-sheng's ideas, ontological or Buddhological, that he put forward and formulated up to the point of the icchantika question (see T38.19a17). The number "fourteen" attests to the kaleidoscopic structure of Tao-sheng's interest and mind.

#### 4. Translation

Tao-sheng is listed as a co-translator of a work of vinaya ("discipline") called Hsi-ho Five-division law of the Mahīśāsakā [School] (T22, nr. 1421) along with the principal translator Buddhajīva. It was translated in 423 or 424 when they were together at the Lung-kuang ssu in Chien-k'ang. It is not certain how much and in what way Tao-sheng as a co-translator participated in the translation process, but it is very rare for a Chinese to share the position with a native speaker of Sanskrit. Even Seng-chao and Seng-jui, the able assistants to Kumārajīva, could not entertain that honour in

any of the translations in which they participated. This suggests that Tao-sheng was equipped with a working knowledge of the Buddhist Sanskrit language and that his scholarly and practical interest extended to and encompassed vinaya or the monastic rules.

#### 5. Letters

a. Letter to Wang-hung. A brief passage answer to Wang's inquiry about the doctrine of instantaneous enlightenment, the letter is found at the end of the Pien-tsung lun (T52.228a8ff.), compiled by Hsieh Ling-yün (385-433), which deals exclusively with Tao-sheng's doctrine. In the letter Tao-sheng generally agrees with Hsieh in interpreting the doctrine, adding, however, that true knowledge consists in what one has experientially illuminated in oneself. The letter confirms and enhances the value of the document as the only legitimate source for Tao-sheng's doctrine especially in the absence of his writing proper.

b. A series of four letters exchanged between Fan Po-lun (Fan-t'ai) and Tao-sheng, Fu Chi (d. 426), or other related monks. Listed in Fa-lun's catalogue (CSTCC 12, in T55.83aff.), it is not certain how many letters Tao-sheng himself wrote in those correspondences. The date is before 426.

## 6. Others

The Ming-seng chuan (Biographies of Eminent Monks) by Pao-ch'ang (during the period of the Liang Dynasty, 502-557) lists five items<sup>61</sup>. They may represent the topics of Tao-sheng's lectures or writings, just quotes from them, or Tao-sheng's statements. Three of them are:

a. "The proposition that those who are endowed with the two factors of life [namely, yin and yang] are (or have in) themselves [potentially] the right causes of nirvāṇa. [And their reincarnation in the three realms (triloka) is simply the result of delusion.] The icchantikas being [also] the class of beings partaking of reincarnation, how is it possible that they are solely excepted from possessing Buddha-nature?"<sup>62</sup>

b. "The proposition that 'the knowledge of the two vehicles is to view emptiness (śūnyatā) as universal characteristics while the knowledge of the bodhisattvas is to view emptiness as specific characteristics'".

c. "The proposition that 'by doing the good and suppressing the evil one is said to have attained the [good] karma of (being born as) man and god (deva), yet in reality that is not the case of the good deed entailing reward'".

d. "The proposition that 'animals enjoy rich and pleasure



while there are those who, born among humans as the result of [good] retribution, are afflicted with poverty and suffering'".

e. "The proposition that 'an icchantika is not equipped with the root of faith, yet, though they are cut off from the good root, they still possess Buddha-nature'".

#### D. Tao-sheng's Doctrines

As set out earlier, one of the objectives of the present undertaking is a proper scrutiny of the structure and contents of Tao-sheng's understanding of the Buddhist doctrines and his thought in general. The only proper way to do this, it seems, is through an analysis of the commentary. Yet it still seems necessary to sketch an overall view of Tao-sheng's doctrines based on all the available sources excluding, if possible, the CSPS. This will serve two purposes: first, we will provide the basis on which his influence can be measured (in next sub-section); second, we will collate the data with what has been found in the commentary (in 2.C).

The titles of the expository writings ascribed to Tao-sheng but now all lost reveal him as a seminal thinker with a vast range of scholarly insight. They do not, however, represent the identical number of essentially

different subjects. Some are interrelated, being variations of certain themes. There are some major distinct themes. They are in turn inter-connected, as if they emanated from an integral system of Tao-sheng's thought.

For that reason and in absence of proper documents we will choose two of more conspicuous topics Tao-sheng was known for, and the rest will be grouped together in a third. Thus we can list the subject matters to delve into associated with Tao-sheng as follows:

1. The doctrine of sudden enlightenment.
2. The doctrine of Buddha-nature. (This is identified sometimes as the matter related to the Nirvāṇa Sūtra or the icchantika issue.)
3. Miscellaneous theories.
  - a. A good deed entails no retribution.
  - b. The Buddha has [in reality] no Pure Land.
  - c. The Dharma-kāya is formless.
  - d. On the double truth.

At a glance, the titles show Tao-sheng's main concerns: What is the Buddha, how Buddhahood is achieved, and how is it possible.

#### 1. Sudden Enlightenment

Since what seems to be Tao-sheng's exposition of the subject, "On sudden enlightenment [as the means] to achieve Buddhahood", is lost along with all of other thematic

writings, relevant information on the doctrine can be gleaned only from other sources. The doctrine is cited or touched upon briefly here and there in various sources, contemporary and later, which attests to the range of its impact on other thinkers.

The most important of the sources is the PTL compiled by Hsieh Ling-yün, which contains some seventeen sets of questions and answers regarding Tao-sheng's proposition, involving six questions and one respondent. The anthology begins with Hsieh's brief preface and ends with Tao-sheng's brief comment. But Hsieh's interpretation may not be identical with Tao-sheng's original line of argument in terms of origination of the theory, phraseology, and logical background. As a matter of fact, in the attached letter to Wang Hung, one of the questioners, Tao-sheng, though he praises the way Hsieh answers, points out the need for clarifying the fact that illumination, unlike ordinary perception, can and must be entered into in one's own realization.

For potentially authentic sources of information, of course, one can immediately think of the three commentaries by Tao-sheng. In regard with the CNS and the CVS, it is true that there one can find some statements or expressions, explicitly or implicitly suggesting the particular approach, but there are very few cases, if any. Perhaps the two sūtras

concerned, because of the doctrines incorporated, do not provide proper grounds on which the commentator can play with such themes. However, in the CSPS we find numerous expressions and statements germane to the process of enlightenment. Yet, to one's bafflement, most of them in an overwhelming number of cases, speak for what appears to be none other than the antithesis of Tao-sheng's original thesis, that is, a gradual path to enlightenment. It requires a scrupulous analysis, which will be attempted later. Nevertheless here we will concentrate on the core of the theory and its background on the basis of the directly relevant information.

Although, as mentioned, Tao-sheng's theory of sudden enlightenment is touched on in some documents, there is no reference to the background of the theory or to any particular scripture involved, if any. One can merely conjecture some factors that possibly led to, or had something to do with, the advent of the doctrine. Let us explore the possible external factors first. One may assume the doctrine as a natural upshot of the development of the Buddhist thought in China since its introduction about three centuries back. The doctrine symbolizes the Chinese way of recapitulating in practical terms what Mahāyāna Buddhism ultimately stands for in terms of the process of salvation as opposed to the approach characterizing Hīnayāna, a typically

gradual self-realization. A series of scriptures on meditation of Hīnayāna tradition had already been translated. The translation and study of the Prajñā-pāramitā sūtras ensued, marking the introduction of the Mahāyāna tradition proper, which was furthered by, and in a way culminated in, the achievement of Kumārajīva including accurate rendering of the Sanskrit texts and correct interpretations of the related doctrines. Hailing from, and standing right in, that line of tradition, Tao-sheng, reputed to be a critical mind, may have arrived at the pragmatic summation of the Mahāyāna path by way of the doctrine of the Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtras, realizing that the discriminating intelligence (prajñā) exercised through the doctrine of emptiness (śūnyatā) refers to intuitive knowledge that comes in instantaneous illumination.<sup>63</sup>

Another factor related to Mahāyāna that probably prompted Tao-sheng to propound the doctrine is the concept of stages (bhūmi). The available records considered, this doctrine is, as Ōchō observes, the most probable direct cause of Tao-sheng's theorization.<sup>64</sup> The concept as the culminating point of the Buddhist practice by nature obviously epitomizes the graduated process of achieving Buddhahood, but the Chinese Buddhists in the 4th century did not fail to see an element of instantaneity in this context. In fact it was surrounding the concept that the question of

enlightenment was discussed. Chih Tun (314-366) was the first in record to have ever touched on the matter. According to a biography of Chih, he "scrutinized the ten stages and then he realized that instantaneous enlightenment occurs in the seventh stage."<sup>65</sup> Thus Chih took the seventh stage as the crucial juncture of gradual path and sudden breakthrough with the virtue of intellectual receptivity called dharma of non-organization (or non-birth) (anutpattika-dharma) set in.<sup>66</sup> We are told that this line of argument is successively identified in the eminent Buddhists including Tao-an (312-385), Hui-yüan, and Seng-chao.<sup>67</sup> The type of theory they advocated was referred to as "small subitism" — a clear indication that it is an invented designation after Tao-sheng appeared on the scene with his argument referred to as "great subitism".

Of the masters of "small subitism", Seng-chao was the closest contemporary with Tao-sheng. However, unlike other contemporaries like Hui-kuan, who wrote "On gradual enlightenment" in order to counter Tao-sheng, it is not certain whether Seng-chao was actually engaged in the debate which may have been going on toward his last years of the life (374-414), if we put the date of Tao-sheng's theory, in agreement with Itano Chōhachi, between 409 and 414.<sup>68</sup> The last part (IV) of Seng-chao's essays (Chao-lun), especially sections 8-13, is devoted to the question of enlightenment in

defence of gradualism. But the part is, or the sections are, spurious.<sup>69</sup> Granted, that attests to the impact of Tao-sheng's doctrine felt for quite a while beyond his days. Anyway, Hui-ta (551-589) in the commentary to the Chao-lun sums up Seng-cha's position on the matter as follows:

Up to the point of the sixth stage, [the two realms of] existence (yu) and nonexistence (wu) are not synthesized. Therefore one is not yet enlightened to li. If one is beyond the seventh, [the two realms of] existence and nonexistence are experienced simultaneously. Only then can we speak of it as enlightenment to li.<sup>70</sup>

It is not certain how much of Tao-sheng's actual wordage is reflected in the statement, but the analytical style and terminology somewhat conform to Seng-chao's. Being the case, Seng-chao envisaged here talks as if he had in mind what Tao-sheng had proposed. Tao-sheng, contrary to the immediate impression of suddenness, does not reject the doctrine of the stages but merely pushes the critical juncture to after the eighth<sup>71</sup> or the tenth stage. Tao-sheng refutes the "small subitists" by describing anything short of the ultimate stage as unreal. He is quoted as saying:

From birth-and-death (samsāra) to the diamond perception all belong to dream. In the perception after the diamond one opens up to great enlightenment.<sup>72</sup>

Here the "diamond" refers to the tenth stage or after. Also in the commentary on the Lotus, we find the ten stages being mentioned but only in the sense that they have limit in

representing enlightenment as the full revelation and consummate fulfillment of the innate potentiality every being is endowed with (409c).

Tao-sheng probably came to encounter the problem of the stages and enlightenment by way of the writings of the earlier and contemporary masters. Otherwise, he still might have been led to it through the texts incorporating the concept of stages. The large version of the Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra (Ta-pin, Śata-sāhasrikā), had long been in circulation. More important, the scripture bearing the namesake, Ten-stage Scripture (Daśabhūmika-sūtra), was translated by Kumārajīva.

Instead of identifying Tao-sheng's doctrine with the Mahāyāna tradition from India, one, as Hu Shih contends regarding the Chan doctrine, may be tempted to ascribe it to a peculiarly Chinese pattern of thinking, taking it as a pragmatic simplification of a time-taking complex learning process identifiable in the Indian way of thinking in general and Indian Buddhism in particular.<sup>73</sup> A support for such view is found in the PTL. In the anthology of queries about Tao-sheng's theory, Hsieh Ling-yün characterizes Tao-sheng's "new theory" as a blending of two cultures, the element of instantaneity drawn from the Confucian teaching and the ability to achieve a sagehood or Buddhahood from the Indian tradition.<sup>74</sup>

Behind those external factors that may have helped



Tao-sheng to formulate and defend the idea of instantaneity may be Tao-sheng's own mystical experience. A description in his biography in the Kao-seng-chuan may be cited in that sense:

After having deeply meditated for a long time, Seng's understanding penetrated to what lies beyond words, whereupon he exclaimed: "The purpose of symbols is to gain a complete understanding of ideas, but once the ideas have been gained, the symbols may be forgotten."<sup>75</sup>

Here one is open to the complex mechanism of understanding, knowing, or enlightenment. While a gradual process as a whole is suggested here, an instantaneous penetration or breakthrough at a certain point of process may be also implied.

Now, aside from the external background surrounding Tao-sheng's exposition, what are the content of the proposition and accompanying reasoning involved in the argument proper? It does not seem to be difficult to get an overview of those points based on the scattered comments and quotes. The PTL carries an account of what Tao-sheng is said to have proposed:

The illumination (or mirror) of the extinction (nirvāṇa) (or the quiet domain) is so subtle and mysterious that it does not allow any grade or class. To learn it accumulatively will be endless. How can it stop by itself?<sup>76</sup>

In a variation of the same theme that follows, the "illumination of the extinction" is redefined as the ultimate of substratum (tsung-chi 宗極). These terms posited as the object of enlightenment and their attributes point to some

kind of ultimate reality or noumenal domain, which suggests that an equally distinct and transcendent existemological approach is necessary. Tao-sheng is challenging here a linear type of accumulative learning process. Typical code of cultivation for the Buddhists also serves only a limited purpose, stopping short of a truly ultimate experience. Liu Ch'iu, a later follower and a faithful interpreter of Tao-sheng, quotes the latter as saying:

By means of [thirty-seven] factors of practice leading to enlightenment (bodhipāksya-dharmāḥ), one may be able to go near nirvāṇa, but one may not be called an arhat yet. By means of the six perfections (pāramitās), one may be able to reach the Buddhahood, but one is not to be referred to as a bodhisattva yet. In case of the analogy of cutting a tree [you gradualists take up in defence of your argument], [it can be said that] one can cut away the tree gradually foot by foot, inch by inch, because the tree still exists. Yet in the case of realizing the non-origination [or dharmas], since birth (or origination) has to be exhausted, illumination must be sudden.<sup>77</sup>

"The stages and gradations", in the words of Heinrich Dumoulin, may "refer to the way and not to the liberating insight itself."<sup>78</sup> The analogy of wood-cutting was probably used initially by the gradualists, but Tao-sheng may be attempting here to make his own point that the wood-cutter is bound to reach the instant when there is no more left to cut.

There are some more similes employed in the arguments, which were obviously taken up first by one party but ended up also being exploited by the opposite party for

their own cause. In the PTL we find the simile of north and south, the north representing the place of the ignorant being, the south the residence of the Sage. The gradualists characterize the travel from the north to the south as gradual progress, while the subitists focus on the actual arrival at the south to have the sudden encounter with the Sage.<sup>79</sup> Hui-kuan, the chief adversary of Tao-sheng's theory, drew the analogy of mountain climbing in which a climber should advance step by step toward the peak in view from afar.<sup>80</sup> Then the proponents of subitism cites it to suggest that the moment the climber arrives on the peak he experiences his vista opening up wide. Tao-sheng also cites the simile of a ripe fruit which drops spontaneously and suddenly on the ground at a certain point of time.<sup>81</sup> Yet that simile too is not totally immune, as might actually have been the case, to the appropriation by the other camp in favour of gradualism. From those analogies, therefore, the fact emerges that the focuses of two approaches are different, open to the possibility that two are not necessarily incompatible with each other, particularly from the syncretic standpoint which was to emerge in different forms later in the tradition after Tao-sheng.<sup>82</sup>

Now, does Tao-sheng offer any metaphysical and epistemological grounds for such an approach based on the immediateness of enlightenment? The key to the quest may lie

in the nature of li, regarded as the term of extreme significance, the Chinese tradition. The presence of the term is ubiquitous in Tao-sheng's writings. A subject of comprehensive scrutiny later (in Part III), the term has a wide spectrum of implications embracing both categories, that is, the particular and the universal. Yet it may be safe to relate li to the essential substance underlying the particular things including the Buddha's diverse teachings and statements. But Tao-sheng seems to take the particulars as representations of the universal. In that way there is no serious conflict between the two levels. And in that sense it may be possible to hypothesize li as a term for a metaphysical entity referring to the ultimate reality. Li is identified with what is immutable (ch'ang 常), nirvāna, Dharmatā, and Dharma-kāya. It represents something which by going astray from one remains in the bondage of birth-and-death (samsāra) and by attaining it one makes it to nirvāna. Whatever it is, li represents that by which one is to be enlightened, i.e. it is the content of enlightenment.

Then why sudden enlightenment? Because li is indivisible or nonanalytic. In essence the ontological nature of li dictates its epistemological means or mode. To-sheng makes the point in the CNS:

The true li (or Truth) is self-so (tzu-jan): enlightenment also is [the process of] mysteriously identifying oneself with [Truth]. What is true being not gradational (nondifferentiated), then can

enlightenment allow any [stages of] changing?<sup>83</sup>

The correlation of the two aspects, ontological and epistemological, receives a more clear enunciation by Tao-sheng in the following quotation:

What is the meaning of "sudden"? It means that li is inseparable, and the word "enlightenment" also means illuminating the ultimate [that li is]. Hence, the non-dual enlightenment matches with the inseparable li. [The distinction between] li and knowledge (both?) being done away with, we call it "sudden enlightenment".<sup>84</sup>

It becomes evident thus that the singular nature of li as the object of illumination presupposes an identical means to grasp it.

As a corollary, one can also consider the expression "one". Besides being associated with the predication in a negative or emphatic tone of indivisibility, li is described in a straight forward way as "one", especially in the CSPS. "One" is found along with such words as "ultimate (or final) (chi 極) "mysterious (miao)", "everlasting" (ch'ang), as well as "vehicle" (yāna). Technically referring to One "Vehicle", as the point of synthesis in the dialectical process involving three vehicles, "One" may be considered also in the context of a general statement. Hsieh's argument in the PTL begins with the premises that "li is united with the One ultimate (or one and final)."<sup>85</sup> As a logical consequence, "one enlightenment" is in order. "With one enlightenment all the fetters of existence are dispensed with simultaneously."<sup>86</sup>

Tao-sheng does not specifically reject the established doctrine of stages (bhūmi), which apparently typifies gradual realization. He locates the ultimate li beyond the confines of the ten stages.<sup>87</sup> Ten stages and four grades of sagehood belong merely to the means the Buddha devised in order to bring li close to the beings.<sup>88</sup>

Faith is (hsin 信) relegated to something short of the level of enlightenment. "Understanding through faith" (hsin-chieh 信解) is not genuine enlightenment; when enlightenment sets in faith gives way.<sup>89</sup> In the PTL we find the following theme drawn by Hsieh Ling-yün apparently to recount Tao-sheng's theory reverberated:

Understanding is not to be gradually reached, whereas faith arises [gradually] from instruction. What do I mean by this? The fact that faith arises from instruction [shows that] there is such a thing as the work of daily advancement. But since [final] understanding is got gradual, there can be no such thing as partial entry into illumination.<sup>90</sup>

In this way Buddhahood does not allow gradual access; what is suggested is an all-or-nothing or once-for-all situation.

To recapitulate what has been investigated above, we have contemplated some possible external factors that could lead Tao-sheng fervently to contend and champion the particular mode of enlightenment and examined metaphysical grounds for it.

Whatever the factors were, it took Tao-sheng's astute insight and conviction for the idea to be recognized and

established as a fundamental element of Buddhist practice in the Chinese scene. Tao-sheng's argument apparently is cogent and is possibly with empirical basis. Suddenness may denote the transcendental nature of illumination. There are many expressions which involve pointing to mystical perception. The basic framework represented by the theory, however, may not account for the process of enlightenment as a whole. The question turns out to be more complex than what has been found here when we attempt to apply the framework to what is described in the matter in the CSPS. That problem will be pursued later in the analysis of the text.

## 2. The Buddha-nature and Related Ideas

Unlike the case of sudden enlightenment the doctrine of the Buddha-nature has a clear connection with a certain scripture in its origin. Yet the arguments and related issues Tao-sheng raised upon his encounter with the sūtra concerned, that is, the Nirvāṇa, should be considered along with other doctrines in the context of Tao-sheng's frame of thought as a whole. This should be the case especially when we consider the fact that the study of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra and raising of the questions by Tao-sheng occupied a relatively long span of time, from 426 to 432, at least. It was toward his last years, when Tao-sheng's comprehension of Buddhist doctrines matured enough to nurture the idea that the Nirvāṇa Sūtra would set forth. Any new doctrine like the Buddha-

nature could be easily assimilated into Tao-sheng's seemingly integral thought structure.

The discussion of the doctrine of Buddha-nature will involve, simultaneously or separately, other relevant matters including the icchantika issue, the concept of conditions (yuan 緣), and the notion of stimulus-response (kan-ying 感應).

Let us first follow historical facts surrounding the Nirvāṇa Sūtra. A question arose when Tao-sheng read an earlier version of the sūtra translated by Fa-hsien in 418. There he came across the phrase (in vol. 4) telling that the living beings possess the Buddha-nature with the only exception of a lowly class of men called icchantika.<sup>91</sup> He believed that statement to be inconsistent with the Buddha's message as embodied in the Nirvāṇa Sūtra. The principle of the universally applicable Buddha-nature was the logical conclusion Tao-sheng arrived at after penetrating the gist of the scripture. One of the propositions Tao-sheng is said to have promulgated reads:

The beings who are subject to the interaction of two elements (yin and yang) are all the primary causes of nirvāṇa. One's birth in the three realms invariably refers to nothing but the effect of delusion. The icchantikas belong to the life-sustaining species; then how can only they be deprived of the Buddha-nature?<sup>92</sup>

Similarly he proposes again:

The icchantikas are not possessive of the root of



faith. [Yet], though they are cut off from [the root of] the good, they still possess the Buddha-nature.<sup>93</sup>

The dictum that "all the beings are bound to become the Buddhas" does not allow any exception; it is as simple as that.

His daring challenge to the written testimony of the scripture, as translated in such a way, provoked the established church as if it had amounted to a sacrilegious act. As a result Tao-sheng was excommunicated in 428 or 429. He was exonerated when another, larger version of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra (40 vols.) translated by Dharmakshema reached the capital. The new translation contained (in chapter 23) a statement verifying Tao-sheng's assumption that the icchantikas, too, are buddha-natured.<sup>94</sup>

What was demonstrated in this event, in which Tao-sheng argued for an unmitigated, strict universality of the nature, was Tao-sheng's prophetic insight and firm-rooted conviction which must be connected to his systematic comprehension of the Buddhist teaching in his own way. It represents a part emanating from the whole. In that sense the theory of enlightenment and the doctrine of Buddha-nature are integrally interconnected.<sup>95</sup> What makes sudden enlightenment possible for the sentient beings? The cause that accounts for it is the Buddha-nature. Tao-sheng identifies sudden enlightenment with self-realization or

internalized knowledge. The linkage is noticeably found well forged in the CSPS. Tao-sheng writes: "The sentient being's endowment of great enlightenment leads all to succeed in becoming a Buddha (408d3)." Again, "yet the sentient beings all possess the endowed [capacity] for great enlightenment; there is no one that is not a potential bodhisattva (409c3)" or, "that is not to bound to become a Buddha (409a13)." Tao-sheng goes on to strike the point proper: "all the sentient beings, without exception, are the Buddhas and all also [in the state of] nirvāṇa" (408b16).

The innate nature originally constituted in the beings is thus posited as the "primary cause (yin/hetu)" of Buddhahood. For the suffering, unenlightened beings the original nature is covered up with the "veils of dirt" (400b10), "bondages" (408b17) or "defilements" (400b11). For this reason beings are alienated from the originally pure state of being. Enlightenment is an act of regaining that origin. The buddha-nature is something originally existent in beings and so it can be said that the unenlightened do not possess it or that it remains dormant. It is the property for the ordinary being to recoup through enlightenment whereby all the inorganic crust a posteriori is done away with. It is in this sense that the title of Tao-sheng's writing on the subject, "The Buddha-nature is something which a being is bound to possess [again when enlightened]" stands

to be interpreted. (Fo-hsing tang-yu lun)<sup>96</sup> Tao-sheng in the CNS makes the point that the Buddha-nature is not astride all the three time-periods: past, present, and future.<sup>97</sup> The interpretation of the concept in terms of time was to become a subject of debate, giving rise to diverse, as many as eleven, lines of interpreters.<sup>98</sup> The intent is implicit also in the CSPS:

Because the living beings are originally endowed with "the Buddha's knowledge and insight", and yet they are not manifested on account of dirt and obstacles, when Buddha [helps] open and get rid of the veils of the dirt, they are now able to obtain it (400b9).

Here the "endowment of the Buddha's knowledge and insight" is the expression identifiable with the Buddha-nature, being adapted to the terminology of the sūtra.

The nature a priori apparently presupposes the object or original reality it resides in,<sup>99</sup> a kind of archetypal entity. It can thereby conjure up the specter of the self (ātman), anathema to the Buddha, whose theme was selflessness (anātman).<sup>100</sup> As a matter of fact, what may be otherwise implicit in other scriptures is brought to the fore in the Nirvāṇa Sūtra. It is typified by the very word "true self" (chen-o 真我). Tao-sheng merely follows the sūtra as far as the terms involved are concerned. Tao-sheng identifies "no-self" with the "true-self" in the sense that the former implies a means to express the latter, as if they represented two sides of one reality.<sup>101</sup> Tao-sheng speaks of the "self

of the Buddha-nature" in agreement with the Nirvāṇa and the Vimalakīrti, for that matter.<sup>102</sup> The Buddha-nature implicitly or explicitly maintains a synonymical relationship with, besides the "true self", the words such as Dharma, the true, origin (pen),<sup>103</sup> Tao, self-soness (tzu-jan), li,<sup>104</sup> the immutable,<sup>105</sup> the middle path,<sup>106</sup> and nirvāṇa.<sup>107</sup> In the CNS Tao-sheng states:

Those who have realized the Dharma are darkly merged with the self-soness. All the Buddhas are invariably in such a state. The Dharma by which [such a process] is effected is the Buddha-nature.<sup>108</sup>

The Buddha-nature is thus deposited as the cause of enlightenment. More specifically it is the primary or "right" cause (cheng-yen 正因 /hetu). That alone is, however, not sufficient to bring about enlightenment. Since it remains a latent power as organic part of the ontic reality, there should be something else to harness or reach the power. What becomes practically necessary to complete the process of enlightenment is the supporting condition (yüan/pratyaya).<sup>109</sup> These two factors, a priori and a posteriori, are closely bound up together in the process. Tao-sheng writes in the CNS:

Cause and conditions can not be separated from each other. Because there are cause and conditions, learning can lead to attainment of the Buddhahood. How can no-self and self be separated?<sup>110</sup>

What is suggested here is that cause and conditions are

related to two domains or levels of truth represented by no-self and self respectively, two being inseparable both ontologically and epistemologically.

What then constitutes the conditions in concrete terms? Tao-sheng seems to have tackled the question in an essay of which only the title is known, and it apparently has some bearing on the interaction between the beings and the Buddha, for the title goes: "On the proposition that [the Buddha's] response (or reflex) is expressed through conditions." Herein comes the role of the Buddha as the mediator and prime mover of the process of the being's illumination. The thrust of Tao-sheng's argument may nonetheless be glimpsed in the following quotation, taken apparently from the writing in question:

Dharma-master [Tao-sheng] says: [The Buddha] illuminates the conditions and response; the response should lie in knowledge. What does it mean that his response should lie in knowledge? It means that he consciously (or voluntarily) responds.<sup>111</sup>

This approach of Tao-sheng is in contrast with the "unconscious response" of the Sage advocated by Tao-an, Seng-chao and Fa-yao, which amounts to the view that there is no "condition" involved. [Response (ying) refers to the Sage's role in the process of the being's enlightenment.<sup>112</sup> Sequentially response-reflex closely follows another act called kan, stimulus (from the beings). Kan-ying, or Ying-kan, as they occur often together in a compound form, is an

inseparable continuum of sequence, almost a simultaneous process. The terms are obviously borrowed from the Chuang-tzu and the I Ching. In the Chuang-tzu we find the following description of the sage:

Roused (kan) by something outside himself, only then does he respond (ying); pressed, only then does he move; finding he has no choice, only then does he rise up.<sup>113</sup>

A similar idea is expressed in the I Ching, Hsi-t'zu chuan:

But if it (the Change) is stimulated it penetrates the raison d'etre of the world.<sup>114</sup>

The same pattern is unmistakably detectable in the CSPS.<sup>115</sup> Yet, as will be substantiated later (in Part III), there is a fundamental difference in the orientation of the Chinese Sage and the Buddhist Sage: one is self-oriented or introversive, while the other is altruistically oriented or extraversive.

Now, how does the stimulated Sage's response come about? Here arises the need for the concrete ways or activities, which are what the conditions are about. Hui-ta quotes Tao-sheng response:

The Dharma-master [Tao-] sheng said: "Stimulus - (reflex) has conditions [through which it is expressed]; sometimes by way of being born in suffering situations to share sorrowful commiseration, sometimes through love and desire to share the bondage of delusion, or sometimes by way of the dharma of the good. Therefore [the Buddha] consciously responds.<sup>116</sup>

What is implicit here is the notion of expedient means (upāya-kauśalya). But speaking broadly, the Dharma of the

Sage is not restricted to a certain approach applied at certain point of time. As Tao-sheng writes,

The Dharma-nature illuminates the round (or perfect), and li the real remains eternal. When it comes to stimulus-reflex, how can it be inactive even for a while?<sup>117</sup>

Put in the context of the process as a whole, the kan-ying stage is preceded, and made possible as well, by the being's active approach to the Sage. Of course, kan or stimulus implies the move initiated on the part of the beings, which is essential because illumination, after all, as Tao-sheng points out to Wang Hung in a brief letter found attached at PTL, denotes an empirical knowledge internalized in oneself.<sup>118</sup> While kan speaks of what is received perceptively by the Sage through the stimulus from outside, the initiative taken on the part of the beings find expression in the term k'ou 扣 (to tap, strike, fasten). Recurrent particularly in the CSPA, <sup>119</sup> the term symbolizes an intense plea to the Sage for his involvement and guidance toward the goal of enlightenment, signalling at the same time they are ready for such a move.<sup>120</sup>

The description of the learning process in general, starting with the inherence of the Buddha-nature and the interaction in particular taking place between the Buddha and the beings, would not be complete without speaking of one more term involved. Chi is the term. As the kind of subtle triggering-mechanism, chi plays the part of an agent for

making the beings' active contact with the Sage possible. As Tao-sheng puts it in the CSPA, "If [a being] has internally no triggering mechanism of Tao, the Sage then will not respond" (412b). It becomes evident here that chi as an inner property shares the implied structure of meaning with the Buddha-nature. In fact, they appear synonymous and interchangeable in many contexts. They may be rooted in one and the same faculty or nature, but Chi partakes of a more dynamic, external level of the category, whereas the Buddha-nature represents the latent substructure which awaits being reactivated by the beings at the time of enlightenment. Originating in the I Ching and the Taoist texts and further evolved by the Neo-Taoists, the concept chi was excavated by Tao-sheng to reinforce and complement the otherwise nebulous concept of the Buddha-nature.

The unique blending of two sources of expression becomes manifest when we put together the phases of the process of enlightenment: when "the beings" with the subtle triggering-mechanism for enlightenment (wu-chi 悟機) [being activated], actively invite (k'ou) the Sage [to come to their aid]", the latter "stoops down (or condescends) to respond".<sup>121</sup> Practically all the terms, substantive and predicative, came from the Chinese philosophical texts. Nonetheless, what is couched in the originally non-Buddhist terminology is the Buddhist content, with the resultant



effect that the content including the Buddha-nature has received a new structural framework.

To sum up, the concept of the Buddha-nature, which Tao-sheng is credited with having excavated from the Nirvāṇa Sūtra and propounded with stress put on its uncompromising universality, has been illuminated in the above in itself and in the light of other relevant concepts as well and found clearly incorporated in Tao-sheng's system of thought. The first cause of enlightenment, the Buddha-nature constitutes the starting point of the Buddha's didactic process for edifying the beings. Tao-sheng advances an elaborate theory of learning, involving a dynamic interaction between the Buddha-Sage and the beings. He combines the Buddhist concept with Chinese philosophical concepts. Thereby he expands its connotation and application and assimilates it into the existing Chinese philosophical tradition.

### 3. Miscellaneous

Besides the two major themes examined above, in the balance of Tao-sheng's expository writings titled with the words i 義 (exegesis) or lun (discussion) listed as many as nine, one can distinguish four more distinct subjects: Good deed entailing no retribution, two truths, the Dharma-kāya formless, and no pure land in the domain of the Buddha. At a glance, one finds that all the themes (except one) are

postulated in the negative, leading one to assume that Tao-sheng set out therein to demythologize some misconceptions which he thought were prevalent in the contemporary Buddhist circle. The pattern may resemble the way the Indian Mādhyamika Buddhists attempted by means of the doctrine of emptiness (śūnyatā) to uncover the absurdity of the Buddhist concepts as understood, or rather misunderstood, by other sectarians. In that respect, one can put the one non-negative title "two truths" into the same category.

As a matter of fact, Tao-sheng was exposed to the Prajñā-pāramitā texts and the Mādhyamika doctrine through different channels from the early stage of his Buddhist career. And the doctrine found its way into his writing, especially in the conception of the real.<sup>122</sup> It should be noted that what is subject to rejection by Tao-sheng may not be the real as such but the ill-conceived notions about it. Tao-sheng appears to be more explicit on that point than the Mādhyamika. In the following we will attempt to reconstitute the four themes individually by gleaning the relevant sources scattered here and there.

#### a. The Good Deed Entails No Retribution

The biographies of Tao-sheng lists the title ahead of others, probably suggesting that it is Tao-sheng's earliest major writing, or one of the earliest major writings, setting the tone for the rest of his themes. The question of

retribution as the effect of deed as the cause intrigued the pragmatic Chinese mind when faced with the alien religion. It was one of the much-talked-about subjects in Tao-sheng's time along with the question of spirit (shen 神) as the immutable entity and the subject to receive retribution. Hui-yüan, for example, wrote two treatises on the subject.<sup>123</sup> Whether Tao-sheng's writing actually initiated a round of lively discussions to yield some in-depth investigative writings such as Hui-yüan's is not certain,<sup>124</sup> but after him there came some who explored and recounted his theories.<sup>125</sup>

As for the substance of the theory, a key may be found in what "good" and "retribution" refer to in terms of ethical or religious value. What is subject to repudiation by Tao-sheng in the thesis: what was popularly regarded as good deed, retribution, or both? Tao-sheng is quoted in a document as writing a proposition that reads:

By overcoming the evil by way of the good, one is entitled to obtain the karma of man or god (deva). [Yet] in reality that is not what is truly good but just receiving retribution [of reincarnation].<sup>126</sup>

In a different proposition Tao-sheng talks of retribution:

[Even] animals enjoy richness and pleasure [while] the retribution of men includes poverty and suffering.<sup>127</sup>

Here Tao-sheng does not reject the notions of "good" and "retribution" as such, but he rejects these notions when they are taken as something responsible for reincarnation as man

or god, that is, as long as a being stays in the saṃsāric cycle he has nothing to do with good deed and resultant retribution. In other words, as long as one remains in the cycle of reincarnation one has done nothing "good" in the true sense of the word. As he says: "Retribution belongs to the phase of change and transience; birth-and-death belongs to the domain of a great dream."<sup>128</sup> The point is made here that the retribution one gets by being born in saṃsāra does not lift one to the ultimate domain of reality of nirvāṇa. In the CVS Tao-sheng illustrates retribution in a negative sense:

When one practises meditation (dhyāna) in the hope of receiving retribution, one then has attachment to the practice. Since one has attachment to the practice, one's retribution must be a delusion. One who is deluded in retribution is tied to birth [-and-death].<sup>129</sup>

He turns to a different kind of retribution, that is, retribution in positive sense:

When [a bodhisattva], in hopes of saving other lives, is born [into the saḥā world], he is being born as a expedient means. Because he is not motivated for his own sake, his retribution is without (or no) delusion.<sup>130</sup>

It becomes necessary now to determine exactly what is meant by the word "good". It is something that can and should be spoken of in terms of li, usually posited as the object of the ultimate knowledge. In the CNS Tao-sheng writes: "The attainment of li is "good". To deviate from li means "not good". And he goes on to say:

What is "good" and what is "not good"? Deviating from li is "not good". Returning to it, one achieves "good" ... In deviation from li, one gets tied [in bondage]. By achieving it one is [in the state of] nirvāṇa, released (mokṣa), and cut off [from bondage].<sup>131</sup>

Merely disliking suffering and seeking pleasure is not what the good deed denotes in the proper sense.<sup>132</sup> What is valued by Tao-sheng is not based on biological, aesthetic, or ethical values. Goodness can be measured only on a religious scale.<sup>133</sup> All the relative values are subservient to the religious value, and not vice versa. Tao-sheng declares in the CVS:

Seeking pleasure is the endless dharma; it is "the conditioned (saṃskṛta) [dharmā]". "The unconditioned (asaṃskṛta)" is the dharma embodying li. Therefore, [in the latter dharmā] there is no actual [worldly] merit and benefit.<sup>134</sup>

Such rejection of good in the conventional sense does not necessarily lead to the denial of good as such. As long as a deed stands to contribute to the path to enlightenment or Buddhahood, it is "good". Chi-tsang, the San-lun master, in his commentary to the Lotus cites Tao-sheng's original treatise:

Previously Chu Tao-sheng wrote a treatise titled "The good deed entails no retribution". In it he states: "one tiny act of goodness also helps all to become Buddhas, but not to receive the retribution of birth-and-death."<sup>135</sup>

The significance of "one tiny act of goodness" is clearly indicated in the CSPA.<sup>136</sup> Accumulation of the tiny bits in

an individual being effects the accomplishment of Buddhahood. All the good deeds, therefore, if they are to be "good" in the real sense of it, should be directed toward the final fruit of enlightenment, which may be none other than retribution in the true sense of it, if it has to be designated as such. All meaningful acts are subjugated and sublimated to the ultimate goal of illumination. That the good deed is to be duly rewarded, if it is ever presented by the Buddha as something less than what is conducive to yielding religious or ultimate knowledge, should be considered as a kind of expedient device designed to induce the unenlightened beings yet to be persuaded to the bodhisattva path.

Tao-sheng's persistent concern with the religious dimension expressed in the exposition thus parallels his epistemological postulation shown in his thesis on sudden enlightenment. The parallelism is well symbolized in the way the two titles are listed in the biographies side by side, as if they constituted the two parts of one exegetical writing (i).<sup>137</sup>

b. There Is No Pure Land in [the Realm of] the Buddha

The notion of Pure Land is found in most of the sūtras that become known to Tao-sheng, including the sūtras which become the texts of his commentaries, namely, the

Prajñāpāramitā (small version) the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa, and the Lotus. The notion kept the Chinese Buddhists interested, as they were looking for something tangible in the world transcendent to the present realm. Hui-yüan is said to have led a group at Tung-lin-ssu to make a vow before a statue of Amitabha wishing to be reborn in the Pure Land in the Western Paradise. It was in 402 when Tao-sheng stayed on the mountain, making the speculation possible that he might have joined the group.<sup>138</sup> Anyway, the activity could have inspired or motivated him to delve into the theme. Rebirth in the Western Paradise somehow may epitomize the recompense for good deeds. The two subjects in essence betray the common foundation of Tao-sheng's speculation, which is based on what can be characterized as the monistic perspective of a thoroughly religious value system. The popular interest in the exotic paradise led Tao-sheng to define the notion properly in the exposition (Fo wu ching-t'u lun) which is now lost. He also could not afford to overlook this important issue in the commentaries.

The Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa in its first narrative (Ch.1) deals with the question of the Pure Land regarding "the Bodhisattva deeds that lead to the realization of the Pure Land."<sup>139</sup> Tao-sheng begins his comment with the words:

The deeds that lead to the Pure Land mean that the deeds bring about the Pure Land, but it is not something to be produced. Producing with regard to the land lies with the part of the species of

living beings.<sup>140</sup>

Suggesting here that the Land has to do with beings, Tao-sheng turns to the Sage in the CSPS:

The phenomenon and images appear only due to the existence of the fetters. Since the Sage is the one who has comprehended li, he has had his fetters all destroyed. The fetters being destroyed, therefore, how can there be any land? (406a)

Hence, one can arrive at his thesis that "the Buddha has no Pure Land [in his domain]". It applies only to beings. In what sense? Tao-sheng further substantiates this point in the CVS:

Land refers to the territory of beings. When there is no impurity in it, we call it pure. There is no impurity, hence, it is not (nonexistent). There is the territory, hence, it is (existent). Existence is caused by delusion. Nonexistence is caused by deliverance (mokṣa). If deliverance is accomplished, delusion will be completely gone.<sup>141</sup>

The idea of Pure Land is in reality unsubstantial. It is merely a convenient designation. Tao-sheng reasons in the CSPS:

The untainted purity thus means none other than no land. [The Buddha] resorts to land to speak of non-existence. Hence he speaks of the Pure Land. (410b)

Yet Tao-sheng does not stop at simple negation of the locus:

Even though it is said that there is no land [in reality], there is nonetheless no place that is not any land. There is neither bodily form nor name, yet bodily form and name are existent all the more. (406a)

Here Tao-sheng seems to apply with some modification to the Mādhyamika style of inference, stopping at two stages of



negation not going over to the thoroughgoing negation represented in the four-pronged negation or tetralemma (catuṣkoṭi). One can figure here some kind of holistic or monistic picture.

Nonetheless, as far as the concept in question is concerned, Tao-sheng is closer to the Mādhyamika doctrine than other contemporaries are, including Seng-chao who was reputed to be the foremost Mādhyamika scholar under Kumārajīva. The way Seng-chao argues along with Kumārajīva does not end up questioning or interpreting in a negative sense the raison d'être of the Pure Land as such, except for the case of the two vehicles.<sup>142</sup>

Also Seng-chao is found less exhaustive overall than Tao-sheng in applying the Mādhyamika logic as far as the concept of the land is concerned.<sup>143</sup>

Chi-tsang, the systematizer of the Chinese Mādhyamika, the San-lun school, however, cites Tao-sheng's writing and comment as follows:

The Master Sheng wrote "On the seven treasures". This is [the same as] the writing "The Dharma-kāya has no domain of the Pure Land". Now I would like to comment on it. [Tao-sheng argues as follows:] If it is said that the Dharma-kāya does not rely on the impurity of earth and sand [for its representation], then it does not consist in the purity of treasures and jades, either. Hence, [Tao-sheng] speaks of no land ... [I would say:] If we accept that the Dharma-kāya dwells in form (rūpa) [for representation] but its reality is in the middle path, we can also arrive at [the premise] that there is no such land. [Yet] that is

not the case [with Tao-sheng]. If we scrutinize the idea meant by Tao-sheng, it is merely the case that there is no land of treasures and jades. [But I say:] You cannot say that there is no land of the middle path. If that is the case, Master Sheng attains the land of the Dharma-kāya, and then loses the land of traces.<sup>144</sup>

Chi-tsang's approach certainly reflects one of the Mādhyamika conceptions of the middle path that nirvāṇa, represented by "Dharma-kāya" here, and saṃsāra, represented by "traces", remain undifferentiated in a sense. But Chi-tsang probably failed to heed the overall orientation of Tao-sheng's thought. Tao-sheng's approach tends to place the norm on the reality itself but not its traces or representations. That imparts the imagery of a monistic position, which Tao-sheng may have learned also from the Neo-Taoists whose language he borrows heavily. Yet Tao-sheng does not remain a simplistic monist. As he says in the CSPS, "Even though I say that there is no land; yet there is nothing that is not [a part of] the land" (406a). He also does not fail to recognize saṃsāra as the actual locus of enlightenment. In the CVS, Tao-sheng states: "Enlightenment of the Greater Vehicle basically does not consist in departure from the birth-and-death (saṃsāra) in the near to seek it from the far."<sup>145</sup>

Tao-sheng's monistic frame nonetheless accomodates all the Buddhist frames including the middle path. In the CNS Tao-sheng says: "What is said here that birth-and-death is the middle path illustrates that there is what is

original."<sup>146</sup> And he goes on to say:

The twelve causes-and-conditions (pratītya-samutpāda) are the middle path. That illustrates that the living beings are originally possessive of [the Buddha-nature]. If [the nature] is taken to be permanent (śāsvata), then it will not correspond to the fact that there is suffering (duḥkha). If it is taken as something annihilated (uccheda), then there will be no li for attaining the Buddhahood. In this way those who see the middle path will see the Buddha-nature.<sup>147</sup>

As such, the domain of the Buddha is not to be found elsewhere than samsaric existence. As Tao-sheng puts it in the CSPS, "the non-existence of the Buddha is because beings are impure and evil; since the Buddha is not present due to [beings'] impurity, when they are pure he will certainly be present"(410b).<sup>148</sup> In short, the Buddha is not to be found separately in the fictitious Pure Land, which is, as made clear in the CSPS (410c), merely an extemporaneous device employed by the Buddha. That is an implication that can be drawn from the title of the theme in question.

### c. The Dharma-kāya is formless

Listed in the biography, side by side with the writing on the Pure Land, Tao-sheng's article "The Dharma-kāya is formless" may not much differ from the former in essential substance and argument apart from the forms of presentation in different titles. The Buddha meant by Tao-sheng in the other thesis is taken largely in the sense of the Dharma-kāya, the real, permanent, omnipresent entity

transcendent to the saṃsāric state of existence, or "the ultimate reality that underlies all particular phenomena".<sup>149</sup> Attesting to that point is Chi-tsang's reading of the title of Tao-sheng's writing in the quotation cited earlier, "The Dharma-kāya has no Pure Land [in its realm]", "The Dharma-kāya" replacing "The Buddha" as recorded in the biography in the Kao-seng chuan.

One of the more conspicuous Mahāyāna conceptions, the Dharma-kāya, created a good deal of different interpretations among the Chinese Buddhists, especially the Buddho-Taoists who were familiar with the notions of Heaven (t'ien 天) and the Sage. This prompted Tao-sheng to express himself against some prevailing misconceptions. In the CVS<sup>150</sup> we can get a glimpse of the framework of Tao-sheng's position on the matter. Also there is another view by Seng-chao juxtaposed in the CVS --an example of diverse contemporary views. Under the phrase from the sūtra," ... the Buddha body is called Dharma-kāya"<sup>151</sup>, Tao-sheng makes his comment. In the beginning he locates the Dharma-kāya in the stratum under the Buddha body and the "sixteen feet" (or Transformation) body (Nirmāṇakāya). Then he defines "dharma" in the sense that "there is nothing that is not dharma"<sup>152</sup>, which may be based on either a monistic perspective or the Sarvāstivādin realism. Then he identifies "body (kāya)" with the substance (t'i) embodying that meaning." Thereupon he advances to say:

Dharma-kāya is true and real while the sixteen fee (transformation) body is extemporaneous in response [to the need of the beings] ... He who gets enlightened to the Dharma of such nature will have his covers and delusion be eliminated and blind illusion be also removed. He will mysteriously transcend the three realms (tri-loka). Li darkly merges with the sphere of the formless. There being no form, there is no form that he is not capable of taking. Three realms having been cut off, there is no realm he is not capable of having. One who is [capable of becoming] any form is ready to respond to any stimulus. The Buddha is in the state of the unconditioned (asamskrta) ... Thus the sixteen feet and eight feet all are the Buddhas visualized by the beings in the water of their thoughts. The Buddha remains always formless. How can there be two [different things, form and formless]?<sup>153</sup>

Here emerges a picture of Tao-sheng's theory. The Dharma-kāya is certainly without form. But that predication of the premises should not be interpreted as a simple negation. It is an expression that implies an absolute affirmation. Negation here applies to any particular form that can be conceived by an unenlightened being. This framework of double negation invariably partakes of the Mādhyamika doctrine of emptiness. And yet Tao-sheng seems to propose something more than the rejection of the popular conception of the concept. The above quote ends up with the monistic overtone.

Now, when one puts Tao-sheng's viewpoint on the matter against, say, Seng-chao's expressed in the latter's commentary on the same passage of the Vimalakīrti<sup>154</sup> one may identify some subtle points clearly delineated. Behind some

basic similarities between two descriptions in structure, terminology, and epistemological implications, there show up some fundamental differences in their approaches. They converge on the monistic conception of the Dharma-kāya as the common basis conserving the two levels of reality. And two levels are expressed via negativa, certainly reflecting the Mādhyamika doctrine. But they diverge on how the levels are related to each other with respect to the Dharma-kāya. In Seng-chao the connection of the two typified by "formless" and "not formless" are copulative with the conjunctive "and" between them, whereas in Tao-sheng the relation is causal, with the resulting structure that "because it is not ens, it is not non-ens". Seng-chao's pattern of description is simple and linear while Tao-sheng's is correlative in the cause-effect relationship. Thus Tao-sheng's definition produces a more integral affirmative tight-knit relation between the two levels of manifestation of the Dharma-kāya.<sup>155</sup> That approach is summed up in the last paragraph of the quotation analysed above: "The Buddha is ever formless; how can there be two, [the Dharma-kāya and transformation body]?" But again that "one" implied assumes many forms: "Although the physical bodies of the Buddhas are different, they are one." Again, "One Buddha has no form that he can not possess. Hence, [it is said that] they are all the same."<sup>156</sup> [Tao-sheng connects the physical body with the

Buddha's response to the need of beings. As he puts it:

The physical body is in existence as his external response. It comes from the "unobstructed knowledge." Yet the "unobstructed" knowledge has no physical body.<sup>157</sup>

As he puts it in the CSPS, "The Buddha in the form body comes into existence invariably in response to [the need of beings]. He has no fixed real form" (409d). Its substance being incorporeal, the Dharma-kāya is identifiable by correspondingly abstract knowledge. It is not an object (viṣaya) in the ordinary sense, but something that requires a dark, mystical perception. Object and knowledge in this case are so closely correlated that it is hardly necessary or even possible to distinguish them. Li, the term for the ultimate principle of reality, often represents what is to be perceived or known. Tao-sheng declares: "The Buddha is the substance (t'i) of knowing li and transcends and surpasses the territories [of the three realms]".<sup>158</sup>

As for the grounds for the premise of formlessness, Tao-sheng attempts to tackle them squarely in a logical analysis elsewhere in the CVS:

The Buddha, incarnated as a human being is nothing more than the composite of the five aggregates (skandhas). If it is [assumed to be] existent, then it follows that the form (or physical body) is identical with the Buddha. If the form is not identical with the Buddha, then it follows that there is the Buddha outside the form. The Buddha being outside the form can further be considered in three categories: the Buddha existent in the form, the form existent in the Buddha, and the form belonging to the Buddha. In case the form is

identical with the Buddha, it does not follow that [the Buddha] is not dependent upon the four [other aggregates][to reincarnate]. In case the Buddha exists outside form, it does not follow that [the Buddha] is dependent upon form. In case the Buddha is found in the midst of the form, the Buddha would be impermanent. In case the form is found in the midst of the Buddha, then the Buddha would have divisions. In case the form belongs to the Buddha, the form would not be subject to change [which would be against its nature].<sup>159</sup>

Hence, the Buddha in the sense of the Dharma-kāya, has in no way any connection whatsoever with the form, which technically accounts for one of the five aggregates that make up the human beings in its anatomy.

What has been brought out in the above analysis is that Tao-sheng's argument for the theme is consistent with what one may hypothesize as the monistic absolutism which appears to be dominant throughout his writings. Itano Chōhachi aptly characterizes Tao-sheng's line of thought as "the monistic perspective of the absolute nonbeing (wu)".<sup>160</sup> Nonbeing symbolizes not only, like the Buddhist term emptiness (k'ung/sūnyatā), negation of self-existence (svabhāva) of things or concepts, but also something original or the ultimate substratum. For the first case, we can mention as an example in Tao-sheng's vocabulary the word wu-hsiang, "the markless" or "without external mark". For the latter implication, we can speak of the antonym of wu-hsiang, shih-hsiang 實相, "the real", or "the real mark". The frame of each implication may be traced to Chu Fa-t'ai, Tao-



sheng's first mentor, who was the theorizer of the doctrine of the original nonbeing (fen-wu i 本無義), listed first in so-called "six houses and seven schools", in connection with the interpretation of the Prajñā-pāramitā doctrine.<sup>161</sup> The position is believed to have been shared by Tao-an, Fa-t'ai's fellow.<sup>162</sup> Their understanding wu in conjunction with the concept of "emptiness" can be contradistinguished with the conception by Seng-chao, representative of the new breed of the Prajñā-pāramitā interpreters through Kumārajīva, who were more faithful to the Mādhyamika texts. Wu, as conceived by Seng-chao is largely used in the sense of the antipode of yu or existence, whereas wu was taken by the earlier interpreters as something fundamental, transcending the phenomena and the antithesis of being and nonbeing.<sup>163</sup> The two connotations apparently made their way into Tao-sheng naturally as the one who passed through two lineages of interpretation during the stage of his education under the masters. The positive element of the conception Tao-sheng inherited from the earlier master must have been reinforced through two channels with which the thought of Tao-sheng was connected: from the Chinese side, the Neo-Taoist Wang Pi's metaphysics strongly tinged with monistic undertone, and from the Buddhist side, the Nirvāṇa Sūtra which encompasses the idea of the true self and the Womb of the Thus Come One (Tathāgatagarbha). Tao-sheng was portrayed by the historians

as the one who succeeded in tactfully harmonizing "the genuine 'emptiness' and the mysterious 'existence'" (Chen-k'ung miao-yu), "emptiness" referring to the doctrine associated with the Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras and "mysterious existence" to what the Lotus and Nirvāṇa Sūtra stand for.<sup>164</sup> The import of the ultimately real as a facade of wu finds expression in some of the terms Tao-sheng frequently uses, such as li, emptiness, Dharma (fa), Dharma-nature, the foundational (pen), One, the ultimate (chi), and Tao, the signless (wu-hsiang/animitta).

#### d. On the Two Truths

The concept of the two truths, worldly or conventional (saṃvṛti-satya) and the supreme or ultimate (paramārthas.), was also one of the common subjects much talked about in connection with diverse Mahāyāna sūtras.<sup>165</sup> Tao-sheng chose to tackle the topic, which is listed incidentally ahead of other "writings" in the biography (KSC) perhaps because structurally it could address well his metaphysical frame of thinking as characterized above.

Tao-sheng's view on the question may be found in the CNS as almost the only substantial source available. He did not fail to notice the part of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra touching on the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism. The position of the sūtra expressed in Chapter 6 coincides in essence with Tao-sheng's own. In the sūtra the Buddha recognizes only one

truth, the supreme, as the real, which the conventional truth as an expedient means is subjugated to and finally identified with.

Tao-sheng in total agreement with the sūtra declares:

"If the worldly truth is identified with [the truth of] the supreme meaning. There is only the supreme meaning. There is no worldly truth."<sup>166</sup>

He substantiates that premise:

Those who are deluded all take what they are deluded about as real. We call it the worldly truth. Although we refer to it as the worldly truth, it does not follow that there is the real that is different from it. Hence it is the [truth of] ultimate meaning. The ultimate truth never changes the worldly truth.<sup>167</sup>

Why, then, the need for talking of the double truth for the single truth? Here comes the notion of expedient device:

Li as mentioned is only one without the second. [The Buddha] speaks of it in terms of two [truths] as the means in expediency and to follow the convention.<sup>168</sup>

The recognition of the conventional truth (su 俗) presupposes the existence of the higher truth. The bifurcation of the two truths, referred to as tao and su as found in the contemporary vocabulary of the Buddhist circle, represents the social and philosophico-religious perception of the sage which Tao-sheng uniquely felt it necessary to be rectified. In the very beginning of the CSPS Tao-sheng deplores such a prevailing tendency to the effect that those who seriously approach and tackle the profound, mysterious words of the

Sage are few whereas those who superficially fondle with the words are many, ending with the lament: "Is it not the case of the sacred (Tao) and the profane (su) in opposition?" (396d) The phrase "Tao as opposed to su" in different variations was in fact an idiom in vogue in the period, found in many contemporary writings,<sup>169</sup> indicating that how the two orders were to be ideally related was at issue. Tao-sheng's ideal was to harmonize or rather unify the two from the standpoint of the religious.

For a different view in contrast with Tao-sheng's, we can cite Hui-yüan. He vehemently defended the differentiation of the two value-systems, religious and secular, the former being superior to the latter.<sup>170</sup> That point of view is expressed in his writing, "A priest does not bow down before a king."<sup>171</sup> In contrast, according to Itano Chōhachi, Tao-sheng rejects such dualism, which is demonstrated in his doctrine of "sudden enlightenment".<sup>172</sup> Not just that writing, but also Tao-sheng's other writings or theses can be illuminated in that perspective.

Then, more specifically, how are enlightenment and the "truth" interrelated? The truth that can be realized only through enlightenment is primary, real and absolute, while the worldly truth for the unenlightened or deluded is secondary, temporary, and relative. Tao-sheng writes:

Because there is delusion that there are "many" [realities], it is called the worldly truth;

because there is comprehension that there are not "many" [realities] it is called the [truth of] supreme meaning. Things near and far [in the relative realm] is the worldly truth; attaining to the real is [the truth] of the supreme meaning. Because one comprehends and sees [the reality], we call it [the truth of] the supreme meaning. What one is deluded about is the worldly truth.<sup>173</sup>

That the two truths are related to the enlightened and the unenlightened is also implicit in the following:

Hence, the one whose letters and words are in accord with li is the Buddha. When [one's letters and words] are discordant [with li], one is an ordinary man. All that is related to the Buddha is true and real. All that is related to an ordinary man is the conventional truth.<sup>174</sup>

Li symbolizes the object of direct self-realization, or enlightenment constituting "truth" and what is real. "Truth" requires empirical verification and investigation of the real. As Tao-sheng puts it, "Li should be verified and realized. This is thus called "truth". "Truth" denotes investigating what is real. Hence it is said as real.<sup>175</sup> Thus the criterion is again illustrated in the quotation of Tao-sheng by Chün-cheng (of T'ang) probably from Tao-sheng's writing in question, which reads:

The Dharma-Master Chu Tao-sheng says: The things are necessarily caused and conditioned, without self-nature (svabhāva). Hence they are not existent. They arise in accordance with cause and conditions. Hence they are not nonexistent. Being

not existent and not nonexistent both clarify the Dharma to be real. Being real, it is referred to as "true" (or supreme). No error, hence it is called "truth". Contradicting what is "true", it is called "conventional". Not "true", hence it is not "truth". Therefore what is unreal and what is real are relative to each other, and the designations of "true (Supreme)" and "conventional" [truths] are produced.<sup>176</sup>

Here Tao-sheng seems to suggest that the conventional as such does not constitute "truth", but the latter is qualified by the former to compose conventional truth as one term, whereas in the case of the real (or supreme) truth the two words match naturally with each other in their true senses.

The supremacy of the absolute domain over the relative, nonetheless, does not abrogate the raison d'être and value of the worldly truth for the enlightened. That is so, not only in the sense that li as the symbol of the final reality unites and conserves the two domains, but also in the sense that it represents an essential means in expediency for the sake of the beings. As Sangharakshita puts it, "only by means of the conventional truth could the absolute truth be realized; the one was the stepping-stone to the other."<sup>177</sup> As cited previously, Tao-sheng clarifies: "mahāyānistic enlightenment consists originally in not discarding what is near, the realm of birth-and-death (saṃsāra), to seek it in the far." That Nirvāṇa is not to be sought apart from the saṃsāra is a Mahāyāna principle: the Mādhyamika Buddhists arrive at identification of the two by way of the principle

of "emptiness". In light of this and the fact that Tao-sheng does not depart from the general tenor of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra in respect of the conception, it may be concluded that, as far as the notion of two truths is concerned, Tao-sheng remains a Mahāyānist more than anything else though the metaphysical structure behind the argument is shared, and probably reinforced, by the Neo-Taoist philosophy.

E. Tao-sheng's Influence and the Impact of his Doctrines

The spectrum of Tao-sheng's scholarly interest, exhibited throughout his life via his expository essays and commentaries, was so vast in terms of the themes and sūtras involved that his line of thinking or doctrines cannot easily be classified in a particular category. Tao-sheng's orientation remained largely philosophical and intellectual, yet still involved the question of salvation; but his interest was not religious in the sense of a system with clearly defined programs, practices and organization. At that time it was too early for any contemporary Chinese Buddhist to consciously chart his way with an eye to the formation of a school or institutionalized following. Tao-sheng was at least one century ahead of any such movement, for it was not until the 6th century that any "school" in the true sense began to appear on the Chinese scene.<sup>178</sup> Although some experimentation in doctrines and practices may have been

advocated, the systematization of schools was a later phenomenon. Understandably some sectarians tended to trace their lines to the past as far back as possible.<sup>179</sup> But except those of Indian origin, such as the Chinese Mādhyamika or the San-lun school in which Kumārajīva and Seng-chao figured prominently, connections often sound arbitrary and historically tenuous. After the period of acceptance and growth, Buddhist study and practice was ramified into different views leading to various schools giving emphasis to various scriptures. As the tendency to adhere to specialized doctrines and texts swept the land, the Chinese Buddhists were expected to belong to a certain school or line of tradition. In this respect, Tao-sheng's influence can be measured along the lineages of five schools. We will identify the traces and influence of the doctrines Tao-sheng advocated in the thoughts of other monks primarily in accordance with the themes outlined in the preceding section.

## 1. The Doctrine of Sudden Enlightenment

### a. The Contemporary and Following Period

With so many problematic interpretations and ideas which often seemed revolutionary and heretical to his contemporaries, Tao-sheng was certainly a controversial theoretician and debater. The impact of his style of thinking must have been felt in the contemporary scene. The controversy



over the process of enlightenment especially spawned a series of debates and yielded some literature both pro and con in the course of the contemporary period and for some time to come. There is, however, no record of any eminent figure in the clerical circle who argued and wrote in favor of Tao-sheng's theory exactly as it was.

Tao-sheng alone was listed as the champion of "great subitism" while many eminent masters--including his contemporaries Seng-chao and Kumārajīva and earlier figures like Chih-tun (314-366) and Tao-an (312-385)--advocated "small subitism", the distinction between "great" and "small" being based on which stage (bhūmi), i.e. the 10th or the 7th, was considered the critical point of enlightenment.<sup>180</sup> This suggests that Tao-sheng's position on the matter was unique and that the theory represented a fresh, revolutionary perception of the existing tradition. Yet there was at least one contemporary work supporting the sudden enlightenment view, the Pien-tsung lun compiled by Hsieh Ling-yün, but the arguments and the terminology used are not identical with those of Tao-sheng.

There were reportedly at least two polemical writings arguing against Tao-sheng's view, attesting to a strong opposition in the established church and thus to the range of impact Tao-sheng's theory registered. One is "In arguing for gradual enlightenment" (Chien-wu lun 漸悟論) by Hui-kuan

(d. 446), the chief master opponent, who accompanied Tao-sheng to Kumārajīva in 405 and was to become, along with Tao-sheng, one of the four "wisest" disciples. The other work is "In arguing that illumination is gradual" (Ming-chien lun 明漸論) by T'an Wu-ch'eng (ca. 383-446),<sup>181</sup> also a disciple of Kumārajīva, one of 33 or 35 "greats". These are lost now, but the gist of Hui-kuan's argument is known to have laid focus on the individual difference in the capacity for enlightenment, using the analogy of climbing a mountain peak.<sup>182</sup>

The line of argument in favor of the opposing view is partially documented in some other writings including part of Seng-chao's essays, namely Part IV ("Nirvāṇa has no name"), chs. 8 to 13.<sup>183</sup> Scholars are divided on the question as to whether this part of Seng-chao's work is authentic.<sup>184</sup> If we follow Itano and place the date of Tao-sheng's argumentation somewhere between 409 and 414, it is possible that Seng-chao, probably alive until 414, was drawn into the dispute as were Hui-kuan and T'an. The document nevertheless testifies to the extent of the controversy, sparked by Tao-sheng, in the contemporary circle and beyond.

Along with the concept of Buddha-nature the doctrine of instantaneous illumination clearly remained a topic of intense ongoing discussion after Tao-sheng. Yet his view suffered some setbacks in prevailing over the opposite view

partly because Hui-kuan (d. 446), the master and spokesman of the gradualist camp, outlived Tao-sheng by some twelve years, effectively attacking the subitist position which now became vulnerable since its originator was gone. But the theory continued to find its proponents at least for the balance of the century. Some of Tao-sheng's own disciples and junior contemporaries defended and expounded his position. They include Pao-lin (d. ca. 453) and his disciple Fa-yao (d. ca. 480), and a certain Hui-sheng, all at the Lung-kuang ssu, where Tao-sheng sojourned during 419-428 or 429.<sup>184</sup> And there were other specialists in the doctrine besides these in the same line of transmission. The King Wen of the (Liu) Sung dynasty took a keen interest in the theory and was impressed by Fa-yüan (409-489) and Tao-yu (ca. 405-475) as they spelled out Tao-sheng's doctrine. The king's successor, the Emperor Hsiao-wu, also had high regard for Tao-yu and his disciple Fa-tzu (or Tao-tzu), considering them the "orthodox line" of Tao-sheng's school.

In the midst of the continuing interest among the clergy and the nobility<sup>186</sup> in Tao-sheng's doctrine of sudden enlightenment and its nemesis, gradualism, the pattern of Tao-sheng's thought as a whole was personified in the lay scholar Liu-ch'iu (436-495). Although temporally far removed from Tao-sheng, Liu-ch'iu's works, which were produced after he retired at the age of 32 (468) to devote himself to the

study of Buddhism, turned out to be remarkably similar in subject matter and even methodology to Tao-sheng's. He "expounded the meaning of [the premises] that good [deed] does not entail reward and that one achieves Buddhahood through sudden enlightenment, wrote commentaries to the Saddharmapundarīka and others, and lectured on the Nirvāṇa, the large and small [Prajñāpāramitā] Sūtras, and so on",<sup>187</sup> all of which are now lost. He discusses the issue of enlightenment from the subitist perspective in his preface to Wu-liang i ching 無量義經 ("The Sūtra of Immeasurable Meaning").<sup>188</sup> The sūtra itself is a peculiar product believed to be a counterfeit made during the Liu Sung period (420-479) against the background of the Lotus Sūtra and Tao-sheng's theory of enlightenment; the reason for the connection with the latter is that its theme is the fast attainment of Buddhahood.<sup>189</sup> Again we see yet another of the indelible marks of Tao-sheng's impact resonant throughout the fifth century.

Tao-sheng's influence may be detected not only in individual thinkers but also in several schools, to which we now turn.

#### b. Tao-sheng's Doctrine and the Ch'an School

Attempts have been made by some modern historians to place Tao-sheng in the lineage of the Ch'an School. Hu Shih, for instance, takes him as "the founder" of the school.<sup>190</sup>

However, in the absence of historical evidence of the claim made by the Ch'an Buddhists, it may be safe to consider Tao-sheng at best a theoretical forerunner of the Ch'an.<sup>191</sup> The source of possible linkage available through internal evidence is the doctrine of sudden enlightenment. But if we take into consideration the fact that the concept of "sudden" did not come into the scene in the Ch'an history until the latter half of the seventh century when the controversy arose between the northern and southern factions led by Shen-hsiu (606-706) and Hui-neng (638-713) respectively, then there would be an almost unbridgeable temporal hiatus between Tao-sheng and the doctrinally parallel faction advocated by Hui-neng or his disciple, Shen-hui (668-760), who may have been behind the creation of the lineage in favor of the "sudden" sect.<sup>192</sup> The gap also includes the apparently unaccountable period between Tao-sheng and the alleged beginning of the school, around 520 at the earliest, when the legendary founder Bodhidharma (470-534) is said to have arrived in China during the reign of Wu-ti (reigned 502-550) of the Liang Dynasty.

Aside from the question of any historically traceable thread of connection, as the attempts to trace and establish some continuity between the two systems on the theoretical side, one may argue, in agreement with Ui Hakuju, that there is a fundamental, qualitative difference in approach between

Tao-sheng and the Ch'an: the former is theoretical while the latter is practical.<sup>193</sup> Tao-sheng's approach may be termed noetic or cognitive while the Ch'an's is intuitive. Nevertheless, what Tao-sheng means by intellectual knowledge in its true and religious sense may not differ essentially from intuitive wisdom (prajñā) after all. Similarly, suddenness as intended by Tao-sheng may not differ in substance from suprasensory perception as implied by the Ch'an. And the Ch'an practice can also be seen as an "intellectualistic approach".<sup>194</sup> The general approach adopted by Shen-hui, the mastermind behind the successful campaign to establish "the school of Sudden Awakening or Enlightenment" (Tun-tsung) in the 7th century, finds expression in the dictum: "The one word 'knowledge' (or cognition) is the gateway to all mysteries."<sup>195</sup>

One can perceive the characteristic of such noetic orientation not only in Shen-hui but also in Bodhidharma who spoke of "entering [the absolute realm] by means of li" (li-ju 理入) as opposed to "entering by means of practice" (hsing-ju 行入).<sup>196</sup> The approach based on the absolute dimension over and above the ethical one is discernable also in the words exchanged between Bodhidharma and Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty; to the latter's question if there was any merit in his good deeds to further the cause of Buddhism, the Bodhidharma said flatly: "none!"<sup>197</sup> What this episode tells

is exactly identical with Tao-sheng's proposition that a "good deed does not entail retribution", suggesting an insurmountable gap between two realms, the relative and the absolute, or the conventional and the religious.<sup>198</sup>

The two systems share many expressions describing the awakening per se, including two typical words that are used throughout the history of Ch'an: "sudden" (tun) and "[penetrating] all of a sudden (open and clear)" (huo-jan 豁然),<sup>199</sup> and the qualifying attributes such as "great"<sup>200</sup> and "immediate" (pien 便).<sup>201</sup> The locus classicus of these words for the Ch'an is the Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch, the basic "sūtra" of the Sudden Enlightenment Sect which shows more similarities with Tao-sheng in phraseology and ideology, as typified in the passage: ". . . ignorant people cannot understand completely. Although [the Buddha's] speeches are made in myriad ways, they are all congruous with li (principle) and ends up becoming one ('return to One')" (sec. 36 of the Tun-huang version). More significantly, the idea of Buddha-nature, with its variants: "nature" (hsing), "self-nature" (tzu-hsing 自性), and "original nature" (pen-hsing 本性), resounds throughout the scripture (sec. 3 et passim). Indeed, if all variations are put together, the term "nature" (hsing) represents the single most recurrent concept in the text. It appears in the first meaningful statement by Hui-neng, the patriarch proper, who character-

istically rejects the idea of gradual cultivation advocated by Shen-hsiu (sec. 6): "Bodhi (enlightenment) originally has no tree . . . Buddha-nature is always pure and clean; where is there room for dust?" (sec. 8). Buddha-nature even constitutes the object or the content of sudden illumination. The pure nature exists in the midst of delusions (sec. 36). Its aspects are identical with or similar to those described by Tao-sheng whose position, as will be unfolded later in the course of the analysis of the text, is explicitly and implicitly expressed in both the commentary with which we are concerned and in other fragmentary writings.

In an enlarged version of the Platform Scripture edited by Tsung-pao in 1291 (T48.345-365), even the Nirvāṇa Sūtra is discussed with reference to the Buddha-nature and icchantika (349c3lff.). It adopts the same format of the very question raised by Tao-sheng for the first time. The notion is also characteristically incorporated in the Ch'an dictum "to [experientially] see the nature and become a Buddha". The two acts presented here may be related as cause and effect or as the emphatic expression of one and the same process in which each entails the other. In fact, the close interrelationship of the process of enlightenment and the Buddha-nature<sup>202</sup> is suggested in the title of Tao-sheng's writing: "Buddha-nature is something that will be manifested in the future [when one becomes a Buddha] (Fo-hsing tang-yu



lun)."

It is worth noting that one of the longer sections (42 of the Tun-huang version) in the Ch'an text is devoted to the Lotus. There the main themes and key terms are appropriately drawn out. These include references to the [One] Buddha-Vehicle, three vehicles that serve as the expedient means for the deluded, and the four stages or "gates" (T9.7a) used to explain the Buddha's purpose for coming into the world, namely, the "opening", "demonstrating", "realizing" (wu) and "entering" into his wisdom and insight. These concepts, moreover, are peculiarly combined with the notion of "to practice with the mind". The relevance of the doctrine to the Lotus is also discernable in the case of Tao-sheng in both ways, through the commentary and the sūtra itself. Some scholars have recognized the CSPS as a source or a depository of Tao-sheng's theory.<sup>203</sup> Ocho, for instance, identifies the Lotus and the Daśa-bhūmika Sūtra through their doctrines as the causes behind Tao-sheng's vigorous argument for the suddenness of enlightenment.<sup>204</sup> The concept of One Vehicle as the ultimate principle represented in the Lotus and the doctrine of stages originated in the other sūtra were at issue in those days; this is reflected in ongoing debates on the question that Tao-sheng initiated. We find not only the former concept appearing recurrently but also the frequent occurrence of the

latter in the CSPS. Here the theme of the fourfold purpose of the Buddha's appearance in the sahā world was also discussed in terms of stages. This discussion ends with the statement that "what a practitioner takes as one enlightenment consists, [in analysis], of these four meanings" (400b).<sup>205</sup>

In general, however, the Platform Scripture is a repository of various doctrines and gives references to their sources. The sūtras mentioned in the smaller version (Tun-huang edition) include (besides those mentioned) the Diamond Sūtra (Vajracchedikā), which belongs to the Prajñāpāramitā literature, the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra, which is rooted in the Yogācāra doctrine of consciousness-only, and the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa, a certain Bodhisattva-vinaya Sūtra. Of these the Diamond is exalted and cited more than the others. To a lesser degree, the Vimalakīrti, which can be regarded as a Mādhyamika-related text, is also frequently quoted. As a matter of fact, the scripture calls itself a Mahā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra. Thereby the text indicates an attempt to trace the theoretical basis of meditational practice to the doctrine of emptiness (śūnyatā). In this context one can still relate the Ch'an tradition to Tao-sheng, since he belonged to the circle of Kumārajīva who translated and lectured on the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures more than on any other line of texts.

Nonetheless the Platform Scripture is ideologically far too complex to be associated with a particular line of tradition. For instance, the emphasis of mind or thought (hsin) taken not only in the negative sense as in "no-thought" but also in a positive sense can be related to the Vijñānavāda or Yogācāra doctrine.<sup>206</sup> With the two major doctrines of Mahāyāna (and others) represented, the scripture is essentially a product of an historical development that combines and synthesizes many sources. Underlying the sudden-enlightenment approach, for example, lies a recognition of the two alternatives (namely, gradual and sudden) due to differences in individual faculties (sec. 39). This indicates nonetheless that the Platform Scripture stands in the line of tradition started by Tao-sheng that gradually developed syncretic tendencies.<sup>207</sup>

In light of the diverse factors considered above, one may not deny that the legacy of Tao-sheng or the tradition initiated by Tao-sheng was carried over to the Ch'an tradition one way or another as one of the original sources contributing to its systematization and development. Even if the idea of suddenness alone is considered, Tao-sheng's contribution and influence could be as great as any other's. If the connection is interpreted as indirect, then Tao-sheng planted a seed in uncultivated soil, which was subsequently nurtured by the Ch'an Buddhists.

The relation of Tao-sheng and the Ch'an is defined in a similar way by Ōchō. In an article dealing with Tao-sheng's doctrine as the source of the Ch'an ideology, he traces the continuity of the tradition with regard to the three points of contact.<sup>208</sup> First, he argues that Tao-sheng's stress on "forgetting the symbols to get hold of the ideas", a well-known notion of the period that originated in the Taoist and Neo-Taoist texts, set an early model for the Ch'an whose motto was "separate transmission outside of the [written] teachings and no setting-up of words and letters". Second, Ōchō claims that Tao-sheng set forth for the first time the question of a sudden and gradual process, which was also to be applied to the classification of teaching (p'an-chiao). Third, Ōchō proposes that the concept of chi, suggesting the triggering mechanism inherent in man, was first introduced into the Buddhist vocabulary by Tao-sheng, finding a significant place in the Ch'an glossary as well as in the terminologies of Fa-yün (467-529), the author of an extensive commentary on the Lotus, Chih-i, the T'ien-t'ai master, and Shan-tao (613-681), the Pure Land master.

Such a way of interpretation presupposes the rejection of Ui Hakuju's contention that the Ch'an and Tao-sheng were of different orientation (the first being practical and the latter being theoretical), and consequently incompatible. Ui thereby presumes two premises: (1) there

is no connection whatsoever between theory and practice, and (2) Tao-sheng was merely a theoretician with no religious practice, while the Ch'an practitioner had no theory to support his. But those assumptions are not valid. In the Buddhist scene, theory and practice are closely interrelated: the one entails the other. The Buddha warned against indulging in metaphysical speculation and insisted that truths should be empirically verified in practice. The same holds true of other derivative theories of the Indian Buddhists. There is no reason to believe that Tao-sheng departed from that tradition. The Ch'an practitioners belonged to this tradition as well. The difference in orientation, if any, may not imply the discrepancy in practical methodology for salvation in essence. Reduction to one aspect or another thus does not do full justice either to the Ch'an or to Tao-sheng. Indeed there is no evidence that Tao-sheng was not a mystic. As a matter of fact, as Ōchō points out, he looked beyond the symbols and words to the ineffable mystical reality.

While it cannot be said that Ch'an practice derives directly from the doctrines of Tao-sheng, it is likely that Tao-sheng had a seminal influence on Ch'an ideology and practice.

If fact, while it may be said that the concept saw its revival in the 7th century in Hui-neng or his disciple,

Shen-hui, the influence of Tao-sheng's thought was still felt beyond the date of the Platform Scripture. Tao-sheng is cited frequently as much as Seng-chao in many Ch'an works produced during and after the T'ang era (618-907).<sup>209</sup>

c. Tao-sheng's Doctrine and the Hua-yen School

The influence or impact, direct and indirect, of Tao-sheng's doctrine on the Hua-yen philosophy can be examined in three ways: through the classification of teachings the concept of li, and the idea of instantaneous enlightenment itself.

First of all, it has been pointed out that Tao-sheng was clearly the first to attempt to account for and schematize the Buddha's apparently doctrinally diverse teachings that are found in the many distinct, if not conflicting, scriptures. The most representative of the Chinese Buddhist schools, namely, the T'ien-t'ai and the Hua-yen, developed their own systems of classifying the Buddha's teachings. The Hua-yen system can be regarded as a variant of the T'ien-t'ai's, because the latter historically preceded the Hua-yen. The T'ien-t'ai, in turn, was structurally modelled after Hui-kuan's p'an-chiao. As will be substantiated later (in our discussion of the T'ien-t'ai School), Hui-kuan's fundamental division of the teachings into two, that is, "sudden" and "gradual"--a distinction that subsequently found its way into

the other two systems--originated by all accounts in none other than Tao-sheng's doctrine. One can say, therefore, that in terms of idea and structure, the whole of the p'an-chiao system owes its origin to Tao-sheng. Furthermore, in Hui-kuan's and the T'ien-t'ai's models, the "sudden" method of teaching refers to the Hua-yen Sūtra. It was suggested that the Buddha first put forward the Hua-yen Sūtra but since it turned out to be too difficult for beings to comprehend, he moved to a gradual process of teaching, enunciating other sūtras.

Here one may be tempted to distinguish teaching from enlightenment as such. But it has become clear that the difference in capacity for enlightenment to the presented truth is a factor that determines and dictates the mode and speed of teaching. The fact of individual differences, as stated earlier, was recognized by Hui-kuan, and Tao-sheng repeatedly makes the same point in the CSPS, in agreement with the Lotus, suggesting differences between "sharp" and "dull" faculties. The interconnection is evident in the Platform Sūtra, the basic "sudden enlightenment" text of the Ch'an, where the teaching is repeatedly referred to as the "Sudden Doctrine (or Teaching)" (sects. 29, 35, 53 et passim). Nevertheless, in the Hua-yen's p'an-chiao, the "sudden" teaching refers to the Vimalakirti and the Ch'an doctrine while the Hua-yen Sūtra represents the fifth and final

"round" (or perfect) doctrine, i.e. the position taken by the Lotus in the T'ien-t'ai system. The Hua-yen represents "One Vehicle" (Ekayāna) while the "three vehicles" refers to Hīnayāna, the gradual, and the sudden. The relationship of the One and the three is defined in a two-fold way: (a) "identical" and "distinct", that is, "identical" in the sense that "One" is inclusive of "three"; and (b) "distinct" in the sense that "One" is real whereas "three" are temporary.<sup>210</sup> Although the three vehicles refer to different groups, this pattern is similar to Tao-sheng's interpretation of the theme of the Lotus in the CSPS as well as the T'ien-t'ai's, which probably inherited Tao-sheng's interpretation.

As to the second point of contact, namely, the concept of li, suffice it to say that li as conceived by the Hua-yen Buddhists--particularly as the key term excavated in the course of defining the Dharma-realm (dhātu)--represents the culmination of the tradition of promoting li as the major philosophical term in Chinese Buddhism. Tao-sheng contributed more to this trend than any other thinker. In Tao-sheng's glossary, li is instilled with a wide range of exegetical and metaphysical implications, including a connotation compatible with the "totalistic"<sup>211</sup> cosmology which characterizes the Hua-yen philosophy. One can also assume that the ontological li, when translated epistemologically, may denote a corresponding mode of enlightenment, namely,



instantaneity.

These points can be verified in Ch'eng-kuan's (738-839) frame of thinking. The fourth patriarch of the school, Ch'eng-kuan purified and consolidated the Hua-yen tradition, giving it yet a new dimension. In his writings one can find the unmistakable trace of Tao-sheng's influence. In Kamata Shigeo's analysis,<sup>212</sup> Ch'eng-kuan departed from his predecessors by putting more stress on the Dharma-dhātu of the noumenon-phenomena (li-shih) interpenetration, the third of the fourfold universal reality, than that of phenomena-phenomena (shih-shih) interpenetration or the final fourth. The li in this context bears some similarities to li as established by Tao-sheng. Li, for example, is posited as indivisible.<sup>213</sup> Ch'eng-kuan recognizes the importance of realizing "One" li, since he follows Tao-sheng's soteriology, actually quoting Tao-sheng's words.<sup>214</sup> Tao-sheng's relativistic view on the relationship of the two truths, real (paramārtha) and conventional (saṃvṛti), lends support to Ch'eng-kuan's interpretation of the question; they share the undifferentiated aspect of the absolute realm.<sup>215</sup> The shared ontological understanding of li naturally leads to the identical position on the epistemic mode of enlightenment. He quotes Tao-sheng's statement in that regard adding his own approving remarks.<sup>216</sup> Ch'eng-kuan also cites Tao-sheng's other works, including the commentaries on the Nirvāṇa,

Vimalakīrti and Lotus in order to substantiate his own views.

Conversely, one may ask whether there was any influence of the Hua-yen Sūtra on Tao-sheng's thought, particularly since the Hua-yen (Avatamsaka) Sūtra (60 chüan) was translated by Buddhahadra (359-429) during the period 418-421 in none other than Chien-k'ang, where Tao-sheng then resided.<sup>217</sup> It is possible that he was exposed to the text, but there is no indication that the sūtra exercised any influence upon him. It is conceivable, for instance, that Tao-sheng may have encountered the idea of individual differences in intelligence and faculty in the sūtra; but this was not new to him for he had already encountered it in the Lotus during his youth. Nor is there room for the Hua-yen Sūtra in Tao-sheng's division of the Buddha's teaching career, as there is in other p'an-chiao models including that of his contemporary, Hui-kuan.<sup>218</sup>

## 2. The Doctrine of Buddha-nature

The study and exegesis of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra continued during the 4th century and into the turn of the 5th, largely due to Tao-sheng's pioneer scholarly interest in the study of the text, and to the controversy over the related theory of Buddha-nature he initiated. This textual study did not evolve into a full-fledged system or "school" in the full sense of the term, and it was to become overshadowed by the development of other schools in the 6th century. Yet such a

continued interest in a specific text and its doctrine, without any missionary or Indian founder involved in the lineage, was almost unprecedented in China. In that respect, it may still deserve to be called a "school" (tsung 宗), and thus Tao-sheng stood very much in the forefront of the tradition of systematization or formation of the schools that would emerge more visibly in the centuries to come.

Tao-sheng was placed at the top of the list with reference to the exegetes of the sūtra and to the expounders of the theory of the Buddha-nature as well; he was first not just chronologically, but also as the initiator of the movement or tradition. In 509, upon the order of the Emperor Wu (reigned 502-550) of the Liang dynasty (502-557), Pao-liang (444-509) and/or Seng-lang collected various commentaries on the sūtra and compiled ten works, ranging from Tao-sheng's to Pao-liang's own commentary, into an anthology of 71 volumes.<sup>219</sup> The actual contents include the words of other monks too. This line of study in the South waned afterwards, giving way to and being absorbed into other sectarian movements. Yet the tradition continued in the north from the 6th century to the 7th, enlisting many eminent monks ranging from T'an-yen (516-588) to Fa-ch'ang (567-645).

Tao-sheng's theory of Buddha-nature also gave rise to diverse interpretations of the nature, typified at first by the original division of three "houses" or different

interpretations, later to be further divided into 10 or 11 interpretations.<sup>220</sup> Tao-sheng's position constitutes the first in both classifications. The scriptural source here is the Nirvāṇa Sūtra (ch. 12): "'I (atman)' means none other than Tathāgatagarbha (Womb of the Thus Come One). All sentient beings possess Buddha-nature and that is what 'I' precisely means."<sup>221</sup>

The basic issue for the three "houses" was whether sentient beings possess the Buddha-nature originally, at present, or in the future. The essence or substance (t'i) of Buddha-nature in other practical terms was also discussed. Tao-sheng defined it as "what the sentient beings are going to have [or realize as the fruit of cultivation and enlightenment]." His argument is believed to have been formulated in an essay bearing the title "Buddha-nature is [the property] one will acquire [in the future]". There are three more relevant texts: "Defining the meaning of Buddha-nature", "Explaining the proposition that a bodhisattva is likely to attain nirvāṇa at the first moment of thought upon arrival at the 8th stage (bhūmi)", and "Thirty-six questions in the Nirvāṇa [Sūtra] (or on nirvāṇa)". Dharmakshema, the master of the second interpretation and translator of the large version of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra (in 40 rolls, T.12, nr. 374), identifies the substance of Buddha-nature with what the beings originally had, the Middle Path (Madhyamā-pratipad)

and Suchness (Bhutatahata). The third view, held by Fa-yao (ca. 400-475), was a middle position between the first two. Buddha-nature as the "right cause" (cheng-yin 正因) consists of the li for attaining Buddhahood already in the beings' possession. In the case of the ten viewpoints, the variations of descriptive terms identified with Buddha-nature include the li of the Buddha, true spirit, pleasure principle, sentient beings, storehouse (ālaya) consciousness, or pure consciousness (amala-vijñāna). The last two were associated with the masters of the Ti-lun (Dashabhūmi) School (6th cent.), the predecessor of the Hua-yen (Avataṃsaka) School (7th cent.), and She-lun (Mahāyāna-saṃparigraha) (6th cent.), the predecessor of the Fa-hsiang (Vijñāptimātratā) School (7th cent.). All those facts indicate that Tao-sheng's shadow extended beyond both the contemporary century and the Nirvāṇa School. As a matter of fact, the Nirvāṇa School is considered as a forerunner of the T'ien-t'ai School, as it became absorbed into the latter.

The universality of the Buddha-nature came to be incorporated into the system of Hua-yen Buddhism, too.<sup>222</sup> It also permeated the Ch'an literature. As pointed out earlier, the Platform Sūtra teems with the notion using several variants of the term per se. The infiltration of the concept further along the tradition is typified in a story or riddle well known in the Ch'an circle. When asked on two different

occasions whether a dog also has the Buddha-nature, the Ch'an master Chao-chou (778-897) answered "no" (wu) once and "yes" at another time.<sup>223</sup>

### 3. Tao-sheng and Other Schools

#### a. Tao-sheng and the T'ien-t'ai School

Tao-sheng's connection with the T'ien-t'ai School can be viewed in two ways: (1) by way of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra and (2) by way of the Lotus Sūtra. As seen in the case of the Nirvāṇa, the relation may be considered in separate contexts. Yet the two sūtras can be illuminated in the general framework that supports the T'ien-t'ai system. They are lumped together in the schema of classification of teachings (p'an-chiao), a device used to accommodate and justify all the diverse sūtras attributed to or associated with the Buddha, and to give the two texts involved a proper place in the essentially chronological chart. In the category of the Five Periods the Nirvāṇa and the Lotus belong to the final period.<sup>224</sup> There is, of course, a subtle distinction between the two: the Lotus represents the ultimate "round" doctrine in the Buddha's teaching career, while the Nirvāṇa, taught simultaneously, represents a resumé of all other teachings expounded before, thereby taking a somewhat penultimate position supplementary and subsidiary to the Lotus.

In addition to his high regard for and exegesis of

the scriptures, Tao-sheng contributed to the development of the T'ien-t'ai School in two other ways with respect to the categorization. First, he is credited with the invention of one of the two earliest prototypes<sup>225</sup> of the p'an-chiao system. In the CSPA (396d), Tao-sheng puts forward the four Dharma-wheels representing the Buddha's teaching career: the good-and-pure, the expedient, the true and the residueless. Although Tao-sheng does not explicitly match any of the sūtras with the stages, the last two seem to suggest the Lotus and the Nirvāṇa in that order.<sup>226</sup> This order is in contrast with that of the p'an-chiao system of the T'ien-t'ai in which the two sūtras are both classified as the final period, with the Lotus implicitly accorded the more important place. If we recognize that the order holds both a chronological and a philosophical significance, as is certainly the case with the T'ien-t'ai and the Hua-yen, Tao-sheng's classification in which the Nirvāṇa represents the final stage makes him worthy of the name "founder" of the Nirvana School, if it ever existed. In the culminating stage of the Nirvāṇa the Buddha manifested "the eternally-abiding wondrous meaning" or reality. Yet, this may not necessarily mean that the Lotus period is less important, if we agree with Ōchō that the divisions can be regarded variously as referring not only to "(a) the order in which the Buddha preached his entire life's mission", but also to "(b) four

methods of preaching, depending upon the capacities of the listener and having nothing to do with chronology, and (c) the process by which the Buddha converts each individual."<sup>227</sup> The T'ien-t'ai schema, along with a similar schema in the Hua-yen school, represents an upshot of the development in the direction initially orientated by Tao-sheng.

The second way Tao-sheng contributed to the development of the T'ien-t'ai category has to do with the Eight Doctrines consisting of one set of four "transforming methods", and a set of four doctrines. The first two, gradual and sudden teachings, probably had their origin in Tao-sheng's pioneer theory of enlightenment.<sup>228</sup> His theory of sudden enlightenment initiated a long history of debate which became more heated as Hui-kuan, the principal adversary of the theory and Tao-sheng's colleague on Lu-shan and at Ch'ang-an, entered the scene with the theory of gradualism. He is recorded to have written a paper entitled "Discussion of Gradual Enlightenment". After some time, however, as the debates progressed, the tendency emerging from the controversy was to view the problem syncretically whereby the two elements were accommodated without contradiction.<sup>229</sup> The germ of that perspective, in deeper analysis, could be seen even in Tao-sheng and Hui-kuan. As will become clear later in the analysis of the text, the gradual process of realization is unmistakably obvious throughout the



commentary. And the division of the teaching itself implies nothing less than the gradual process. Similarly, behind Hui-kuan's theory and practice is a clear indication of an attitude of tolerance toward Tao-sheng's theory.<sup>230</sup> Hui-kuan in fact came up with a p'an-chiao scheme a little closer to the T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen models than Tao-sheng's. The two main branches of Hui-kuan's scheme are "gradual teaching" and "sudden teaching". The "sudden" refers to the Hua-yen Sūtra while the "gradual" encompasses other sūtras and doctrines including the Nirvāṇa and the Lotus.<sup>231</sup>

There are still further points of connection. For example, Tao-sheng speaks of "to converge and return" (hui-kuei 會歸 396d17) with implicit reference to the theme of the sūtra that the three vehicles as tentative devices give way to the final One Vehicle as the true goal. Tao-sheng interprets the theme as a kind of a dialectical process expressed by the term "wondrous" (miao), with a positive overtone of three "returning" (or organically "belonging to"), a notion harking back to the Taoist idea of "returning to the origin" (fan-pen).<sup>232</sup> In the T'ien-t'ai, it is paraphrased as "the three being converged to return to the One" (or unity of three in One) (hui-san-kuei-i).<sup>233</sup> The description of "three" as the "tentative" (ch'üan) and "One" as the real (shih), emphasized in the T'ien-t'ai philosophy in the pattern of "to lay the exigency (of three) open and

manifest the real" (k'ai-ch'üan hsien-shih 開權顯實) was already coined and used by Tao-sheng.<sup>234</sup> Besides those points of contact, Tao-sheng is frequently cited by Chih-i (538-597), the actual systematizer of the school, throughout his diverse commentaries on the Lotus.<sup>235</sup>

b. Tao-sheng and the San-lun School

Tao-sheng's connection with the San-lun ("Three Treatise") School, the Chinese Mādhyamika, can be treated historiographically as well as from the standpoint of internal, concrete evidence. In one old tradition,<sup>236</sup> Tao-sheng is listed as the second patriarch of the sect, after Kumārajīva as the founder, and that lineage reaches Seng-lang (d. ca. 615) and Chi-tsang (549-623), the two principal contributors to the establishment of the school proper called "New Three Treatise Sect". This record has been critically reviewed especially by some Chinese and Japanese scholars; some have come up with other names like Seng-chao and Seng-sung in the place of Tao-sheng.<sup>237</sup> After all, the earlier part of the genealogy claimed by a school tends to be an arbitrary creation made by some of the tradition-conscious Chinese Buddhists as evidenced in the one found in the Ch'an tradition, going all the way back to the Buddha and Mahākāśyapa.<sup>238</sup> In the case of the San-lun School, there was no transmission in either the tangible or esoteric form. In

light of these facts, as Robinson concludes, "under these conditions, though the study of the Three Treatises had not actually lapsed, it is rather misleading to speak of an Old Three Treatise Sect."<sup>239</sup>

The honor given to Tao-sheng, i.e. that of being chosen over fifteen to thirty-five prominent disciples of Kumārajīva to represent the tradition as the torch-bearer, suggests that Tao-sheng was still highly respected in the tradition as the personage of such a versatile mind capable of handling numerous subjects including the Mādhyamika doctrine.

There is no evidence that Tao-sheng intensely studied or actively promoted the texts constituting the "three treatises" as such, namely the Mādhyamika Śāstra, Dvādaśa nikāya Śāstra and Śata Śāstra. And his relatively brief stay at Ch'ang-an did not allow him to participate in the translation activities involving those and other related texts except one. Nonetheless, Tao-sheng managed to write a commentary on one of the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, the original source of the Mādhyamika doctrine. And earlier he probably participated in the lecture on the Tao-hsing Prajñāpāramitā given by his erstwhile master Chu Fa-t'ai. Thus there is no question that he was exposed to and familiar with the doctrine. More significantly, he wrote a work entitled "Discussion of the Two Truths" (Erh-ti lun), apparently dealing

with the concept closely associated with the Mādhyamika as demonstrated by the fact that Chi-tsang discusses the same topic in his exposition called "The Meaning of the Two Truths" (Erh-ti i) (3 volumes, T45, nr. 1854). Tao-sheng's writing is lost as is the commentary. However, the idea of his conception can be partly glimpsed in his commentary on the Nirvāṇa Sūtra, the fragments of which are preserved in the collection (TPNPCCC, T37. nr. 1763).<sup>240</sup> Although Tao-sheng's words may be too fragmentary and insubstantial to draw any coherent picture, there does not seem to be any point particularly at variance with Chi-tsang's views, though the latter present a far more complex framework involving three levels of double truth. Rather, at some points similarities are shown in what underlies their basic conceptions. At one point Tao-sheng says:

Li does not consist in two realities, yet there are two designations. As their marks (hsiang) exist, it does not follow that [li] presupposes two [realities]. As the marks do not exist, two thus are false.<sup>241</sup>

And Chi-tsang states:

However, it is not merely illusion that is to be discarded, for "reality" too does not (actually) exist. The reason is that reality exists only because originally there is illusion (i.e., only as the antithesis of illusion).<sup>242</sup>

Tao-sheng also identifies illusion (huo) with the worldly truth (saṃvṛti-satya).<sup>243</sup> Here he refers to the monistic nature of true reality (li), while Chi-tsang refers to the

Mādhyamika conceptions of "Emptiness" (śūnyatā) and Middle Path. But both attempt to arrive at the negation of bifurcated realities as the fundamental basis of agreement, hinting at the ultimate reality transcending the relativistic perspective. In the text Chi-tsang quotes many sources including the Nirvāṇa Sūtra,<sup>244</sup> also the source of Tao-sheng's view of the concept. In various places Chi-tsang frequently refers to Tao-sheng's statements,<sup>245</sup> as often as any contemporary of Tao-sheng including Seng-chao, who was perhaps a Sunyavadin.

## NOTES TO PART II

<sup>1</sup>I am referring to the Lao-tzu hua-hu ching (Sūtra on Lao-tzu's Conversion of the Barbarians) written, or rather forged, by Wang Fu at the turn of the 4th century A.D. For studies on this work, see Kamata Shigeo, Chūgoku Bukkyōshi, p. 44, note 3.

<sup>2</sup>Of Tao-sheng's contemporaries, Hui-yüan (334-416) and Seng-chao (374-414) are most typical. For Hui-yüan's case, see Arthur F. Wright, Buddhism in Chinese History, p. 46; Paul Demiéville, "La pénétration du Bouddhisme dans la tradition philosophique chinoise", Cahiers d'histoire mondiale, III(1956), 23-24.

<sup>3</sup>His brightness in conventional subjects prior to his conversion to Buddhism is suggested in his biography in the Kao-seng chuan, T50.366b20f.; and his eulogy by Hui-lin in T52.266alf.

<sup>4</sup>天下同歸而殊塗 in "Appended Remarks" (Hsi-ts'u chuan) pt. 2, ch. 5; tr. by Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, p. 268).

<sup>5</sup>See Hu Shih, "The Development of Zen Buddhism in China", The Chinese Social and Political Science Review, XV, nr. 4(1932), 484: "Tao-sheng was only the natural product of an age which . . . was one of Taoist revival."

<sup>6</sup>See T'ang Yung-t'ung, "On 'Ko-yi,' the Earliest Method by which Indian Buddhism and Chinese Thought were Synthesized," in W.R. Inge et. al., ed., Radhakrishnan, Comparative Studies in Philosophy, London, Allen and Unwin, 1951, pp. 276-286.

<sup>7</sup>See T52.9-16. For a discussion of the document from a different perspective, see Kenneth Ch'en, "Anti-Buddhist Propaganda during the Nan-ch'ao", Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 15(1952), p. 176f.

<sup>8</sup>See T52.225a.

<sup>9</sup>T52.225b2f.

<sup>10</sup>In the KHMC, vol. 23, T52.265c.

<sup>11</sup>Comparison of the Chinese and the "barbarian" traditions became a topic of ongoing discussion beyond the

time of Tao-sheng. In a writing squarely tackling the issue, called "On the Barbarians and Chinese" (I-hsia lun), written in 467, Ku-huan puts Confucius, Lao-tzu, and the Buddha in one identical category with regard to their same purpose. Yet, they are differentiated in their orientation and are in fact complementary to each other: Buddhism provides the method for destroying evils whereas Taoism is the technique for promoting good.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, Pien-tsung lun, T52.226c7.

<sup>13</sup>Lao-tzu i, vol. 3, b/5:3; tr. by Rump/Chan, Commentary on the Lao Tzu by Wang Pi, p. 112.

<sup>14</sup>For the Taoist aspect, see Holmes Welch, Taoism, p. 89.

<sup>15</sup>In the Hung-ming chi, vol. 13 (T52.86a-89a) translated in E. Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 164-175.

<sup>16</sup>Actually the concept and the word itself were carried to them by the Nirvāna Sūtra, a predominant subject of extensive study of the day, which, as Tao-sheng and other Chinese Buddhists rightly found out, puts forward the eternal reality and the true self (T12.389c14f.) as the culminating point of the self, true self, or eternal self in his commentary to the Nirvāna Sūtra in T37.452a, 452b, 453b, 453c, 463a, 532c, and 550b. Also what appears to be Tao-sheng's statement or doctrine is found in the Ming-seng chuan ch'ao (Excerpts of the Biography of Famous Monks) by Pao-ch'ang, in Hsü tsang ching, vol. 134, p. 8d10.

<sup>17</sup>Ming pao-ying lun (On the explanation of karmic retribution) in Hung-ming chi, vol. 5, T52.33f., and San-pao lun (On three kinds of karmic retribution), ibid., T52.35. For discussions and translation in part especially of the first article, see Fung/Bodde (tr.), A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. II, p. 272ff.; Liebenthal, "Shih Hui-yüan's Buddhism as set forth in his writings", Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. 70(1950), 243-259.

<sup>18</sup>See Kenneth Ch'en, "Neo-Taoism and the Prajna School during the Wei and Chin Dynasties", in Chinese Culture, vol. I(1957), no. 2, p. 35ff.; Fung/Bodde (tr.), op. cit., p. 243ff.; Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 148.

<sup>19</sup>An episode involving Hui-yüan's practice of analogical method is recorded in his biography in the KSC, vol.

6, 348a. But Ōchō, op. cit., p. 172, holds that Tao-an already abolished the method.

<sup>20</sup>Zuercher, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>21</sup>Loc. cit. For the characteristic development of Buddhism in north and south in the subsequent period, see Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 74ff.

<sup>22</sup>Kamata Shigeo, Chūgoku Bukkyōshi, p. 76 gives the date 355-434 with no explanation for the new date of birth.

<sup>23</sup>For example, Liu I-min (Ch'eng-chih) (354-410), a prominent contemporary layman at Lu-shan.

<sup>24</sup>Zuercher, op. cit., p.

<sup>25</sup>See Arthur F. Wright, "Fo-t'u-teng: A Biography", Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 11(1948), 324: "He had come to China with the intention of starting a religious center in the imperial capital, and, had he reached there at a less disturbed time, he would no doubt have become a great translator and exegete."

<sup>26</sup>KSC, vol. 5, 354b.

<sup>27</sup>The master-disciple relationship is assumed by Robinson, Early Mādhyamika in India and China, p. 99; Kamata, op. cit., p. 74; Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China, while T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, p. 142, defines their relationship to be that of peers.

<sup>28</sup>See Fung/Bodde (tr.), op. cit., p. 272ff.; Chen, op.cit., p. 118f.; Fung, A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, p. 249.

<sup>29</sup>For an assessment of Hui-yüan in reference to his understanding of the Mādhyamika doctrine, see Robinson, op. cit., p. 104 & p. 114.

<sup>30</sup>See the biography of Hui-yüan in the Kao-seng chuan, T50.361b, tr. in Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 253.

<sup>31</sup>See Itano Chōhachi, "Dōshō no tongosetsu seiritsu no jijō", Tōhō gakuho, 7(1036), 125-186, particularly 164ff., and 175ff. See the text, 396d3f.

<sup>32</sup>See CVS, 392a17.



<sup>33</sup>See the Mādhyamikakārikās by Nāgārjuna, 25:19, trans. in Frederic J. Streng, Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning, p. 217.

<sup>34</sup>T'ang, op. cit., 142. Cf. Kamata, op. cit., p. 75f.

<sup>35</sup>See his biography in the Kao-seng chuan, T55.110c29. It may not be easy to prove or disprove the point in the text concerned, for the third element, the Taoist view, makes the question more complex. Nonetheless see CSPA 397a5, for example, for the possible trace of such connection. Liebenenthal, "A Biography", p. 68, holds that close contact with the Abhidharma, though it may have enriched his knowledge, left Tao-sheng's thinking processes virtually untouched.

<sup>36</sup>The other three are Tao-jung, Seng-chao, and Hui-kuan; see KSC, vol. 7, 368b.

<sup>37</sup>See T50.332b23.

<sup>38</sup>It does not necessarily mean his knowledge of Sanskrit was poor or insufficient to make him an assistant. As a matter of fact, Tao-sheng is listed as a co-translator along with Buddhajīva of the text of Mahīśāsaka vinaya translated in 423 in Chien-k'ang; see his biography in CSTCC, vol. 15, T55.111blff.

<sup>39</sup>T50.332b20.

<sup>40</sup>H. Dumoulin, A History of Zen Buddhism, p. 62, speculates; "His sudden return to Mount Lu, and from there to Chien-k'ang, seems to have been caused by the strained atmosphere of the monastic community of Ch'ang-an." See Liebenenthal, "A Biography", pp. 72-73.

<sup>41</sup>See Ōchō, "Jiku Dōshō sen", p. 173.

<sup>42</sup>See Robinson, op. cit., p. 169; Demiéville, "La pénétration", pp. 32-35.

<sup>43</sup>Itano Chōhachi, "Jiku Dōshō no tongosetsu", p. 168, believes that the theory of sudden enlightenment was expounded in the period between 409 and 414.

<sup>44</sup>See the Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra, vol. 4, tr. by Fashien, T12.881b.

<sup>45</sup>See the Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra, vol. 5, tr. by

Dharmakshema, T12.633b.

<sup>46</sup>Robinson, op. cit., p. 169, wrongly puts the date of death at 432, probably following Liebenthal, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>47</sup>See KSC, vol. 5, 354b.

<sup>48</sup>See Ocho, op. cit., p. 204.

<sup>49</sup>Fa-hua hsüan-lun, T34.363b.

<sup>50</sup>See Ocho, op. cit., p. 202ff.

<sup>51</sup>See Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China, p. 66.

<sup>52</sup>See Ōchō, op. cit., pp. 189-195.

<sup>53</sup>See ibid., p. 205; Paul Demiéville, "La pénétration du Bouddhisme dans la tradition philosophique chinoise", Cahiers d'histoire mondiale, III, no. 1(1956), p. 32.

<sup>54</sup>See T'ang, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>55</sup>Liebenthal, op. cit., 71, is misinformed on two counts: with regard to the Sanskrit title "Daśasāhasrikā", and the year 407. For the first see Zuercher, op. cit., p. 65 and Robinson, op. cit., p. 117, and for the second see Seng-jui's preface to the translation, T55.55a4.

<sup>56</sup>Liebenthal, "A Biography", p. 94, lists the title rendered: "The Response of the Buddha is Conditioned".

<sup>57</sup>Quoted also in Chi-tsang, Fa-hua hsüan-lun, T34.442a9ff., in which the writing called "The treatise on the Dharma-kāya having no 'pure land'" is identified with "The treatise on the 'seven treasures'". For the identification of "pure land" and "seven treasures" see CVS, 334b-c28; CSPS, 410b15ff.

<sup>58</sup>Liebenthal, "A Biography", p. 94, translates the title; "True Piety Requires no (Mundane) Rewards." It is thus contentious whether "good" has ethical or religious implications and, likewise, what dimension retribution refers to. One can consider the next topic in close association with the present one, and one of the "propositions" to be listed below on the similar subject. Anyway it is evident that Tao-sheng talks of the two different places, moral and religious.

<sup>59</sup>The close connection of the present theme with the last one is apparent in the sources of information, namely, Tao-sheng's biographies. KSC, 366c, lists the present writing right after the last topic without hiatus and any word interpolated, even the word (i). CSTCC, T55.111a5 adds the word (and) between the two. See Kogaku, Nehanshū no kenkyū, p. 22 and p. 192.

<sup>60</sup>T'ang, op. cit., 150, doubts the authenticity of this work. See Kamata, Chūgoku Kegon shisōshi no kenkyū, p. 418.

<sup>61</sup>Liebenthal, "A Biography", p. 94.

<sup>62</sup>The full statement of the article now translated is found in the I-ch'eng fo-hsing hui-jih ch'ao (Transcript of the One Vehicle Buddha-nature wisdom) by the Japanese monk Enso (d. 883), in T70.173c. See Fung/Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. II, p. 271. Cf. tr. by Liebenthal, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>63</sup>As will be discussed in the next section, the interconnection of the doctrine of emptiness and sudden enlightenment is also identifiable in the Ch'an tradition. The respect for the Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras, especially the Diamond Sutra, and its doctrine is clearly demonstrated in the Sixth Patriarch Platform Scripture, the subitist's text, which is in one version (Tun-huang) also titled: Southern School Sudden Doctrine, Supreme Mahāyāna Great Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra ... See Yampolsky, p. 125.

<sup>64</sup>Ōchō Enichi, "Jikudōshō no tongosetsu", in Zen kenkyūsho kiyō, 3, p. 108.

<sup>65</sup>Cited in T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, 170, quoting from Shih-shuo wen-hsüeh p'ien-chū.

<sup>66</sup>See Liu Ch'iu, Preface to the Wu-laing i ching, T9.384a (cf. the ching, 388b); Hui-ta, Chao-lun shu, in HTC, vol. 150, p. 425d. For the definition of the term, see BHSD, p. 27.

<sup>67</sup>See Hui-ta, loc. cit.

<sup>68</sup>Itano Chōhachi, "Dōshō no tongosetsu seiritsu no jijō", p. 168.

<sup>69</sup>See T'ang Yung-t'ung, Fo-chiao shih, II, 184; Liebenthal, Chao Lun, p. 152. Robinson left out the part in his translation in op. cit., pp. 212-232. Cf. Ocho Enichi's article in Tsukamoto Zenryū, ed., Jōron kenkyū, p. 197ff.

<sup>70</sup>Hui-ta, loc. cit.

<sup>71</sup>See CSPA 406all. cf. Hui-ta, op. cit., p. 426b4.

<sup>72</sup>Quoted in Chi-tsang, Erh-ti i, T45.111b (cf. 121c).

<sup>73</sup>For instance, see Hu Shih, "The Development of Zen Buddhism in China", p. 483.

<sup>74</sup>See T52.225a.

<sup>75</sup>T50.366c, translated in Fung/Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. II, p. 270.

<sup>76</sup>T52.225a. Cf. trans. in Fung/Bodde, ibid., p. 275: "... the state of mirror-like voidness (of Nirvana) is abstruse and mysterious and does not admit of any stages (for its attainment). But the accumulating of learning is an endless process, for how can it stop of itself?"

<sup>77</sup>T9.384a. Cf. Chao-lun, IV, ch. 9, in T45.160a.

<sup>78</sup>Dumoulin, A History of Zen Buddhism, p. 64.

<sup>79</sup>See T52.225c. Cf. Hui-ta, op. cit., p. 426b. A translation is found in Liebenthal, The Book of Chao, p. 189.

<sup>80</sup>See Hui-ta, op. cit., p. 426c; Liebenthal, "The World Conception", I, 80 and II, 89.

<sup>81</sup>See Ibid., p. 425c.

<sup>82</sup>For more discussion, see part III, 2.

<sup>83</sup>T37.2377b. Cf. translation by Liebenthal in "The World Conception", II, 77: "The Inner Order (or things) is [sic] that of Nature and Recognition is a transcendal act of union (with that Order). Inner (Order) is without distinctive features; how then can Recognition change (with its object)?"

<sup>84</sup>Hui-ta, op. cit., p. 425c.

<sup>85</sup>T52.225a2.

<sup>86</sup>T52.225b28.

<sup>87</sup>Cf. CSPS, 409c8, 410c15.

<sup>88</sup>See hui-ta, op. cit., p. 425c15.

<sup>89</sup>See ibid., p. 425c13.

<sup>90</sup>T52.225b25, trans. by Fung/Bodde, op. cit., p. 278.

<sup>91</sup>For the definition of the word in the contexts of the Nirvāṇa and other sources, see Mochizuki Ryoko, "Itsusendai towa nanika", IBK, vol. 17 \*1968), nr. 1, 112-118.

<sup>92</sup>Originally in the Ming-seng chuan (vol. 10) by Pao-ch'ang, now lost, condensed in a work by the Japanese monk, Sosho, in T70.173c; see Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 102. Also found in a shortened form in HTC, vo. 134, p. 15a. Cf. a translation in Fung/Bodde, op. cit., p. 271: "All those who receive the two principles have the right cause that may lead to Nirvāṇa and (continued) endurance of life within the Threefold World is (simply) the result of delusion. Since the icchantikas fall within the class of beings who partake of life, why should they be the only ones to lack the Buddha nature?". Cf. also Liebenenthal, "A Biography", p. 94.

<sup>93</sup>HTC. vol. 134, p. 15b.

<sup>94</sup>See T12.393b.

<sup>95</sup>See Itano Chōhachi, "Dosho no busshoron", p. 4ff.

<sup>96</sup>For the definition of the word tang and a discussion of the problem, see T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, 160ff.; Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China, p. 128f.

<sup>97</sup>Chun-cheng (of T'ang), Ta-ch'eng ssu-lun hsüan-i, in HTC. vol. 74, p. 46b.

<sup>98</sup>For enumeration and discussion of them, see Tokiwa Daijō, Busshō no kenkyū, p. 183ff. The question is widely discussed in the classical works to be written later, including Chun-cheng, op. cit.; Chi-tsang, Ta-ch'eng hsüan-lun, in T45, especially vol. 3; Sosho, op. cit.

<sup>99</sup>See CSPS, 403c18, 404a2.

<sup>100</sup>See Nakamura Hajime. ed., Jiga to muga, especially p. 119ff.

- 101 See CNS, 452a, 453b.
- 102 See CVS, 354b.
- 103 See CNS, 532b, 531c (cf. 277b; CSPS, 407c).
- 104 See CNS, 534b, 547c.
- 105 Cf. CNS, 277b.
- 106 See CNS, 546c.
- 107 See CNS, 547c; SCPS, 408b. Also see Fang Li-t'ien, Wei Chin Nan-pei-ch'ao Fo-chiao lun-t'ung, p. 171f.
- 108 CNS, 549a.
- 109 See CSPS, 399d.
- 110 CNS, 461a.
- 111 Chün-cheng, op. cit., p. 40a.
- 112 See CNS, 394b.
- 113 In chap. 15, trans. by B. Watson, The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, p. 168.
- 114 Pt. 1, ch. 10; Legge, tr., I Ching, p. 270: "When acted on, it penetrates forthwith to all phenomena and events under the sky".
- 115 See CSPS, 412b.
- 116 HTC, vol. 150, p. 421a.
- 117 CNS, 420a.
- 118 See PTL, 228a; CVS, 343a.
- 119 CSPS, 402b, 403a, 404b, 412b.
- 120 See Morie Shunko, "Jikudōshō no kanno shisō", IBK, vol. 21 (1972), nr. 2, pp. 140-141.; Liu Kuei-chieh, "Chu Tao-sheng ssu-hsiang chih li-lun chi-ch'u", Hua-kang Fo-hsueh Hsueh-pao, nr. 5 (Dec. 1981), 364f.
- 121 See CSPS 412b2, 403d1.

122 See Kobayashi Masami, "Jikudosho no jiso gi ni tsuite", IBK, vol. 28 (1979), nr. 2, p. 764; Liu Kuei-chieh, "Chu Tao-sheng ssu-hsiang chih li-lun t'e-se chi ch'i chia-chih i-i", Hua-kang Fo-hsueh Hsueh-pao, nr. 6 (July, 1980), 390f.

123 Two works titled San-pao lun and Ming pao-ying lun are preserved in the Hung-ming chi compiled by Seng-yu, found in T52, 33ff.

124 Cf. Fung/Bodde, op. cit., p. 272, note 2.

125 See T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, 167.

126 Listed in Pao-ch'ang, Ming-seng chuan ch'ao, in HTC, vol. 134, p. 15b. See Liebenthal, "A Biography", 94: "By doing the good and suppressing the evil one attains what is called the Karma of men and gods; in the aspect of truth getting reward for doing the good is not (the issue)."

127 Ibid. (MSCC). Liebenthal, ibid., translates the title: "'Animals may be happy; among men there are poor people. (Is that a suitable) reward (for good deeds)?"

128 In Chi-tsang, Erh-ti i, in T45, 111b.

129 CVS, 378b.

130 Loc. cit.

131 CNS, 532c; cf. 531c.

132 See CNS, 396b.

133 See P. C. Bagchi's article in S. Radhakrishnan, ed., History of Philosophy Eastern and Western, p. 577: "When Tao-sheng speaks of 'goodness requiring no reward', he speaks not from the relative point of view but from the absolute ...".

134 CVS, 357c.

135 T34.505a. Cf. trans. by Liebenthal, "World Conception", I, 84: "Every pious act, insignificant as it may be, leads to Buddhahood; it does not receive a mundane reward."

136 See CSPA, 397a, 400d.

137 See KSC, vol. 7, in T50.366c; CSTCC, vol. 15, in

T55,-111a. The same can be said of Liu Ch'iu, a faithful interpreter of Tao-sheng's doctrines; see KHMC, vol. 19, in T52.233a. Ōchō speculates the same possibility in his article "Jikudōshō no Hoke shisō", in Sakamoto, Yukio ed., Hokekyo no Chūgokuteki tenkai, p. 172, note 3.

<sup>138</sup>One hundred and twenty-three participants in the vow mentioned in the biography of Hui-yüan in CSTCC, vol. 15, in T55.109c. Kamata Shigeo, Chūgoku Bukkyō shi, p. 75, counts Tao-sheng, one of the eighteen celebrated pundits in the community at the Tung-lin monastery, among them.

<sup>139</sup>Charles Luk, trans., The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra, p. 8.

<sup>140</sup>CVS, 344b.

<sup>141</sup>CVS, 344c.

<sup>142</sup>Following closely what is set out in the Vimalakīrti, Seng-chao maintains that purity of Buddha land is inseparably bound up with the purity of the beings (CVS, 335b15). The Pure Land of the Tathāgata is essentially unrestricted (334b) and remains always pure (337b); the sin and impurity of beings keep them from seeing it (337b24). The land being unrestricted, there is no other land which belongs to the ordinary beings (334b27). Here Seng-chao exhibits some trait of the Mādhyamikas holding no difference between nirvāṇa and samsāra in a sense.

<sup>143</sup>See Furuta Kazuhiro, "Jikudōshō no Butsumujodosetsu", IBK, vol. 19 (1970), nr, 2, 318.

<sup>144</sup>In Fa-hua hsüan-lun, T34.442a9. Liebenthal translates: "... If he wants to define the Middle Path saying that the dharmakāya moves his body into Reality, and therefore is not found in Paradise, then he is wrong. For he has expressed (only one side of the picture) saying that the Land is free (even) from the Precious Things and calling that the Middle Path. He has in this way described the Land of the dharmakāya (non-World) but omitted that of the Traces (World)-(which is the other side of the picture)." "(World Conception", II, 86).

<sup>145</sup>CVS, 392a.

<sup>146</sup>CNS, 546b.

<sup>147</sup>CNS, 546c.



<sup>148</sup>See also Chi-tsang's commentary on the Lotus, in T34,441c.

<sup>149</sup>D. T. Suzuki, Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, p. 46.

<sup>150</sup>CVS, 343a.

<sup>151</sup>Charles Luk, trans., op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>152</sup>Cf. CSPA, 397a6.

<sup>153</sup>Cf. rendering of the paragraph by Liebenthal in "World Conception", II, 85-86.

<sup>154</sup>Seng-chao's comment on the same passage reads: "In the sūtra it is said: 'the Dharma-kāya is the body void and empty.' [Dharma-kāya] is not something born, yet there is nothing that it is not born into. It is without form, yet there is nothing that it does not take form of. It transcends what the three realms represent. It is separated from the realm of the conscious ... Being subtle and mysterious, it can not become the existent (yu); ready to respond to myriad forms, it can not become the nonexistent (wu). Extending fully out to the eight directions, it cannot become small, minutely entering [any space] without leaving any room uncovered. Hence, it is capable of coming out of birth and getting into death, it remains penetrative and comprehensive in its inexhaustible transformation... How can one afford to discard what is nearby, that is, the sixteen feet [body], and seek the Dharma-kāya in the distance! (CVS, 343a)"

As in the case of Tao-sheng, Dharma-kāya is defined here in binary terms with two contrasting elements, negation of an element and again the negation of its antithesis. Elements employed are identical or similar. Both Tao-sheng and Seng-chao share the proposition that the Dharma-kaya is transcendental to the manifestation of the three realms and unconditioned. Tao-sheng predicates the Buddha as the unconditioned. Seng-chao later also characterizes the Dharma-kaya as the unconditioned (412a). Seng-chao uses the expression "fully extending to the eight directions". We find in the CSPA (402c, 404b) the same expressions applied to li which is identified with the embodiment of the Dharma-kāya. The implied approach for a practitioner is, according to Seng-chao, to seek the real by way of the visible representation in the Transformation body. Later Tao-sheng,

as quoted earlier, makes a statement in a similar vein: "The enlightenment of the Greater Vehicle consists, in its original sense, not in discarding what is in the near, namely, birth-and-death and seeking it again in the distance (392b cf. 392c, 406b)".

<sup>155</sup>See Furuta Kazuhiro, "Jikudōshō no hosshin-mushokusetsu", IBK, vol. 17 (1967), nr. 2, 128-129.

<sup>156</sup>CVS, 405a.

<sup>157</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>158</sup>CVS, 360a.

<sup>159</sup>CVS, 410b.

<sup>160</sup>Itano, "Dōshō no tongosetsu seiritsu no jijō", 184-185.

<sup>161</sup>For description of and discussion of them, see KSC, in T50.354; Fung/Bodde, op. cit., p. 243ff.; Kenneth Ch'en, "Neo-Taoism and the Prajñā School during the Wei and Chin Dynasties", in Chinese Culture, vol. 1, nr. 2 (1957), p. 35ff.; Liebenthal, Chao Lun, p. 133ff.

<sup>162</sup>See Fung/Bodde, ibid., p. 247f.; Ōchō, "Jikudōshō sen ...", p. 201f, 35f.; Mikiri Jikai, "Jikudōshō no shisō", Ōtani gakuhō, vol. 46, nr. 1 (1965), 31ff.; T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, I, 169.

<sup>163</sup>See Kobayashi, op. cit., p. 255.

<sup>164</sup>See T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, 179; Ōchō, "Jijudōshō sen ...", p. 173.

<sup>165</sup>Found also in Hīnayāna; see Sangharakshita, A Survey of Buddhism, p. 282.

<sup>166</sup>CNS, 487b.

<sup>167</sup>CNS, 487a.

<sup>168</sup>CNS, 487b.

<sup>169</sup>See part V (Translation), note, preface, 5. Cf. Hui-ta, op. cit., p. 443a10.

<sup>170</sup>See Itano, "... tongosetsu seiritsu ...", especially p. 171ff.

171 Preserved in HMC, vol. 5, in T52.29c-32b; translated in Leon Hurvitz, "'Render unto Caesar' in early Chinese Buddhism", Liebenthal Festschrift, pp. 80-114.

172 Itano, "... tongosetsu seiritsu...", 164ff.

173 CNS, 488a.

174 CNS, 464a.

175 CNS, 489b.

176 Chün-cheng, op. cit., p. 23c Cf. for a little interpretation, see Mikiri Jikai, "Jikudōshō no hannya shisō", Bukkyōgaku seminā, vol. 4, p. 56f.

177 Sangharakshita, op. cit., p. 283.

178 One can talk of the "six houses and seven schools" in the 4th century which came into being, as found later, due to the divergent views on the prajñā doctrine often interpreted in terms of Taoist concepts. Yet it could be a convenient grouping by the later historians including T'an-chi in the 5th century. Those "schools" lasted too briefly, mostly for a single generation, to be regarded as the sects, as found later. See note 16 above.

179 For example Hui-yüan (344-416) has been sometimes regarded as the founder of the Ching-t'u (Pure Land) School because he, as early as in 402, organized a group called the White Lotus Society to worship Amitabha aspiring to be born in the Pure Land in the Western Paradise. But T'an-luan (476-542) is accepted as the real founder. See Ch'en, Buddhism in China, p. 105f.; Takakusu, The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, p. 168 and p. 15. Incidentally, Tao-sheng is listed arguably as one of the "18 eminent savants"; see T'ang op. cit., p. 142.

180 See Ch'i (of Sui), San-lun yü-i i, T45.121c; Hui-ta, Chao-lun shu, HTC, 150.425cf. and 428d; Chi-tsang, Erh-ti i, T45.111b; Liu Ch'iu, preface to the Wu-liang i ching, T9.384a.

181 Kamata, op. cit., p. 404, says mistakenly of the two works as if they were available.

182 Hui-kuan's view appears in Hui-ta, Chao-lun shu, HTC, vol. 150, p. 426b-c. Also his theory seems to be reflected in the Ming-seng chuan ch'ao, excerpts from the

Ming-seng chuan by Pao-ch'ang, (ch. 13), HTC, vol. 134, p. 8c. See T'ang, op. cit., p. 184.

<sup>183</sup>T45.159ff. Hui-kuan's argument may be found in chs. 8-10 particularly. See T'ang, op. cit., p. 184.

<sup>184</sup>See T'ang, op. cit., p. 184; Itō Takatoshi, "Jōron o meguru shomondai", Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyō gakubu kenkyū kiyō, vol. 40 (March 1982), p. 206ff.

<sup>185</sup>See Tao-sheng's biography in the KSC, T50.367a.

<sup>186</sup>The theory, believed to be declared, according to Itano, op. cit., p. 168, in the period from 409 to 414, still excited the gentry Buddhists in 422-3 when the Pien-tsung lun was compiled. See T'ang, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>187</sup>See the letter to Liu Ch'iu by Hsiao Tzu-liang in KHMC 19, T52.233a.

<sup>188</sup>T9.383b.

<sup>189</sup>See Kamata, Chūgoku Bukkyō shi, p. 143; T9.384b, 385c, 386a, b, c et passim for the concept of speedy enlightenment.

<sup>190</sup>Hu Shih, "Development of Zen Buddhism in China", in The Chinese Social and Political Science Review, vol. xv, no. 4, Jan. 1932, p. 483, and "Ho-tse ta-shih shen-hui chuan", Hu Shih wen-ts'un, IV, 261f. Liebenthal disagrees with Hu who views Tao-sheng as "the actual founder of Ch'an (Zen)" ("A Biography", p. 90) or "the virtual founder of Ch'an Buddhism" ("The World Conception", I, 103).

<sup>191</sup>T'ang, op. cit., p. 179 (see also p. 156) regards him as "the founder" (or the first patriarch) in reference with doctrines; Fung/Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. II, p. 388, says: "Ideologically speaking, the origin of the Ch'an school goes back to Tao-sheng (ca. 360-434)." In the seventh chapter we have discussed his two famous theses that "a good deed entails no retribution", and that "Buddhahood is achieved through instantaneous enlightenment". It is these that provide the theoretical basis for Ch'an philosophy.

<sup>192</sup>See Philip B. Yampolsky, The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, p. 23ff.; Hu Shih's articles on Shen-hui, including a biography of Shen-hui in Hu Shih wen-ts'un, IV, 245-288, especially 288.

<sup>193</sup>Ui Hakuju, Zenshū shi kenkyū, vol. 1, p. 20f.

<sup>194</sup>Hu Shih, "Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in China, Its History and Method", Philosophy East and West, III, no. 1, (April, 1953), p. 15.

<sup>195</sup>The expression is employed by Tsung-mi (779-841), as he interprets or quotes Shen-hui, in the Ch'an-yüan chü-ch'üan chi tu-hsü (General Introduction to the Collection of Expositions on the Sources of the Ch'an), T48.403alf., cited and discussed in Hu Shih, "Ho-tse ta-shih shen-hui chuan", Hu shih wen-ts'un, IV, 261, and Shen-hui ho-shang i-chi, p. 35.

<sup>196</sup>See Hu Shih, "p'u-t'i-ta-mo k'ao", Hu Shih wen-ts'un, III, 296ff., and Hu Shih Chiang-yen chi, I, 161. Though it is not exactly the same, we can speak of "entering li", which Tao-sheng uses in the commentary (409a); cf. his biography (T50.366c). Kamata, Chūgoku Kegon shisōshi no kenkyū, p. 405, identified it with "a kind of sudden enlightenment (satori)".

<sup>197</sup>Found in the Platform Sūtra, sec. 34, Yampolsky, p. 155.

<sup>198</sup>See Hu Shih, "Ho-tse ta-shih shen-hui chuan", p. 262f.

<sup>199</sup>The expression is originally found in the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra, T.14.541a. For Tao-sheng, see T45.111b, tr. in note 93 above. For the Ch'an, see the Platform Sūtra, secs. 19 and 30: "suddenly" (Yampolsky, pp. 141 and 151).

<sup>200</sup><sup>5</sup>See Tao-sheng's commentary, 398b9, 408d4, 409c3 et passim, the Platform Sūtra, secs. 37 and 42.

<sup>201</sup>See CSPS, 401a14; the Platform Sūtra, sec. 40 et passim.

<sup>202</sup>Cf. Fuse, Nehanshū no kenkyū, p. 193; Hu Shih Chiang-yen chi, I, 118f.

<sup>203</sup>See Ōchō, "Jikudōshō no tongosetsu", p. 107; Kamata, Chūgoku Kegon shisō shi no kenkyū, p. 406.

<sup>204</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>205</sup>Liebenthal, "The World Conception", p. 88, commits a logical error by rendering the passage (400b17) with "that these four steps are taken by the believer in one single act

of illumination".

<sup>206</sup>T'ang, op. cit., p. 179 (also see. p. 156), traces the idea of mind associated with enlightenment as found in the Ch'an ideology to Tao-sheng.

<sup>207</sup>See Ōchō, "Jikudōshō no tongosetsu", p. 109.

<sup>208</sup>Ocho, ibid., p. 99ff.

<sup>209</sup>See Kamata, Chūgoku Kegon shisō shi no kenkyū, p. 413.

<sup>210</sup>See Takakusu, op. cit., p. 116f.

<sup>211</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>212</sup>Chūgoku Kegon shisōshi no kenkyū, p. 416f.

<sup>213</sup>See T36.219a.

<sup>214</sup>See T36.220a.

<sup>215</sup>See T35.575b.

<sup>216</sup>See T36.187a.

<sup>217</sup>Tao-sheng is believed to have studied at least the Ten-stage Sūtra (Daśa-bhūmi Sūtra), Vasubandhu's commentary to which was to become a base text for the Ti-lun (Dasa-bhūmi) School, the predecessor of Hua-yen; see Ōchō, Hokke shisō, p. 229.

<sup>218</sup>Tao-sheng's colleague at Lu-shan and Ch'ang-an as well as his adversary in the doctrine of enlightenment, Hui-kuan acknowledges the position of the Hua-yen Sūtra in his p'an-chiao; see Tsukamoto, Collected Works, III, 93.

<sup>219</sup>Found in T37, nr. 1763. Ch'en, Buddhism in China, p. 128, mistakes (71) volumes as commentaries.

220

<sup>221</sup>T12.648b.

<sup>222</sup>Takakusu, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>223</sup>See John, C. Wu, The Golden Age of Zen, p. 142.

<sup>224</sup>See Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 237ff.

225 The other one is the schema formularized by Seng-jui in the postface to the Saddharmapundarīka, in CSTCC, T55.57b-c, in which the Prajñāpāramitā and the Lotus are in mutual relationship; see Ōchō, "Jikudōshō sen", p. 232.

226 See Hurvitz, op. cit., p. 218; Tsukamoto Zenryū, Collected Works, vol. 3, p. 96.

227 Hurvitz, op. cit., p. 198, note 3, summing up what Ōcho, op. cit., p. 237, says.

228 See Hurvitz, ibid., p. 197.

229 See Fuse, op. cit., p. 38f.

230 See ibid., p. 42.

231 For Hui-kuan's p'an chiao, see Hurvitz, op. cit., p. 219, the chart being based on Ito Giken, "Tendai izen no kyohan ni tsuite", in Ryūoku Daigaku ronsō, no. 284 (Feb, 1929), pp. 46-77.

232 Tao-sheng uses the term in his commentary on the Vimalakīrti, T37.531c.

233 See, for example, Chih-i, Miao-fa lien-hua ching wen-chü, T34.127a-b; Ti-kuan, T'ien-t'ai ssu-chiao i, T46.775b. Also Chi-tsang, the systematizer of the San-lun School, to be discussed later, frequently employs the phrase in his commentaries to the Lotus; see, for example, T34.363a-b.

234 For Tao-sheng, see the text 397a; for the T'ien-t'ai, see Chih-i, ibid., and Ti-kuan, ibid., cited above. Cf. Ōchō, op. cit., 234 and 236, for the use of the phrases applicable to Tao-sheng.

235 For example, see Chih-i, ibid., (T34.127a). The point is also made by Sakamoto Yukio, in the same ed., Hokkekyo no Chūgokuteki tenkai, introduction, p. 2. For more connections, general and particular, identifiable between Tao-sheng and T'ien-t'ai, see Fuse Kōgaku, "Hokke koryū no kenkyū", in Shūkyō kenkyū, vol. 6, issue 6, 1929, pp. 25-54, especially 33ff.

236 See Prebish, ed., Buddhism: A Modern Perspective, p. 190; Takakusu, op. cit., 99; Kamata, Chūgoku Bukkyō shi, p. 185.

<sup>237</sup>Hatani, "Sanron Kaidai", pp. 3-6, cited by Robinson, op. cit., p. 162f.

<sup>238</sup>See The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch, section 51, Yampolsky, tr., p. 179. For the division of the text into sections I follow D. T. Suzuki, ed., Tonkō shutsudo Rokuso dankyō (Tokyo, 1934).

<sup>239</sup>Robinson, op. cit., p. 173.

<sup>240</sup>See T37.487af.

<sup>241</sup>T38.487a1f.

<sup>242</sup>Tr. in Fung/Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. II, 297.

<sup>243</sup>See T38.488a.

<sup>244</sup>See, for example, T37.79a,b.

<sup>245</sup>For example, Erh-ti i, T45.111b, Chi-tsang quotes Tao-sheng: "It is also identical with the meaning of the great sudden enlightenment. This is what Chu Tao-sheng talked about. He said: 'Retribution [for good or evil karma] belongs to the sphere of change and decay. Life-and-death belongs to the realm of great dream. From life-and-death to the diamond-consciousness, all are dreams. After the diamond-consciousness one achieves instantaneous wide-open great enlightenment.'"



### PART III

#### A CRITICAL STUDY OF TAO-SHENG'S COMMENTARY ON THE SADDHARMAPUNḌARĪKA

##### A. Tao-sheng and the Saddharmapundarīka

The only credible information about how Tao-sheng came to take interest in the Lotus is his own statement found in the commentary itself, specifically in the preface (396d). He writes to the effect that earlier, "when young", he happened to attend a series of lectures on the subject, referring to the Lotus, which were "rich in literary content and meaning", and "deep in reflection (shih) in the explanatory medium and underlying principle (li)". The notes he jotted down then, he goes on to say, became the basis of the present commentary compiled later toward the end of his life in 432. Who was the lecturer is not specified here. Possibly, it could have been either Chu Fa-t'ai (320-387) or Kumārajīva (344-413). The expression "when I was young" makes Chu sound the more plausible author, because Tao-sheng was with Chu presumably between his ages 11 (ca.371) and 27 (ca.387), while he studied under Kumārajīva in of his late forties between 405 and 408.

However, there is no other evidence supporting Liebenthal's theory of the earlier master.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the commentary is based on the text of Kumārajīva not on any other translation, though it is not categorically impossible

that he initially attended the lecture based on another version and later adjusted them to the new translation. The oldest of the three extant translations is the one by Dharmarakṣita (translated in 286). Tao-sheng may have studied it at some point in the thirty years following his conversion to Buddhism. Yet, the study of the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras (especially in the circle of Chu Fa-t'ai as in the circle of the latter's colleague Tao-an), dominated and overshadowed the study of other scriptures.

As a matter of fact, Tao-sheng was in Ch'ang-an when Kumārajīva translated the Lotus. The translation activity was not limited to just rendering the Sanskrit text into the Chinese language but involved the master's presentation of his interpretations of the text, eliciting lively discussions among students concerning the most appropriate translations of the original Sanskrit terms. It may be pointed out here that in his colophon to the Lotus, Seng-chao recognized Tao-sheng's presence in translation, stating that "the letters and meanings [as suggested by Kumārajīva] were both penetrative", resembling Tao-sheng's description cited earlier.<sup>2</sup> In any event, a long gap of at least 27 years lies between Tao-sheng's introduction into the Lotus and the compilation of the commentary. During the period Tao-sheng was occupied with many subjects and sūtras, covering practically all of his theories and writings. The commentary

thus symbolically marks the culmination of his career and scholarship.

The commentary was completed (432) while Tao-sheng was at Lu-shan after being excommunicated in 430 because of the icchantika issue with respect to universal Buddhahood. Tao-sheng apparently took up the Lotus as a medium to voice his thought and feeling about the Buddhist study and practice of the time. This is expressed in the first passage of the commentary as he laments: "... those who seriously tackle and grasp [the subtle words] are few while those who superficially touch and sneer at them are many" (396d). In fact the doctrine of universal Buddhahood is manifestly embodied in the text (400b9f., 408b16f. et passim). Doctrinally the Lotus is close to the Nirvāṇa. In the view of the contemporary and later Chinese Buddhists, they represent two final stages of the Buddha's teaching career, as evidenced in the archetypal schema by Tao-sheng as found in the commentary (396d13f.), In the schema, the fourth ultimate stage refers to the Nirvāṇa Sūtra, while the Lotus is implied in the third, penultimate. Tao-sheng is credited with having worked out a synthesis of "the true (chen 真) emptiness (k'ung/śūnyatā) and the mysterious (miao) existence (yu 有)" in that order. K'ung and yu sum up the whole spectrum of the Buddha's teaching as much as the pattern of wu (nonexistence or non-being) and yu encompasses the range

of the Taoist metaphysical structure. Yu represents the "eternally-abiding wondrous intent" suggested in the Nirvāṇa. The Lotus provides the fact and principle of the ultimate unity of the diverse "vehicles". The Lotus thus occupies an essential, if not ultimate as with the Nirvāṇa, place in the stratification of teaching — a tradition to be transmitted to (and later consolidated by) the East Asian Buddhists, especially the T'ien-t'ai.

One thing that has to be examined and clarified about the commentary is the composite nature of the content. The source of that query is Tao-sheng's own modest statement in the preface (396d) to the effect that he edited and compiled the commentary from lecture notes and other commentaries which he later consulted. Then, where is the room for Tao-sheng's own thought to be reflected? The commentary, according to Fuse Kogaku, reflects an early line of tradition concerning exegesis of the Lotus associated with Kumarajiva and his circle.<sup>3</sup> Yet that does not mean denying the content of Tao-sheng's own words in the text. As evidenced in the aforementioned trace of the theory of Buddha-nature and as will further be seen later in the next section, there are numerous statements and expressions which are undoubtedly Tao-sheng's own. It is thus clear that the content consists of the elements of two sources or more. However, it is hard to sort out and identify the concepts and interpretations

drawn from the other source. We can merely guess that the information from other sources might include exegetical definitions of some words and structural analysis of some passages and chapters.

Arguably, these parts of the text for which Tao-sheng does not directly give credit to others (with the words "a certain exegesis", etc. [400b]) represent his own original interpretation. Viewed in this standpoint, the commentary stands as an authentic treasury of Tao-sheng's original thought. And it has an added significance in that the commentary, being broadly based on various sources, can also be construed as an upshot or outgrowth of the line of tradition concerning the Lotus Sūtra up to the time of the culmination of Tao-sheng's own career. This being the case, it is a product of, as it were, collective thinking merging with Tao-sheng's own speculation. But then, by the same token, he may not be much different from other contemporary Chinese Buddhists in that respect.

Lastly, as a more fundamental problem for a document of antiquity like the commentary, one may raise the question of authenticity: does the work stand as the genuine writing of Tao-sheng in every sense, and then how can one verify it? As a matter of fact, much contemporary literature have been viewed with suspicion by some modern scholars. A part of the corpus of Seng-chao's writing and the Wu-liang i ching

(Scripture of Immeasurable Meaning)<sup>4</sup> are cases in point. Coincidentally, the two questionable sources deal with the problem of the temporal process of enlightenment, the former documenting the theory of gradualism and the latter reflecting Tao-sheng's own subitism. They indicate the impact that Tao-sheng's theory left during the contemporary and ensuing ages.

In the case of the text concerned, however, there is no reason to doubt Tao-sheng's authorship. His name is written down at the head of each of the two volumes.

First, the commentary is mentioned in Tao-sheng's biography in the usually infallible compilation, the CSTCC by Seng-yu, completed ca. 518.<sup>5</sup> It is listed also in two other sources: Fa-hua ch'uan chi<sup>6</sup> and Tung-yu ch'uan-teng lu.<sup>7</sup> One can also count in this category the preface to a later edition of the collected commentaries to the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa, stating that Tao-sheng's commentary became the standard base for the commentaries to come.<sup>8</sup> As a relevant material, we can cite the aforesaid colophon to the Lotus written by Seng-chao, describing how the translation was conducted with Kumārajīva in the centre, with the participation of Tao-sheng, top on the list, and other eminent students. In fact in the CSPA Tao-Sheng traces the original meanings in Sanskrit of the proper nouns appearing in the first chapter in almost the same way Kumārajīva does

in the commentary on the Vimalakīrti<sup>9</sup>.

Second, Tao-sheng's words in the commentary are quoted verbatim in various commentaries to the Lotus by some eminent masters including Chih-i<sup>10</sup> of the T'ien-t'ai school and Chi-tsang<sup>11</sup> of the San-lun.

Third, Tao-sheng's style and phraseology typified in the commentary show no noticeable discrepancy, to say the least, with those identified in the other two commentaries, CVS and CNS. Sometimes, even almost identical expressions are found. And, perhaps more significantly, many of his ideas are readily identifiable in the commentary. The text abounds especially with the variations on the theme of the Buddha-nature. Other discernable themes include the Pure Land, the Dharma-kaya, and goodness. However, one subject (that of enlightenment in terms of temporal process), apparently contradicts the picture of the doctrine represented by the original title itself. But the text may merely show that the nature of the process is more complex than one would surmise from the title and other information. This being the case, the other hitherto unknown facet of the concept, that is, gradual realization, is emphatically presented in the commentary.

## B. Literary Aspects

### 1. Structure

#### a. General

The commentary in the extant edition is divided into two rolls (chüan): one from preface to chapter 4, another from chapter 5 to chapter 27. The first roll, although it has fewer chapters, is still slightly longer than the second. This suggests that the first few chapters are more important. It is difficult to tell whether the original texts was divided in this manner. In the text (396d) Tao-sheng mentions "one roll"<sup>12</sup>. In any event, the first four chapters are the longest and most elaborate of all.

The text may be divided into three distinct parts: preface, explaining the meaning of the title of the sūtra, and exegesis of chapters (27) as the main body of the text. Yet Ocho finds the commentary structured in six parts: "(1) a description of the circumstances that led to the composition of the commentary, (2) the arrangement of the Buddha's preaching career, (3) specific designation of the Lotus, (4) an interpretation of the title Miao fa lien-hua ching, (5) the general meaning of the whole scripture, (6) a chapter-by-chapter explanation of the text"<sup>13</sup>. He regards (2) to (4) as the "forerunners of the hsüan-i 玄義 and hsüan-t'an 懸談 of later Chinese Buddhism", and (5) and (6) as the "forerunners of subsequent i-shu 義疏 and wen-



chü 文句". However, Ōchō goes too far in dividing the text structurally into such a number, unless they merely refer to distinct ingredients of the content. The items (2), (3), and (5) in Ōchō's segmentation are simply information found under the heading of (4). More specifically, (2) and (3) are put forward under the general heading of the word Miao-fa, and (5) under the further divided letter miao, to be repeated under the word lien-hua. Or Ōchō may identify (5) with the first paragraph of the introductory chapter. The text, therefore, is made up of three structural divisions, though the third division far outweighs the first two which are composed of one paragraph each.

#### b. Preface

The first paragraph which is an introductory remark or preface, tells briefly of the state of Buddhist study in the period and of his motivation to write the commentary, followed by the background of writing or compilation. The second paragraph describes the implication of the four elements that make up the title of the sūtra, namely "miao", (sad), "fa" (dharmā), "lien-hua" (puṇḍarīka), and "ching" (sūtra). In the course of explaining the title Tao-sheng schematizes the entire teaching span of the Buddha under the four "dharmā-wheels", well-nigh the earliest type of p'an-chiao. Also defined there is "Mahā-yāna" as the hierarchical source (tsung 宗) of the sūtra. The explanations of these

terms converge on the theme that the three vehicles are set to turn into the One Vehicle.

In the first paragraph of the Introductory Chapter (397a) Tao-sheng breaks down the entire sūtra into three sections according to content. The first section, consisting of the first thirteen chapters, deals with the theme that the cause of three is identical with the cause of the One. The second, from chapter 14 to chapter 21, expounds the theme in terms of effect. The third, i.e. the remaining chapters, is keyed to the theme that the men of the three vehicles turn out to be none other than the men of the One Vehicle. This thematic division into three was unique at the time. Tao-an had already introduced a method of dividing a scripture into three parts: (introductory, the Buddha's main discourse, and talk of propagation)<sup>14</sup> and this system became a standard for later commentators. However, while Tao-an's segmentation is concerned with external structure, Tao-sheng's is concerned with internal structure. Here the leitmotif stands out clearly: the eventual identification of the three and the One in a sort of dialectical process.

#### c. Interpretation of Chapters 1-27

Each chapter begins with the description of the content and general intent of the chapter of the sūtra, explaining why a given chapter has the title it does. Tao-

sheng was a pioneer in the method known as k'o-wen 科文 (compartmentalized composition), which "consisted of summing up each chapter of a scriptural text in a few clear, well-chosen words and showing its relation to the whole work"<sup>15</sup>.

Then follows an analysis of the content. In longer chapters like first four of the commentary, the entire chapter or large portion of the sūtra is anatomized into a number of distinct paragraphs. Metric parts (gāthās) are also included in the breakdown, being taken appropriately as an account of what was said earlier in prose, but Tao-sheng, perhaps naturally like any Buddhist in good faith, fails to take a critical look at the composition of the text as a composite product of historical development consisting of two layers of tradition represented by prose and metric parts.<sup>16</sup>

Along these divisions are some terms and passages entered for comment. A synopsis or actual implication of the paragraph is provided under the heading of a paragraph. The sections that follow are probably made in order to help unravel the general intent of the paragraph, also substantiating or reinforcing the import of the chapter or the main ideas of the commentary.

In the actual exegesis of particular phrases, Tao-sheng is less interested in the definition or meaning of the word, phrase, or passage as than in its implications and background information in the wider context. This is true

not only of the longer chapters but also of the shorter ones. The expressions, phrases, or passages represented are closely knit together with Tao-sheng's own words in the web of the sūtra and in the commentary as a whole. Thus, it is easy to misinterpret any given statement which is taken out of context, as Liebenthal often does in his translations and interpretations of Tao-sheng's statements collated in fragments.<sup>17</sup>

The pattern so far described generally applies to individual chapters, except those chapters (9, 12, 21, 26, 27) which are made up of a single paragraph. Chapter one has a slightly different structure; being introductory, it is elaborate in etymological definitions of individual names appearing in the congregation surrounding the Buddha and some of the participants' cosmological positions. This suggests that the commentary was intended also as a reference primer for the neophytes. In general, however, Tao-sheng's approach is exegetical, rather than purely literary<sup>18</sup>; in essence it is an "exegetical commentary" (i-shu 義疏) as it was called in some records. Not just in that connection but in broader range, Tao-sheng's commentary set the pattern for the later commentators to follow.

## 2. Style and Exegetical Method

### a. Style

Tao-sheng's literary style, as found in the

commentary, does not appear to be unique or idiosyncratic. It may well be a form of style current among contemporary writers, especially the Buddhists, who in the course of translating Buddhist literature developed somewhat peculiar styles. In translating sūtras naturally they had to adjust to the more complex Sanskrit style and syntax. The text of the Lotus, translated by Kumārajīva, for instance, shows a complex sentence-structure particularly in prose parts, which alternate with the parts consisting of either four or five letter verses. Some technical terms and proper nouns transliterated help make sentences and passages look more complex and longer. Compared with raw translations, expository essays and polemical writings by the Buddhists are refined, but they still remain reflective of the Indian element.

Since a commentary is by nature required to stay close to the scripture being commentated, the CSPA exhibits a peculiar complexity in style. Tao-sheng nonetheless endeavours to simplify and economize wordage as much as possible by using such means as Chinese terms and symbols. As he tries to capture and deliver to the reader the central ideas and implications in a given chapter or paragraph of the religious text, Tao-sheng often succeeds in producing terse, articulate philosophical statements, though some of them heavily laden with the Taoist or other Chinese terms

sometimes remain elusive to us. For that effect Tao-sheng employs various forms of rhetoric including parallelism and antithesis. There was no fixed form of literary style prevalent in the period. A certain style called p'ien-li t'i 駢儷體 or p'ien wen 駢文 "an euphuistically antithetic style of writing"<sup>19</sup>, (characterized by four-word and six word composition) had not yet been developed. It became a dominant style in the sixth and seventh centuries, though we encounter basically four-letter composition in Tao-sheng's contemporary Hui-lin's eulogy of Tao-sheng. Yet somehow Tao-sheng's writing reads crisp and elegant, being punctuated frequently by four-letter clause, repeated as the essential elements of syntax. One may sense a kind of internal rhythmical structure. Very often Tao-sheng uses rhetorical questions and interjectional expressions or exclamatory sentences for emphasis.

#### b. Exegetical Method

Tao-sheng's style of writing and structure of the text are original and his method of exegesis appears unique. The commentary is designed and structured in such a way that the motif of the sūtra and the intent of any individual chapter, paragraph, or expression may unfold coherently and lucidly. The focus is on the unified idea rather than on the literal meaning of the individual words or expressions.

The plot is discernable in every aspect of writing. Sometimes Tao-sheng plays on words by dissecting a single word into its constituting phonemes, irrespective of the equivalent original Sanskrit word. In glossing the words in such a way Tao-sheng merely harps on the main theme directly or indirectly. One of his favourite expressions is "borrowed (or metaphorical) statement" (chia'ts'u 假辭) or its variants. He uses such expressions in reference to a part of the Buddha's speech or story. It is true that the concept of expediency (upāya) is given an essential place in the thematic scheme of the sūtra, yet Tao-sheng sometimes points out the unreal aspect of the Buddha's speeches.

Peculiarly in the writing Tao-sheng never makes reference to any other Buddhist sūtra; nor is any specific phrase or passage actually quoted from any source, except in one paragraph of chapter 2 (400b) in which "according to a certain exegesis" is quoted four times successively. It seems very unusual for a mature scholar like Tao-sheng, having been exposed to various scriptures and other Buddhist literatures, to stay away from the scriptural and literary sources. His contemporary, Seng-chao, for instance, in his essays, widely cites the sources. However, the text is strewn with Chinese philosophical idioms and dictums. This seems to suggest that Tao-sheng apologetically concentrates on the doctrine of the sūtra per se, speaking in, and making

full use of, the current language.

Tao-sheng's method of exegesis along with other aspects will be further illuminated later when three representative chapters are subjected to a comprehensive content analysis.

### 3. Vocabulary: the Language of the Text with Special Reference to Neo-Taoism

#### a. Introduction

At a glance a student of Chinese tradition familiar with the classical literatures will not fail to notice that the commentary is full of words and phrases which are not Buddhist. It is hard to find a single passage without such a term,<sup>20</sup> especially when the passage is a significant reflection from Tao-sheng himself. Granting that language and thought are inseparably correlated, this style poses a serious intellectual challenge to understanding the inner structure of Tao-sheng's thought.

It may be argued that a Buddhist glossary as distinct from the ones from existing Chinese traditions had yet to be established and Tao-sheng like anybody else in that period had no alternative but to resort to such a way of writing. This view would immediately be weakened by recalling that Kumārajīva managed to render the sūtra concerned without showing a tendency to draw heavily from the Chinese philosophical lexicon. The sūtra translation of Kumārajīva



does contain a few words in that vein, borrowed particularly from the Taoist literature,<sup>21</sup> but they do not create any exegetical problem because the matching Sanskrit words were, as a consequence, deprived of the philosophical implications which had been intended in the original sources.

One plausible explanation of Tao-sheng's use of Taoist terms may be pedagogy. That is, Tao-sheng was obliged to speak the language of the day with prospective Buddhist converts, out of missionary zeal. The familiar device of expediency is a pronounced theme of the sūtra and also a notion commonly found in the original Chinese tradition.<sup>22</sup> One notable precedent of this practice is the system of "ko-i" (concept-matching), a crude, superficial form of exegesis invented and practiced by some earlier Buddhists immediately preceding Tao-sheng but believed not to be in practice at the time of Tao-sheng.

The question then is: Does the language in Tao-sheng's case serve only as a missionary tool or does it mirror the actual content of his thought? This is the central question of our enquiry: In terms of what system or in what frame of reference did Tao-sheng's process of thinking take place? Was Tao-sheng in this commentary primarily a Buddhist, a Taoist, a Buddho-Taoist hybrid, or something else?

The source of his borrowing was not restricted to a

single system, but if one is to be singled out, Neo-Taoism is the candidate, for most of the terms with semantic and philosophical significance are traceable to the canons and related works of Neo-Taoism.<sup>23</sup> In fact, Neo-Taoism represented the dominant philosophical-religious system of the day. Doctrinally, it is an amalgam of the two major traditions, Confucianism and Taoism. Tao-sheng in his early days, before his conversion to Buddhism, was widely read in these Neo-Taoist works.<sup>24</sup>

In the following, we will examine a number of select concepts, thirteen in all, which are identifiable in the two sources. The terms and patters are selected for analysis on the basis of their prominent positions in Tao-sheng's terminology. Put together, they constitute the backbone of Tao-sheng's interpretation and statement. Mostly they do not occur in the scripture except some technically fixed applications. As a procedure, the connotations of the identified terms will be drawn from the classical sources and then juxtaposed with the meanings apparently intended by Tao-sheng in accord with appropriate notions in the sūtra. Then we will be able to determine whether Tao-sheng borrowed the concepts with the effect that the given Buddhist ideas are more clearly presented without visible distortion or deviation or that they become imbued with the Chinese

philosophical presuppositions. The survey may effectively tell whether Tao-sheng remains a Buddhist in spirit or in disguise.

This analysis will help us to answer the questions which have been posed about Tao-sheng and his contribution to the Chinese understanding or sinicizing of Buddhism.

#### b. Analysis of the Concepts

##### (1) Li

"Li" is the most conspicuous abstract noun that the reader encounters in the commentary, occurring as many as 139 times in the text which is only a moderate size of two rolls.<sup>25</sup> Apparently a key term of the text and possibly Tao-sheng's philosophical speculation, li is worthy of an intensive analysis. The task will be undertaken in the forthcoming section. Here we will examine the term as a part, on top of the list, of the Tao-sheng's borrowed vocabulary. The brief survey here may be taken as an abstract of, or a preliminary to, what comes next. (The reader may skip this part and turn later to a wider view of the concept.)

In its extensive usage, unprecedented for a Buddhist text,<sup>26</sup> the term involves many elements of meaning which reflect Neo-Taoist conceptions. Li had become a pivotal term

for the Neo-Taoists in interpreting what Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, the Analects, and the I Ching had loosely proposed. The term is widely used in the text, more frequently than its closest synonym, Tao, and can be singled out as the text's most significant philosophical receptacle. The term reflects not only what Wang Pi and Kuo Hsiang put forth in common, but what they diverge on as well.

Tao-sheng is in the Neo-Taoist tradition, first of all in the way the term is used as an object or good; something "to be searched exhaustively" (chin 盡);<sup>27</sup> "to be consummated" (ch'iuung 窮);<sup>28</sup> the ultimate point "to reach" (chi 至); or "to encounter".<sup>29</sup> He also, however, adds a Buddhist color by describing the goal as something "to be enlightened to" (wu 悟),<sup>30</sup> and "to be seen (directly) or experienced" (chien 見).<sup>31</sup>

The word is employed in the text either independent of any qualification, as in the above cases, or with a qualifier. When it is qualified, the word is preceded by such indicative adjectives as "this" and "that", or an adjective phrase with chih 之 (. . . of), a word that makes a possessive case, though sometimes chih does not appear but is implicit. What is suggested here are the dual facets of the concept, the universal and the particular. That harks back to the distinct features emphasized respectively by Wang

Pi and Kuo Hsiang. Wang's focus is on the li which transcends phenomenal representation; Kuo puts stress on the li immanent in phenomena.<sup>32</sup> As a corollary, in connection with li, Wang views the world from the perspective of the absolute domain of wu or nonbeing while Kuo deals mainly with the relative realm of yu or being. In Kuo's cosmic map, every being has its own li in itself.<sup>33</sup> When a being stands in compliance with its own li, it is following the self-existent nature at the same time: li is that which is self-so or self-caused.<sup>34</sup> The stress on the relative sphere, however, does not preclude the higher plane; inasmuch as there is a particular li there is the unifying principle of the heavenly li<sup>35</sup> or the ultimate li.<sup>36</sup> Wang, in contrast, stresses the all-conserving li of Heaven or Nature which "unites and commands all particular concepts and events".<sup>37</sup> While Kuo talks emphatically of the plurality of things and their li, taking T'ien or Heaven as "name for the sum total of all things",<sup>38</sup> Wang underscores the universal unity of things and its singular principle underlying them; for Wang, the universe is the one single whole.<sup>39</sup>

These two contrasting pictures of li have both apparently found their places in Tao-sheng's metaphysical model. The particular, however, appears to be overshadowed by the universal, with the possible implication that li as an

all-conserving entity has more weight than li as an individual principle underlying a particular fact, thing, or statement. The cases of independent occurrence of the term outnumber the particular cases. Yet, an independent case does not necessarily refer to the universal entity. Although often difficult to identify, the term li, when occurring by itself, turns out in the context to be closely related to or identifiable with a particular case, mostly in the same passage or paragraph. In isolation from the actual context, therefore, the unqualified li can be wrongly reduced to the universal concept. Thus the difference in form does not always translate into a difference in content.

It is also questionable, on the other hand, whether the concept, although particularized in its form, remains particular in implication. For the marginal cases in the sense we can cite "the ultimate",<sup>40</sup> "the Buddha's (li)", "the Tathāgata's (li)", "the mysterious (li of Mahāyāna)", and, probably to a lesser degree, "(li) of emptiness (k'ung/ 'sūnyatā)". Are these senses of li all different, and are they basically dissimilar to li as used by the Neo-Taoists? As a related question, is the Buddhist system the exclusive receptacle and conveyer of li at its highest level? These questions may shed light on the scope and depth of Tao-sheng's metaphysical basis.

There are some words that are conducive to rendering the very abstruse li more accessible for those beings who are somehow "depraved". Among such words is shih 事 or profane facts. Although there is some element of this concept in Kuo Hsiang's philosophy, and also some conceptual basis for it, it is by no means entirely lacking in Tao-sheng's conception of the term; the form of close relationship between li and shih, later to be advanced in Chinese Buddhism by the Hua-yen Buddhists to the extent of interpenetration of the two entities, had not yet materialized.<sup>41</sup> Stopping short of the sense of "phenomenon" as opposed to li as "noumenon", shih is something subservient to li as a conduit or teaching aid in its explication in what appears to be a monistic perspective evident in Tao-sheng's system, as in Wang Pi's. Li becomes manifest through shih, if not in shih. As long as shih is taken as the supporting material for unfolding li, Tao-sheng remains loyal to the sūtra: shih accounts for the parables and similes concocted by the Buddha in order to present his original purport or li more comprehensible and approachable to beings.

How extensively Tao-sheng exploits metaphysical terms originated in other systems is epitomized in this passage: "Li transcends the realm of calculation . . . it fills up and covers the ultimate of non-being (wu-chi 無極)." <sup>42</sup> The

style and diction of the quote are anything but Buddhist or of Tao-sheng's coining; the key words are unmistakably identifiable in the texts associated with Neo-Taoism.<sup>43</sup> And yet it is clear in the context that the epistemological implication is rather Buddhist. "Transcending" (ch'ao 超) seems to be intended to refer to a dialectical process in which two realms, being (yu) and non-being (wu), end up being synthesized, and "the ultimate of non-being" may represent such a synthesized state as well as the other end of the spectrum. Hence, as Tao-sheng points out elsewhere, there is nothing that li does not cover and penetrate, which is identical in substance with the statement that the Dharmakaya is omnipresent.<sup>44</sup>

Still inherent in the notion of transcendence of li (a point of emphasis on the part of Wang Pi) is its immanence, which finds expression in tzu-jan, or "self-soness", also Kuo Hsiang's term for the ultimate. Tao-sheng concurs with or rather follows the Neo-Taoists in glossing and identifying li as expressed by the Buddha in the sūtra with tzu-jan.<sup>45</sup> The word tzu-jan occurs frequently, functioning variously as a noun, adjective, or verb.<sup>46</sup> When used as a substantive the term seems to have affinity with the Taoist usage. Tzu-jan refers not only to the mode in which cause and effect interact, but also to the very thing that regu-



lates the interaction.<sup>47</sup> The locus of transformation (hua) lies in tzu-jan,<sup>48</sup> which is, as it turns out, identifiable with the Buddha-nature, potentiality a priori inherent in men.<sup>49</sup> By returning to the state of tzu-jan one becomes transformed, which is tantamount to saying that by departing from "delusion" one becomes enlightened to li.<sup>50</sup> This notion of "regress" (fan 反) in reaching out to "the ultimate point of origin" (pen 本) can be traced back to Taoism. But here again, Tao-sheng, by combining them (fan and pen) with the terms "delusion" (huo 惑, moha) and "enlightenment" (wu 悟, bodhi), interpolated them into what he probably intended as an irrevocably Buddhist statement.<sup>51</sup>

(2) Fen (endowed potential in man's nature)

Thus Tao-sheng is assumed to follow the Taoists on the basic concept of nature as a self-existing state. Unlike the Taoists, however, he is concerned more with human nature in particular than with nature as a universal principle. More specifically, Tao-sheng deals with that part of the natural element in (human) beings pertaining to their capacity for perfecting enlightenment or becoming a Buddha, which, as he already proposed, is inherent in man. Though the usual term for the potential, Buddha-nature, which has its scriptural source in the Nirvāṇa Sūtra, does not occur in

the text, the idea is invariably entrenched therein by way of such expressions as "all the sentient beings are to become enlightened",<sup>52</sup> because they are "the potential bodhisattvas"<sup>53</sup> and by extension, Buddhas. Now the notion finds a Chinese equivalent in the word fen ("allotment"). The Taoist's contend that all beings should strive to live in accord with their assigned allotments, naturally varied from one individual to another.<sup>54</sup> One's happiness lies not only in realizing this inborn share of capacities, commensurable with one's ontological position in the universe, but also in successfully translating it into an appropriate, properly-defined position in the social context, which is what the Confucianists call the unity of "name and actuality" (ming-shih<sup>55</sup> 名實). But instead of delving into its social and ethical implications, which is to be subsumed eventually by the religious order in his monistic vision of the world, Tao-sheng has borrowed the term to refer to the ontological structure of beings, and the subsequent emerging epistemic method for realizing reality as a whole. More specifically, all men are endowed with the common share of capacity for "great enlightenment" (ta-wu / mahābodhi),<sup>56</sup> or, "The Buddha's knowledge and insight".<sup>57</sup> In other words, man, by his very nature, possesses "the subtle, triggering mechanism (chi 機) for enlightenment".<sup>58</sup>

The Neo-Taoist premise that natural allotment can be varied from one person to another remains intact in Tao-sheng's distinction of the individually different "sharp" and "dull" capacities.<sup>59</sup> But here is another point that happens to conform with the tenet of the sūtra.

The traditional concept of allotment thus finds a Buddhist application in the notion of potential capacity for enlightenment inherent in sentient beings. The epistemological implications of the concept also show an essential similarity with the Neo-Taoist approach. In dealing with one's attainment to li or enlightenment, Tao-sheng speaks as if there were an archetypal image of being, which is to be retrieved by men through dispensing with the existential bondages and crusts superimposed on the original, true self in the course of individual and collective history.<sup>60</sup> Salvation consists not so much in an increment of positive elements as in a decrement of negative ones, not in progression but in retrogression. For description and prescription of this approach Tao-sheng follows the Taoist line of thinking. He writes:

Li cannot be attained to instantaneously. One should grind the coarse in order to reach the fine; decrease it and further decrease until one arrives at the point of no decrease.<sup>61</sup>

In the language, style, and message it is remarkably similar to this passage in the Lao-tzu (ch. 48):

The pursuit of learning is to increase day after day. The pursuit of Tao is to decrease day after day. It is to decrease and further decrease until one reaches the point of taking no action.<sup>62</sup>

Yet the message couched in the borrowed words may not render the specific approach advocated in this way incompatible with the line of the sūtra as regards the matter: for the position of the sūtra apropos the process is, if anything, none other than gradual approach as a whole. This is but another example of internal affinities enshrouded in different expressions.

### (3) The role of language

Typical of a tradition of perennial philosophy, Taoism treats language as a tool somewhat deficient in unfolding ultimate reality to the full extent, as epitomized by the adage in the Lao Tzu: "Those who know do not speak; those who speak do not know." (ch. 56) Also the Hsi-tz'u chuan ("Commentary on the Appended Judgements") of the I Ching, which is a text of Wang Pi's commentary, quotes Confucius as stating: "Writing does not do full justice to the words, which in turn do not do the same to the ideas." (11-12) The ineptness of words finds expression in none other than the ineffable nature of li. Kuo Hsiang echoes this point here: "The ultimate li is not something to be spoken of . . . li is not that which can be verbalized."<sup>63</sup>

Tao-sheng is unequivocally in agreement with the Taoists on the limit of language. Various adjectival modifiers descriptive of li such as "deep", "profound", "wide", "mysterious", "far-off" and "dark", all clearly identifiable in the Taoist literatures,<sup>64</sup> have the connotations of the unspeakable, abstruse nature of li. At best the role of language is to circumscribe li through categorization and approximation. He pointedly declares: "Li is transcendent to the words."<sup>65</sup>

Implicit in the limitation of the words, on the other hand, is their intermediary value. Language belongs to the category of exigency (ch'uan 權) or expediency (fang-pien 方便, upāya). Tao-sheng declares succinctly: "Li by nature is unspeakable, and yet we speak of it by resort to the words in their temporary and false role, which we call expedient means."<sup>66</sup> The words as medium or "ferry" are indispensable especially to those who have not "witnessed" li in the course of their self-realization.<sup>67</sup> In this respect language can be best described as a catalyst in the chemistry of enlightenment or realization of li.<sup>68</sup> Technically, in Buddhist terms, it can be counted among the supporting causes (paryaya) whereas the primary cause (hetu) for making realization possible lies in the original capacity innate in human nature.<sup>69</sup>

The utility and limit of language is manifestly delineated against the background of the classic simile of fishnets and traps. There the tools are rightly symbolized as something to be dispensed with once the desired goal, catching fishes and animals in this case, is achieved. Tao-sheng appropriates the simile, originally from the Chuang-tzu (ch. 26), in his own way:

Since he has realized li, what is the use of the words? They are like fishnets and traps for getting fishes and hares: once they have been caught, what utility do the nets and traps have?<sup>70</sup>

The simile receives a lengthy elaboration in Wang Pi's Chou-i lüeh-li (Exemplifications of the Book of Changes), in which it is said summarily:

Now, the words are the fishnets of the images, and the images are the traps of the meaning . . . Thus only by forgetting the images can one grasp the meaning, and only by forgetting the words can one grasp the images.<sup>71</sup>

As an extension of such an axiomatic premise, Tao-sheng likewise holds that the pure object remains far-fetched from, and too recondite for, words and relative human knowledge.<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless language, at times, especially in connection with the Sage, is credited with more than a symbolical and catalytic role. Here Tao-sheng also shares common ground with the Neo-Taoists. The words of the Sage, who has had an experiential encounter with li, carry some weight and

an aura of mystic depth and propriety, with efficacy amounting to authentic testimonial, a right source of knowledge; his words acquiesce with li.<sup>73</sup> Thus here language does not remain just descriptive but turns prescriptive.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, in the adulation of the sūtra itself as repeatedly urged therein there may not be anything irrational and so unacceptable to Tao-sheng,<sup>75</sup> whose approach demonstrated in the commentary generally reflects more than anything a rationalist frame of mind.

As has been suggested earlier, the inscrutableness of li as the symbol of the core reality gives rise to the inadequacy of words vis-à-vis li, as is evident in the profuse expressions descriptive of the unfathomable nature of li and its closest synonym, Tao.<sup>76</sup> Wang Pi, as he portrays Tao as "bottomless", "deepest", "most remote" and so on, makes much of the inherent difficulty in the process of realizing it.<sup>77</sup> In line with this standpoint, Wang "opposes symbolism of numbers" represented in the Book of Changes and accentuates "the (cosmic) situation and (individual) position."<sup>78</sup> Likewise, using the word "number" (shu 數),<sup>79</sup> Tao-sheng affirms the gulf between the two representations: "The profound li is in so dark an abyss that it transcends what the numerical realm represents."<sup>80</sup> Also to be included here is the proposition that "the ultimate image has no form",<sup>81</sup>

"form" symbolizing the domain of calculative and discursive thinking, for the Chuang-tzu has already asserted that "What is ultimately fine (or essence) has no form . . . the formless is of such dimension that it is beyond the reach of numbers."<sup>82</sup>

Appropriate to the perception of words and symbols viewed in both negative and positive ways, Tao-sheng clearly puts himself in the indigenous Chinese setting.<sup>83</sup> Nonetheless, it may not be just coincidental that the point is undoubtedly implicit in the Mahāyāna philosophy, especially in the form made known to him by way of the Prajñā-pāramitā sūtras.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, he was exposed to and familiar with the two sources of information concerning the subject. Since there is a common ground existing between them in the substance, some kind of grafting in the form would not sound awkward and unnatural to Tao-sheng. The expression k'ung-li 空理, "li of Emptiness (Śūnyatā)",<sup>85</sup> is a case in point. It is open to varying interpretations, but it seems here that, since in syntax the two nouns are in apposition, the word li simply designates the preceding word in line with its general import as principle or substratum underlying phenomena and affairs, including the previously stated facts and notions. It also appears that the term reinforces what k'ung is purported to mean. Hence, through blending, what



exists separately is strengthened and articulated rather than weakened or distorted.

#### (4) The "Sage" and Related Terms

In the text one readily finds the words "the Sagely Man" (Sheng-jen 聖人) and its abbreviation "Sage" (Sheng) used more frequently than "the Buddha" as the leading character, undoubtedly constituting a departure from the sūtra. Are they merely interchangeable synonyms? "Sage" embraces broader connotations than Buddha, even if the latter is combined with the concept of the Dharma-kāya. The term naturally has an added significance, for it is a concept that originates and figures conspicuously in the established Chinese systems.

- (i) The Sage in the frame of "the inner" and "the outer".

The Sage personifies the prototype of man in both traditions, Confucian and Taoist, yet in a slightly different portrayal: the one, a type of socially-oriented leader, the other, an introvertive recluse. In the Neo-Taoist tradition, the two pictures merge in a syncretic form, with Confucius emerging as the foremost archetype of sagehood. Sagehood actually accounts for half of the Chinese ideal of man, succinctly expressed in the idiom, "Tao of sageliness within and kingliness without."<sup>86</sup> A Sage-king does not necessarily

have socio-political implications but may refer to a spiritual ideal; the expression then simply suggests a perfect model of man representable in two parts in essence.<sup>68</sup>

The bi-focal division of an ideal character is a recurrent pattern in the text. Of the two facades, internality overshadows externality in terms of priority and significance, as illustrated in the repeated motif: "As virtues fill within, fame spreads without",<sup>88</sup> and it is undoubtedly a variation of the Taoist theme, typified in Kuo Hsiang's words: "As virtues fill within, the beings respond to the outside", or ". . . then spirit fills up the outside."<sup>89</sup> The centrality of the internal part is implicit also in the words of Tao-sheng: "As the Tao is great, it combines kingliness."<sup>90</sup>

Tao-sheng proceeds to translate this Taoist frame into Buddhist terms. The outer part of the Tao is equated with the external activities compassionately carried out for the sake of other beings.<sup>91</sup> "The equal emphasis on external and internal life"<sup>92</sup> laid out by Kuo Hsiang applies also to the process of enlightenment. Tao-sheng writes:

Since internally they have cherished the wondrous comprehension and externally they have further practised the six perfections (pāramitās), and their thought and reflection affairs (shih) are both in so advanced a state that right awakening (samyaksambodhi) is the matter of any moment, in the morning or evening.<sup>93</sup>

It seems that in the background of Tao-sheng's pattern of thought lies a monistic tendency, also identifiable in the mainline of Neo-Taoism, in which initially the diverse elements or orders, typically dual, are conserved and eventually fused together in the same goal.<sup>94</sup> Likewise t'i (substance) analytically represents the unity of two aspects, hsiang 相 (lakṣaṇa) or external mark, and hsing 性 or nature.<sup>95</sup> The Sage is the one who is "equipped with the Tao or expertise for penetrating" and unifying two layers of being, a priori and a posteriori.<sup>96</sup>

As regards the Sage's role in the enlightenment of beings, the Sage as envisioned by Tao-sheng participates actively in the process to act as a catalytic guide toward the stage of radical transformation, as well as the initiator of the process. His work is summed up in the word hua 化, which means not just "to teach", but "to exert metamorphosis" or "conversion".<sup>97</sup> The Sage's didactic program for teaching and converting beings is geared to meet varying circumstances, individual and collective, including intelligence, temperament, ethos, and receptivity. This factor brings Tao-sheng closer to the Buddhist ideals represented in the sūtra than to the Chinese ideals. Although there are parallel notions in the two systems, skill-in-means (upāya-kaśālya) and exigency (ch'üan 權) respectively, they are

alike merely in form, but different in orientation. In actual application of the principle, the Chinese sage, especially the Taoist Sage, is primarily concerned with himself rather than with others, teaching them, if ever, by exemplification rather than by tête-à-tête instruction. But the compassionate Buddhist teacher acts as a spiritual mentor approaching men with the ready prescription for suffering and leads them directly to salvation. Thus the similarity, unfolding in the way the process is induced, fades at the end with divergence emerging in pedagogical philosophy and methodology. The way the Buddhist "sage sets forth his teaching"<sup>98</sup> and "charting out his course"<sup>99</sup> resembles, or is rather identical with, the mode in which the Confucian "sage sets forth the diagrams"<sup>100</sup> and "sets forth his teaching",<sup>101</sup> only to reveal the methodological difference, for the program of the Confucian is set to be carried out "by way of his spiritual path". Hua, therefore, in the original Taoist sense, stops at self-transformation (tzu-hua 自化) at best leading to exemplification short of helping other beings to ferry over to the shore in the Mahāyānistic way, if not thereby entirely lacking in some sort of the active, dynamic interaction between the Sage and beings. In such a way, it has been shown that the ideal unity of the internal and the external in man has found a new form of harmony in Tao-

sheng's interpretation in conformity with the Bodhisattva ideal, the raison d'être of Mahāyāna, calling for a more dynamic, outgoing approach than what the original Taoist formula tended to imply. Some of the points made above will be substantiated later.

The form-borrowing and dynamism as an added element can be discerned in Tao-sheng's interpretation of the concept of concentration (ting 定, samādhi). The Sage of the Chuang-tzu and Kuo Hsiang is the one who freely roams between the two realms of being (yu) and non-being (wu), between movement (tung 動) and quiescence (ching 靜), without obstruction, without any deliberation of his own (wu-hsin 無心) in a state on non-action (wu-wei 無爲).<sup>102</sup> Yet somehow the Taoist Sage is tilted toward the side of quiescence, in contradistinction with the king. In comparison, the Sage in Tao-sheng's portrayal is not subject to movement and quiescence, particularly in the state of concentration or samādhi, in which, unlike in the Taoist reveries symbolized in the term tso-wang 坐忘 (sitting in forgetfulness),<sup>103</sup> li is never to be forgotten or lost.<sup>104</sup> Among what ought to be forgotten instead are the external mark (lakṣaṇa) and existential bondage (lei 累) which hinder one's path to li.<sup>105</sup> Lei is another term adopted from Taoism.<sup>106</sup> Identifiable with defilements (kléśa),<sup>107</sup> lei, also meaning

"ties", refers to something that helps feed and cause attachment--a new feature added to its otherwise similar meaning taken by the Taoists.

(ii) Chi 氣 and its beyond

Tao-sheng's Sage, not subject to either of the two modes of existence, remains always in the state of wu-wei or non-action,<sup>108</sup> in much the same way as the Dharma-kāya,<sup>109</sup> the incarnation of li, is spatio-temporally omnipresent.<sup>110</sup> It seems that in the Chinese classics something eternally ubiquitous as the ontological ground of being is generally postulated. There are some terms like t'ien (heaven), Tao and li that clearly suggest the idea and it becomes more explicit in Kuo Hsiang. He identifies the true nature of the Sage with "that by which traces are caused" (so-i-chi 所以迹).<sup>111</sup> The Sage is comprehended by "function"<sup>112</sup> under the external traces (chi). Thus in the schema so-i-chi is the substructure, with the Sage working between the two levels. The word so-i-chi as such does not occur in the commentary but its intent is implicit in other abstract terms, such as shih 實 (the real or actuality), in the apposition of name-reality (ming-shih),<sup>113</sup> a much discussed subject in the native tradition. But chi, identical with ming, occurs more often (in twenty places). It is semantic-

ally juxtaposed with "li" (398a), "the real" (399b, 403d), and "Dharma" (400a). And it directly correlates with "words" (399c, 408a), "feeling" (402b), "exigency" (401a, 407b, 412d), and "affairs" (411d et passim). It is also coupled with "transformation" (406d), and "(the past) conduct" (407b). Typically, chi has to do with "the external" (398a et passim). Although it is found juxtaposed with the true, Dharma, or li, it is not meant to be something bogus, but still in touch with the ultimately real,<sup>114</sup> while it can be said to be short of reaching the real.<sup>115</sup> Even when it stands by itself without direct reference to the ontological substratum, chi implicitly suggests some locus from which it emanates, and also to which it is to "return" (396d), alluding to "the ultimate source" (411d); the terms involved are invariably traceable to the Taoist texts. Behind Tao-sheng's indebtedness to the Taoists for the general framework of the concept, however, there emerges a fundamental discrepancy in its relation to the ultimate reality. Tao-sheng's "trace" represented by "three vehicles" has a temporary but necessary value with positive implications for the process of salvation, whereas the Taoist "trace" is designated as something that, ideally speaking, has to be rejected from the beginning. The Taoist ideal is thus glorified in the Tao-te ching, ch. 27: "The skilful traveler leaves no traces of his

wheels or footsteps."<sup>116</sup> On this, Wang Pi comments: "If one acts according to tzu-jan without creating or starting things, things will reach their goal and leave no track or trace."<sup>117</sup>

It is true that what Tao-sheng borrowed from the Neo-Taoists extends beyond the form of the term to its conceptual framework. It is delineated, for example, in the juxtapositioning of the word with li as is shown in Kuo Hsiang's enunciation: "Once li is arrived at, chi is extinguished."<sup>118</sup> As to how the notion applies to the interaction between the Sage and the beings, the fundamental philosophical difference unfolds again. This difference amounts even to the denial of the trace of the Sage to the beings. Kuo writes:

The Sage causes the beings to act for themselves. Therefore, he is without trace. Hence, what we call "Sage" refers to the one whose self (or substance) has no trace. Thus, when the beings obtain [what they believe to be the Sage's] trace and the trace obtained is given a forced name of "Sage", the "Sage" then refers [in reality] to the designation for [the one whose essence is] traceless.<sup>119</sup>

Implicit in the different perceptions of "trace" is the way the Sage deals with the beings didactically and soteriologically. Although the Taoist Sage in this context elicits a stand-offish attitude toward other beings, remaining self-centered and assuming a posture of strict aloofness



from them, the Buddhist Sage, on the other hand, by means of "trace" closely follows the emotional conditions of the beings in his path to saving them.<sup>120</sup>

Such divergence is clearly identifiable in the implications of ch'üan or exigency taken differently by the two sides. Like chi or trace, ch'üan is something from which the real is distinguished: "chi stops short of reaching the real"; "ch'üan shows the unreal".<sup>121</sup> Yet it represents an essential part of the edification process with a transitory value and validity, typified by the three vehicles as the harbinger of the One Vehicle.<sup>122</sup> In fact, ch'üan is the favoured synonym of the otherwise more standard technical term fang-p'ien (upāya).<sup>123</sup> Tao-sheng keeps within the bounds of the Taoist tradition when he states that "the exigent approaches (of the Sage) are unrestricted in pattern".<sup>124</sup> But similarities stop there. On the one side, the emphasis is on the Sage's ability to adapt himself to the changing circumstances he encounters; on the other side, the emphasis is on the Buddhist Sage's effort to comply with the different existential conditions of the beings, the recipients of his salvific prescription. The two philosophical traditions, as represented by the Neo-Taoists and Tao-sheng as a Buddhist, are founded upon a set of shared presuppositions: self-transformation or enlightenment as the goal of

religious practice, and achieving Sagehood or Buddhahood as that part of human nature that makes it universally possible. The consequential total effect might not vary whichever path may be taken, but they remain clearly dissimilar in their approaches as to how the beings should be edified. Compared with the image of the Buddha-Sage playing the part of an active guide by posing even as the secondary conditions (yüan 緣, pratyaya)<sup>125</sup> with an organized program and formula on hand requiring a more regimented and institutionalized procedure, the Taoist Sage cuts a very passive and private figure, remaining an ideal to be emulated by the beings.<sup>126</sup> About this laissez-faire pattern of the process, the Tao-te ching sets the tone: "Tao invariably takes no action, and there is nothing left undone . . . all things will transform spontaneously."<sup>127</sup> Again, the same is intoned in the I Ching: "The Sages persevere long in their course, and all under the sky will be transformed and perfected."<sup>128</sup> The naturalism in their philosophy of education receives a further articulation in the following words of Wang Pi:

The Sage understands the nature of tzu-jan (self-soness) perfectly and knows clearly the conditions of all things. Therefore, he goes along with them but takes no unnatural action. He is in harmony with them but does not impose anything on them. He removes their delusions and eliminates their doubts. Hence, people's minds are not confused and things are contented with their own nature.<sup>129</sup>

Although they take their common term hua to refer to both

process and goal, teaching-cum-transformation, the Taoists and Tao-sheng are widely apart on how this can be achieved by beings.

- (iii) Kan 感 (perception), ying 應 (response), and chi 機 (subtle triggering-mechanism)

Tao-sheng's points of contact with and departure from the Taoist and Neo-Taoist line of thought, especially in regard to didactic methodology, become manifest more distinctly in a set of terms descriptive of the way the Sage and the beings interact with each other in the teaching-learning process. The concepts involved are all firmly rooted in the Chinese philosophical tradition, while one of them, namely chi, partly coincides in connotation with the Buddhist concept of "faculty", an otherwise dormant concept which Tao-sheng excavated ingeniously.

The mechanism of the process is initiated by the activation of chi or subtle, triggering mechanism, as it "actively appeals to (k'ou 扣) the Sage".<sup>130</sup> Here it has to do with the beings' own initiative taken by dint of the innate potent. The locus classicus of the term is in the I Ching,<sup>131</sup> but chi is found more relevantly and commonly in the Chuang-tzu<sup>132</sup> and subsequently in Kuo Hsiang's commentary.<sup>133</sup> Chi is closely connected to ken, "root" or "faculty". It does not specifically occur in Tao-sheng's commen-

tary, but in other Buddhist contexts the two combine to make a compound,<sup>134</sup> and the linkage is implicit in Tao-sheng's analysis. Only ken is found in the sutra.<sup>135</sup> Although ken is also drawn by Tao-sheng,<sup>136</sup> chi is exploited in overwhelmingly broad contexts. It becomes evident that Tao-sheng fully exploits the term, already impregnated with the Taoist and Neo-Taoist perspectives in order to apply the Buddhist doctrines. Even the connection of ken and chi was already forged by Kuo Hsiang. On the passage of the Chuang-tzu, "Where lusts and desires are deep, the springs of the Heavenly (T'ien-chi) are shallow"<sup>137</sup> Kuo Hsiang states:

Only after the deep root rather reaches the ultimate, one can revert once [and for all] to the desireless state.<sup>138</sup>

Chi's relation with human nature is also clear in Kuo Hsiang's words: "as they employ their own nature (hsing) the Heavenly chi darkly issues forth."<sup>139</sup> "Heavenly (t'ien)" here may not entirely be foreign to Tao-sheng when it comes down to its practical implication, because for Kuo Hsiang "'Heaven' represents the general designation for the ten thousand (or myriad) things."<sup>140</sup> Viewed in this light, with its connection with inherent nature (hsing), the "spiritual (shen) chi"<sup>141</sup> of Tao-sheng is not far off in implication from the "Heavenly chi" of the Neo-Taoists.<sup>142</sup>

The terms chi and ken seem to be inseparably inter-related in that they denote the two facades, inside and outside, of one and the same spiritual entity: chi appears to refer more to the kinetic superstratum of faculty and being and ken more to the inner substratum. It is this chi that enables the beings to establish a point of contact with the Sage as a spiritual ability, impetus, momentum, or chance.<sup>143</sup> This opportunity will not be tapped unless it is caused to spring from the internal capacity as an extension.<sup>144</sup> The concept in its original form is based on the premise that human nature inherently contains a positive element conducive to man's advance to the Tao or li, a parallel with Tao-sheng's point of emphasis that all beings are Buddha-natured. But Tao-sheng exhibits more affinity with the Lotus than with Neo-Taoism by underlining the difference of chi as well as of ken among individuals.<sup>145</sup> Although the Taoists admit variable individual allotment in one's nature, they do not explicitly dwell on that aspect; the resultant effect on the Taoist Sage's teaching plan has him applying the principle of exigency to himself only, while the Buddhist Sage thereby addresses himself directly to the well-being of others.

Subsequent to the activation of chi, as the next step of the process, the Sage, stimulated or moved (kan) by the

beings, who indicate that they are spiritually ripe for his teaching,<sup>146</sup> responds (ying) to them with the teaching program. The Sage's response is an automatic reflex to the stimuli reaching him from the beings, because the Sage is capable of intuitive realization (beyond discursive reasoning).<sup>147</sup> Hence, the two acts, moving and responding, are integrally related like an almost simultaneous chain of reaction in continuum, as is illustrated by the compound kan-ying.

Here again, however, the analysis of the schema in concrete terms indicates that beyond the shared framework there is the fundamental difference between the two philosophical systems. In the case of the Chinese Sage, stimuli come from external things and the ambience surrounding him, but not, as in the case of Tao-sheng's Sage, from the beings in the course of his interaction with them. Furthermore, the Chinese Sage's response is directed to himself in order to make himself adapt to the changing situations in general, but not for the sake of others in, at least, a direct, unmitigated way. This image of the self-oriented Chinese Sage figures unambiguously in the contexts; it remains grammatically not objectified<sup>148</sup> in contradistinction to Tao-sheng's usage, in which the subject and the object are almost always posited explicitly or implicitly.<sup>149</sup>

The feeling (stimulus)-response (kan-ying) pattern employed by Tao-sheng thus concerns the interaction between the Sage and the sentient beings, with the element of human nature associated with the capacity for achieving Buddhahood at the base, while the traditional pattern covers the universal aspects of nature expressed in binary terms, namely, yin and yang.<sup>150</sup> The interaction nevertheless takes place, of course, but not in mutually equal stations. There is an original chasm between the Sage and the beings; they are situated in different realms. An attempt to bridge the gap by reaching out to the lower plane is made by the Sage as he assumes a "deigning"<sup>151</sup> posture to "respond" (ying) to other beings. However, in the context of the Chinese tradition, this posture applies to a case when a superior man (chün-tzu) or an emperor, not necessarily a Sage, being positioned, like the average man, somewhere between heaven and earth, "stoops down" in order to search the principle in the world.<sup>152</sup> Thus the concept does not apply to the situation in which the Sage interacts with the beings as is the case with Tao-sheng's Sage.

The Sage's next move, subsequent to the stimulation from the beings showing their readiness to have their inner potential stirred up and his consequent reflex, is the actual teaching itself<sup>153</sup> which can ferry them up to the seventh

stage (bhūmi) of the bodhisattva path.<sup>154</sup> The activities and compassion of the Sage, largely missing in Taoism, are found intrinsically in the sūtra.<sup>155</sup> Otherwise, the phraseology in which the teacher-learner relationship is delineated is drawn largely from the classical texts associated with Neo-Taoism. This is further illustrated by the expression "the exhaustive realization of li".<sup>156</sup> The Sage is equipped with "the methodology (tao) of thorough penetration (or propagation)".<sup>157</sup> This resembles the mode represented in The Book of Changes in which the Change (i), when it moves to act, "thoroughly penetrates the raison d'être of the world."<sup>158</sup>

(iv) The Sage as saviour: chi-wu (to ferry the beings)

As the term hua suggests, the function of the Sage extends beyond the category of a mere teacher to a saviour in the beings' spiritual journey to enlightenment. The notion of salvation is, as Jochaim Wach points out, a sine qua non for any system to be religious,<sup>159</sup> and it is invariably found in the two systems related to Tao-sheng. The word "to ferry" (chi) is contained in the sūtra in the expression chi-tu 濟渡 (to ferry [the living beings] across [the sea of reincarnation to the shore of nirvāṇa]).<sup>160</sup> The notion is also in view in the Taoist works in similar forms including



even the expression chi-wu (to ferry the beings across [to salvation]), frequently employed by Tao-sheng throughout the text. Implicitly proposed in the phrase chi-wu as used by Tao-sheng is, not only the explicit object to be rescued, but also the agent of saving, namely, the Sage, thereby indicating a more organized form of salvific process in the Buddhist didactic program. In Taoism, on the other hand, the subject is at best the amorphous abstract Tao or the Change. So whenever the soteriological aspect is mentioned, the Sage gives way, appropriately enough, to the Tathāgata as well as to the Buddha.<sup>161</sup> Saving other beings was an essential mission for the Buddha, constituting his raison d'être in the world. In contrast, the idea of salvation in the Chuang-tzu, when directed especially to other beings, appears to take up a secondary position; saving is relegated to something in the category of "the knowledge of petty man":

The understanding of the little man never gets beyond gifts and wrappings, . . . He wastes his spirit on the shallow and trivial, and yet wants to be the saviour of both world and the Way, to blend both form and emptiness in the Great Unity. Such a man will blunder and go astray in time and space; his body entangled, he will never come to know the Great Beginning.<sup>162</sup>

In so far as it is held that transformation is self-induced or spontaneous (tzu-hua), there is no substantial difference between the two systems regarding the goal of universal salvation. However, there is a clear-cut discrepancy in

methodology. Recalling the premise in the Tao-te ching, that "Tao never does; yet through it all things are done. If the barons and kings would but possess themselves of it, the ten thousand creatures would at once be transformed",<sup>163</sup> Wang Pi goes on to say: "Do not inhibit the nature (hsing) of beings, then beings will help [save] themselves."<sup>164</sup> In brief, as Kuo Hsiang puts it, "If there is deliberate action (yu-wei), there is no way of helping [themselves for working out their own salvation]".<sup>165</sup>

The Buddhists and the Neo-Taoists thus start from a common basis, namely their belief in human nature in its original wholesomeness, but they diverge from each other when it comes to the methodology for realization. However, they merge at the same goal at the end, i.e. universal salvation. Based on this common premise, the two ways of thought set the goal of bringing the Sage and the beings together through the latter's self-enhancing acts, with some aid from the former. This point is emphasized more in Buddhism. After his own enlightenment on (the truth of) suffering, the Buddha set the goal to bring the beings to the same realization, that is, to save [others] as the next step.<sup>166</sup> To be considered along this line is the Taoist idea of "seeing things equal" or "making all things equal" (chi-wu 齊物).<sup>167</sup> While referring to the state of consciousness "in which any

distinction between It and Other is seen to be illusory and all language dissolves in the immediate experience of an undifferentiated world",<sup>168</sup> the notion connotes the fundamental equality of all beings.<sup>169</sup> Likewise, Tao-sheng also recognizes the "universality or sameness" (p'ing-teng 平等) when he glosses the term "mahāyāna".<sup>170</sup> In this framework, even "one trickle of goodness" is conducive to achieving the "topmost knowledge".<sup>171</sup> The underlying implication is that all beings are equally footed in the ability to realize the truth. A striking similarity with indigenous Chinese thought in wording and content is demonstrated in the way Tao-sheng makes the point of universal salvation. While discussing the efficacy of calling upon the name of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara as one of the numerous methods the Sage designed for the sake of the beings, Tao-sheng says that the Sage is intent on saving all by ever-varying approaches without missing any one.<sup>172</sup> Likewise, it is said in the I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan (Commentary on the Appended Judgements):

(The knowledge of spirit) molds and encompasses all transformation of Heaven and Earth without mistake, and it employs diverse approaches to bring things into completion without missing any.<sup>173</sup>

There is, nevertheless, an indelible mark of Mahāyāna in Tao-sheng's perception of the salvific process. He does not fail to note that the Tathāgata or the Buddha acts on the salvation of all beings, being motivated, appropriately

enough, by "great compassion" (mahākaruṇā).<sup>174</sup> There still can be certain reciprocal feelings or affection exchanged between the Taoist Sage and the beings,<sup>175</sup> and the consequential effect might be identical, though the route taken may be different. This becomes clear in the words of Lao Tzu:

And, therefore, the sage is always skillful and wholehearted in the salvation of men, so that there is no deserted man; he is always skillful and whole-hearted in the rescue of things, so that there is no abandoned thing.<sup>176</sup>

And yet it does not seem to match the Buddha-sage's compassion in its direct interaction and immediate impact. The adjective "great", which always appears as a qualifier when Tao-sheng uses the word "compassion", is perhaps intended to accentuate what he may have considered a distinctive concept.

(5) The emotional factor (ch'ing 情)

Involved in the interaction between the Sage and the beings is a peculiar element called ch'ing (feeling, mood). An essential faculty in the biological and mental makeup of the human psyche and mind, it plays a significant part in man's drive toward illumination. One of the recurrent terms in the text, it has no exact Sanskrit equivalent. Its closest equivalent in the sūtra may be adhimuktatā, "disposition", which can be the basis for nurturing faith and understanding. Although both terms constitute the condition

that prompted the Buddha to employ various approaches in teaching the beings, adhimukti, "strong inclination, attachment, earnest, zealous application",<sup>177</sup> is limited to a potentially favorable human emotion that could become "faith and understanding" (hsin-chieh 信解), whereas ch'ing has a wider range of application covering neutral, negative, as well as favorable aspects, referring more often to the somewhat rudimentary, volatile part of human emotion which is to be neutralized and brought under control. It does not stop just at sensory feeling in its limited sense.<sup>178</sup> Naturally, it can readily be assumed that Tao-sheng had recourse to the native Chinese sources for this conception. But first let us see how the term is placed in the text semantically and syntactically.

A prominent medium through which ch'ing is rendered apparent is the term li. Ch'ing is antithetically juxtaposed with li in many places, pushing the locus of li outside its (ch'ing's domain;<sup>179</sup> li is darkened by ch'ing;<sup>180</sup> and ch'ing succumbs to li.<sup>181</sup> In brief, ch'ing has to be overcome in order to pave the way for li to prevail.<sup>182</sup> In other words, ch'ing differs from what constitutes the original state or nature.<sup>183</sup>

Now, turning to the Buddhist terminology, Tao-sheng puts ch'ing in the same category with illusion (moha),<sup>184</sup> illusive thought,<sup>185</sup> mind of impaired vision,<sup>186</sup> and the five

desires.<sup>187</sup> However, ch'ing also signifies the base of inner tendency<sup>188</sup> which can become meritorious and conducive to the beings' search for Dharma and the One. Ch'ing connotes something existentially too significant to be ignored; it is something to be grappled with by the Sage to steer beings to the realization of the One. In this respect, it retains something of "disposition" (adhimukti).<sup>189</sup> One finds the Buddhist element more strongly imprinted in terms of the scope of the application of the concept, which extends beyond individual or private emotion, to a collective public mood (shih-ch'ing 時情)<sup>190</sup> prevailing in the congregation surrounding the Buddha. Tao-sheng thereby elevated the Chinese concept from its originally individualistic content to a higher religious dimension of "social emotion"<sup>191</sup> in harmony with the Mahāyānic notion of compassion. There is no indication that other contemporary and earlier Chinese Buddhists treated the concept in such a way.

There is no doubt that Tao-sheng is indebted to the indigenous sources for the basic signification and format of the idea of the emotional factor. In fact, the question of ch'ing has been a conspicuous subject of continuous discussion throughout the Chinese tradition, from as early as Mencius to the in-depth inquiries by the Neo-Confucianists. In Tao-sheng's period it had already intrigued the major figures of Neo-Taoism including Ho Yen (d. 249) and Wang Pi,

two ostensibly contrasting figures. The gist of the argument was whether or not the Sage, like ordinary beings, possesses emotions, usually broken down into five: joy, anger, sorrow, delight, and hatred. Behind their differing views the fact remains that Ho Yen and Wang Pi are in agreement that the Sage is not "ensnared" (lei) by emotions in his response to the beings or objects (wu 物), but their reasons differ: according to Ho Yen, the emotions are totally absent, yet for Wang Pi the Sage has the ability to put emotions to rest lest he should be enslaved by them, to remain nonchalant and disinterested in the entangled affairs of the world.<sup>192</sup> In any case, the Neo-Taoists saw ch'ing as being part of the corpus of human nature as much as is hsing, representing two different levels of nature, a posteriori and a priori respectively. According to Wang Pi, these two entities (also a continually much-debated topic in Chinese philosophy with respect to their relationship)<sup>193</sup> ideally are to be brought into harmony with human activities so that an equilibrium of mind may be attained.<sup>194</sup> In actual usage, the Neo-Taoist texts and their canons also fed into the word ch'ing some of the connotations found in Tao-sheng's conception which point to those elements that are counterproductive to the cause of what is true or universal. Ch'ing is synonymously coupled with the word wei 偽, or false.<sup>195</sup> In the context of Kuo

Hsiang's philosophy, ch'ing is assumed as something existentially real, so that the beings may be provided with the basis for their exploration and realization of the ultimate li.<sup>196</sup>

Tao-sheng is not directly concerned with the question as to whether the Sage is under the influence of feelings, because he assumes that the Buddhist Sage, by virtue of being enlightened, has, like any yogi, brought the senses (indriyas), the source of feelings, under complete control for good. On a few occasions, however, ch'ing still applies to the Sage, but it signifies only a good intention or will to be activated and is exercised for the sake of other beings.<sup>197</sup> The same is true of the word yu 慾 (to desire),<sup>198</sup> the very term otherwise equivalent to trṣṇā (tanhā), the arch-cause of suffering (k'u/duḥkha), and transmigration. In contrast, the Taoist Sage has no such will or desire, neither for his own sake nor for others', even though it can still be said that he rules the world in such a way that people are caused to be freed from desires and delusion, according to the Tao-te ching.<sup>199</sup> Even when Wang Pi argues that the Sage is subject to feelings, this refers to the situation concerning the external objects (wu) surrounding him. In Tao-sheng's vocabulary, the same word primarily refers to (human) being. Tao-sheng is more



concerned with human situation. Therein lies the fundamental difference between the teaching methods of the two sides, having had already become manifest in other concepts: the one, by a passive, static exemplification, the other, by a direct, dynamic approach, although these are not necessarily being based on the opposite motives of self-orientation and altruism. They still share much in the rudimentary level of feelings, extending to a somewhat faith-like earnestness,<sup>200</sup> but Tao-sheng moves from the level of its application to a positive, religious dimension to a point beyond the neutral sphere of feeling in general. "Delight" (lo 樂), for instance, has been transformed into the holy blissfulness associated with meditation, and is presented as something antithetical and thus antidotal to suffering.<sup>201</sup> In the Sage ch'ing is transformed into the pathos felt for and directed toward the suffering beings.

(6) Lei (ensnarement, bondage)

Due to their alienation from the li or Tao proper, the unreleased beings are conditioned to remain in the entangled state of existence, often called lei 累. The word is found together with "external mark" (hsiang/lakṣaṇa) both as something subject to be forgotten after "wondrous fruit" is obtained.<sup>202</sup> The worldly forms (shih) and images

(phenomenon) are listed as the effects brought about by lei.<sup>203</sup> It appears to have something in common with impurity or depravity (kleśa)<sup>204</sup> and attachment, constituting a stumbling block to one's passage to li. Naturally for the Sage who has apprehended li it is gone forever.<sup>205</sup> It is something that used to occur less often in the beings of antiquity, whose "naturally endowed original stuff" was pure and untainted.<sup>206</sup>

Tracking the classical source of the term, one comes across a similar though somewhat nebulous form of its usage in the Neo-Taoist literature. Referring to the state whose absence predicates the Sage, Wang Pi writes: "The emotion of the Sage responds to the things, but is not ensnared by them".<sup>207</sup> The li versus lei pattern already took place in Kuo Hsiang: ". . . to advance to the ultimate li thus to dispel lei";<sup>208</sup> the process is identical with that found in the commentary. The objects that give rise to attachment or bondage include "form and name",<sup>209</sup> which accounts for what is real. It is described as a process that the deliberate mind (yu-hsin) affects on the self-so state (tzu-jan).<sup>210</sup>

Thus what seems to have begun as a verb in Taoism and Neo-Taoism through Wang Pi, used loosely to describe the deluded condition of men entangled in the phenomenal factors, incognizant of their true nature, came via Kuo Hsiang to be fixed by Tao-sheng's time as an abstract noun, referring to a

kind of existential bondage, which the Tathāgata can help untie. This is clearly demonstrated in the Pien-tsung lun by Hsieh Ling-yüan, which contains a series of inquiries about Tao-sheng's theory of sudden enlightenment. There the term is settled as a noun, shown in the phrases "annihilation of lei" and "suppression of lei",<sup>211</sup> the former being identified with sudden enlightenment. In the Buddhist terminology, lei seems to play the same role as the twin "hindrances" or "veils" (chang/āvarāṇas), intellectual (jñeya-) and moral (kleśa-).<sup>212</sup> In its practical implication lei seems to be equivalent to "delusion" (huo/moha), a cause of nescience (avidyā). And we find those key related terms in the Chuang-tzu in a similar context:

Such a man will get confused and deluded in the entanglement of forms of the universe, and will never come to know the Grand Beginning.<sup>213</sup>

In so far as such equations and actual contents of the terms may not be incompatible with the genral tenet of Taoist philosophy, Tao-sheng found in the term a common denominator and saw no contradiction.

#### (7) One Ultimate

One of the major themes resonant throughout the commentary is the process of the three vehicles evolving into one. This theme, which can be regarded as the leitmotif of the sūtra, especially appeals to Tao-sheng, as he returns to

it time and again. The proposition can be considered from two perspectives. In a narrow, textual context, the numbers refer to three kinds of discipleship, namely, 'srāvaka, pratyekabuddha, and arhant (or bodhisattva). In broader terms, three symbolizes multiple approaches to one single reality or truth, necessitated by the inevitable divergence in the perceptive powers of the multitudinous beings (chung-sheng).<sup>214</sup> In this respect, the three vehicles can be seen as merely symbolical.

In the textual context, all vehicles, each of which is claimed to be the right channel to the Buddha's path, are assigned proper places in the Buddha's didactic program. This was to prompt the Chinese Buddhists to come up with frameworks for classifying and justifying the Buddha's diverse doctrines and teachings, to be called p'an-chiao. Its primordial form is put forward by none other than Tao-sheng, breaking down the Great Sage's career chronologically into four "Dharma-wheels" (-cakra): of the good and pure, of the skill-in-means (fang-p'ien/upāya), of the true and real, and of the no-remainder (wu-yü/anupadhiśeṣa).<sup>215</sup> Implicit in "Dharma-wheels" is the three-turning-one process--a dialectical "one" in the sense that three are set to be uplifted and synthesized into One. "One" is not a cardinal number as opposed to "three", rather it stands for a

unity,<sup>216</sup> which explains in part why the One and the process itself are identically described, either attributed or predicated, as "mysterious" (miao 妙).<sup>217</sup> Apart from the schema as a whole, "two" or "three" vehicles can be termed false or unreal.<sup>218</sup> Tao-sheng generally follows the line of argument advanced in the sūtra, and yet there is an added shade of emphasis laid more on the positive aspect of the interim stages than on the negative. The position of the sūtra is succinctly illustrated in the passage: "Therefore the Buddhas, with their expedient power, make distinctions in the One Buddha Vehicle and speak of three."<sup>219</sup> Tao-sheng interprets the passage thus: "Although he spoke of three, he always talked of the One."<sup>220</sup>

In its broader sense, when stripped of the technical term "vehicle", the motif in many respects stands parallel to the concept of the "One" as defined in Taoist thought. The Tao-te ching (ch. 42) puts "One" at the penultimate point, right after Tao, portraying it as the fountainhead of all multiple forms of existence as it can be a predicate of the term Tao. "One" is the alpha and omega of existence. As Wang Pi puts it, "One is the beginning of numbers and the ultimate of things."<sup>221</sup> It is the point of return as well as departure.<sup>222</sup> It is that which the Sage has embraced.<sup>223</sup> Similar patterns of description are readily recognizable in

Tao-sheng's writing. Some of these may be seen contextually as connected with the particular vehicles, but in many cases they assume the form of a metaphysical statement with universal applicability. Typically, "Li is non-dual and Tao of the Tathāgata is one".<sup>224</sup> Here one can assume that there is a clear connection between the "One" and "one"; the "One" is not merely symbolical, but it still implies oneness. It has already become evident in Wang Pi. On the passage in the Tao-te ching, ch. 42: "Tao produced the One. The One produced the two. The two produced the three. And the three produced the ten thousand things." Wang Pi comments:

The ten thousand things have ten thousand different forms, but in the final analysis, they are one . . . If there is One, there are two, and consequently three is produced.<sup>225</sup>

Tao-sheng returns to the theme that all diversified approaches are destined to return to or merge into One Ultimate or one unity.<sup>226</sup> In Tao-sheng's system (as in Neo-Taoism), therefore, "One" not only denotes the final goal to be achieved<sup>227</sup> or the original source to return to,<sup>228</sup> but also it connotes the unity of all varied and seemingly conflicting elements.<sup>229</sup> Not unnaturally, "One" conveys the monistic picture of reality, which is borne out by the extensive use of the term by Wang Pi, an ascertained monist. It can further be inferred that the ultimate goal to be

pursued by the beings consists in the union with One.<sup>230</sup> Tao-sheng, like the Taoists, talks of returning (397) to the One ultimate (397a1) or the origin. For Tao-sheng, salvation, after all, consists in regaining the original state of being. In the sense of unity "One" is similar to "Great".<sup>231</sup> Tao-sheng in fact uses them interchangeably. Similarly, Lao Tzu designates the "master" source to which myriad things belong, namely Tao, which also gave birth to One, as "the Great".<sup>232</sup> The affinity will sound more feasible when we consider the fact that Tao-sheng may not use the words only in connection with the "vehicles" but more in general terms.

#### (8) Middle Way (Chung-tao)

One expression that rephrases and characterizes "One vehicle" is "the Tao of the middle and right" (chung-cheng-chih-tao 中正之道).<sup>233</sup> One can ask: Is its source Buddhist or Chinese? It can be traced to either source. The same can be said of chung-tao or cheng-tao,<sup>234</sup> which can be taken either as the abbreviated forms or as separate words. In the Buddhist context, it can be broken down into two characters, the first standing for the middle path (chung-tao/ madhyamāpratipad) and the second for the eightfold right (Skt. "noble") path (cheng-tao/āryamārga) consisting of as

many right (samyak) ways. Then is "chung-tao" in Tao-sheng's vocabulary used in the first sense? The question is posed because the expressions and the idea involved are traceable in Chinese scriptures.

The idea of middle in the sense of (golden) mean occupies a salient place in the Chinese thought. It is engraved in the classical texts, particularly in the Doctrine of Mean (Chung-yung). On moral and psychological planes, the golden mean points to a moderate and proper position, avoiding the extreme behavioral patterns,<sup>235</sup> or it points to an indeterminate unstirred state of feelings,<sup>236</sup> which is largely compatible with what the Buddha meant by the middle path, the theme of his first sermon, in which he taught the avoidance of two extremes, namely, asceticism and hedonism. On the philosophical plane, "chung" signifies what is central in the sense of exactly hitting the point right.<sup>237</sup> The two implications may not necessarily be distinguished, for moderation by extension means what is proper and right, which in turn must be in accord with what is ultimately true in the absolute order.

A text imbued with the notion and its related terms more explicitly than any other is the I Ching. It is replete with the terms chung, chung-cheng, chung-tao and other variants. The right-in-the-middle state symbolizes the most



balanced, stabilized, ideal position in the arrangement of the lines, the components of the hexagrams, in two ways: "middle" and "right". Hence, the prime target of the I Ching practice consists in obtaining the mean or the middle way. Wang Pi translates this occult expression into functional and philosophical terms: "Chung means non-overdoing (or no mistake); cheng means non-depravedness".<sup>238</sup> By being situated in the right-in-the-center position, one achieves the state of harmony (chung-ho 中和), the state of equilibrium between the opposing elements (yin and yang), inside and outside, firm and yielding, fine and coarse, and movement and quiescence, most of which are found in Tao-sheng's vocabulary. The state of equilibrium (ho), according to the Doctrine of the Mean, refers to the condition in which the feelings, once aroused, are balanced in due proportion, while Chung means the state before the feelings are welled up.<sup>239</sup> The welling-up of feelings are not to be fixed in a certain form, but should be contained in equilibrium in compliance with the changing ambience and existential situations: this is called "the timely mean".<sup>240</sup> When Tao-sheng speaks of "advancing toward the middle way",<sup>241</sup> the style of the expression and the mode of the action involved are similar to those found in the Doctrine. Yet the subject of the action is not exactly the same. In the Confucian text, it is a sage

that is always "in harmony with the Way (Chung-tao)".<sup>242</sup> Likewise, Tao-sheng refers to li in the commentary as the subject that always remains in harmony with the Way, suggesting that li always remains central or essential in its diverse representations through varied extemporaneous means applied by the compassionate Buddha.

What seems to be a variant or emphatic expression of "middle" or "middle way" is found in the cryptic expression huang-chung 黃中 ("yellow and middle").<sup>243</sup> Huang is identified with the earth in the I Ching<sup>244</sup> and with the middle<sup>245</sup> by Wang Pi. It is obvious that here, as in its sources, the word refers to some kind of centrality or ultimate limit in the physical or metaphysical sense, alluding to "golden mean". Tao-sheng apparently has drawn on the I Ching, for the passage containing the phrase concerned--"Li has extended to (or penetrated) the yellow and middle (or center of the earth)"--resembles in style and terminology the passage from the book, "The superior man is in the yellow and middle and has penetrated li . . . extended to the four limbs." Yet here again is the essential difference in their approach. Tao-sheng's Sage represented by Avalokiteśvara is altruistically oriented and "penetration" (or propagation) has to do with the salvation of other beings, whereas "penetration" of the Change remains impersonal and unrelated

to others.

In the light of those points and other related facts it is fairly evident that, with regard to the idea of "middle", Tao-sheng for the most part takes the Chinese frame of expression and instills therein the Buddhist content. Yet the concept does not necessarily concur with the metaphysical implication of middle path (madhyamā-pratipad) in the Mādhyamika philosophy.<sup>246</sup> It uniquely reflects in spirit the Buddha's methodology as reflected in the Lotus.

(9) Tao

The term Tao comes only next to li as the most recurrent (as many as 101 times) abstract noun in the commentary. By the time of Tao-sheng, Tao had become a universal term inseparable from Chinese life and widely accepted by every system of thought, including Buddhism. It is present in the translated sūtra, though limited to some technical terms in compound forms. Tao occurs profusely in the writings of the contemporary Buddho-Taoists, in the form more fully incorporated than li, in contradistinction to Tao-sheng's usage. Tao-sheng's possible contribution to the further development of the concept of Tao may be limited, and is certainly less pronounced than his contribution regarding li, as far as the commentary is concerned. A brief survey of the concept will suffice here.

The term tao as found in the text embraces a wide spectrum of connotation, ranging from a path (mārga), already used in the sūtra by Kumārajīva, and other particular "ways", to a self-subsistent abstruse entity expressed by "Way" or simply "Tao". As in the case of li, in view here are the two domains, the relative and the absolute. Yet upon deeper analysis, the two domains are interrelated in so far as the higher, universal one subsumes the other. The unspecified tao or the universal Tao, in fact, overwhelmingly outnumbers the particular tao in frequency of occurrence. Again, as in the case of li, a particularized tao, especially the tao of "Śākyamuni", "the Tathāgata", "the Buddha", "the bodhisattva", or "the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka" may not conflict with, or differ in substance from, the Tao as the universal norm. Those substantive modifiers may be construed simply as the vehicles or media of the latter. After all, "the tao(s) of various Buddhas is (are) the same"<sup>247</sup> and "one", and "the Tao is ubiquitous"<sup>248</sup> (397b17 et passim). Suggestive of a normative, ontological entity, the Tao denotes both the goal to be sought and the means or path by which one achieves the goal. Thus what can be said of the Tao can fit the structure and nature of li. There is of course a shade of difference in nuance and practical usage, but what is attributed and predicated for one is generally applicable to the other.

They are both "mysterious", "far-reaching", "unobstructed",<sup>249</sup> and so on. They are particularizable as "this" or "that". In a few places they are in fact juxtaposed or appositional within the same sentence or passage.<sup>250</sup>

The term Tao thus provided Tao-sheng with yet another functional tool for the exposition of the foreign tradition. Tao had become by then a fully developed concept, and with a wide scope of implications it could accommodate a new element like Buddhism. Tao-sheng simply added a new variable. However, Tao-sheng prefers li, yet to be fully exploited, to tao. He needed a new leather for a new wine.

### c. Concluding Remarks

In the above we have scrutinized the more conspicuous of the terms and concepts in the text's vocabulary which are found to be rooted in traditional non-Buddhist Chinese literatures. Other words and expressions in various grammatical forms and functions occurring less frequently or singly are numerous. Some idiomatic expressions and adjectival phrases are found as frequently as some of those substantives discussed above. The presence of the words apparently drawn from (or identifiable in) Chinese philosophical writings is ubiquitous.

Nevertheless the practice is not unique to Tao-sheng.

The reading of a text by any contemporary Buddhist demonstrates that Tao-sheng is not atypical in this regard. Tao-sheng is following the trend. Yet, it can be said that his dependence on Chinese concepts is less marked than that of his contemporaries. For example, the Pien-tsung lun, which is an anthology of arguments on Tao-sheng's theory of enlightenment, and Seng-chao's writings are more densely filled with Confucian and Taoist concepts and terminology than Tao-sheng's writings. He may merely reflect the language of the day, used especially in philosophical talks and expositions. Thus one can assume that it would be virtually out of the question for thinkers in that developmental stage of Buddhism in China<sup>251</sup> to deviate from the general tendency in interpreting and speaking of the foreign philosophical concepts, either practically or for pedagogical purposes. Hence, one encounters everywhere the universal, common use of the terms, li and tao, which we have discussed above. Another example of the contemporary trend is the li-related idiomatic expression ch'iung-li chin-hsing 窮理盡性 (the tracing of li to the end and consummate realization of one's nature) as found in the text (398b4) and in the I Ching as its classical source.<sup>252</sup> So many contemporary writers<sup>253</sup> of Buddhism cite this dictum as if it were the catchword describing the ultimate goal of religious

practice or a critical premise they were to interpret or paraphrase in their own way.

The central question is how closely and in what way the language and structure of thought are related in Tao-sheng's case. To put it differently, inside the garb of borrowed language does Tao-sheng remain a Confucio-Taoist or does he emerge a Buddhist convert? Or, what is his primary frame of reference? Our examination of some significant concepts above and our perusal of the text show that Tao-sheng normally did not lose sight of the Buddhist doctrines under discussion. This does not necessarily mean that the basic conceptions the words are set to convey in their original non-Buddhist contexts are completely neutralized or compromised. Rather, the two cultural contents find some form of blending in Tao-sheng's vocabulary and thought. One might further observe that two elements have found their optimum expression in Tao-sheng's language. Not only are the old contents or forms often retained but also sometimes the new substance or forms are introduced, with the result that both are extended and reinforced. And in some cases, old contents are changed or modified. One is newly illuminated and becomes clarified vis-à-vis the other. One form of cultural grafting is underway. A good example has been the concept of li. Li is far from something like the category of

an entity of existence (bhāva), or even ātman--anathemas in Buddhism. It is no more than a surrogate designation for something real or ultimate (whatever it may be), and for that which underlies the Buddha's statements or messages represented in the sūtra, without doing any violence to the fundamental truths set down by the Buddha, no more so than the coinages of the later Mahāyānists in India, e.g. Tathatā (Suchness), Tathāgata-garbha (the storehouse of the Thus Come One), or Ālayavijñāna (the storehouse consciousness), let alone the concept of the "true self" represented in the Nirvāna Sūtra. Thus, in the usage of the term, li, Tao-sheng merely makes explicit what lies implicit in the Buddha's inculcation.

Tao-sheng no doubt succeeded, as is clear from Itano Chōhachi's conclusion regarding Tao-sheng's idea of sudden enlightenment: "in surmounting the Lao(-tzu)--Chuang(-tzu) thought".<sup>254</sup> His success was no less than that of his contemporary pundits, such as Hui-yūan and Seng-chao, whose grasp of some of the Indian Buddhist doctrines, of Mādhyamika in particular, is deemed to have been unsurpassed among Tao-sheng's peers but whose language is heavily drawn from the Taoist lexicon. Furthermore, from the investigation of the language there can be no question that Tao-sheng, no less than any Chinese Buddhist at least up to his time, has



contributed in paving the way for a more organized and institutionalized form of Chinese Buddhism to emerge, which in spirit may not be an aberration of original Buddhism after all.

### C. Central Ideas

#### 1. Main Themes

The examination of literary, external features of the text brings us to the question if there are internally coherent ideas constantly lurking in the commentary. Are there any persistent themes standing out in Tao-sheng's narration? If so, are they closely linked with the sūtra? Although the author is allowed to enjoy some liberty for musing his own ideas, he has to, as a rule, stay within the certain framework of the sūtra.

It is therefore necessary to set straight the main themes of the sūtra. The dominant theme is that the three vehicles do not exist; there is in reality only One Vehicle. Put in general terms, it can be translated: "there is only one form of Buddhism."<sup>255</sup> Hurvitz nonetheless draws out two essential points.<sup>256</sup> Let us consider them for analytical purposes. One is that "there is only one Path to salvation, not three". The other is that "the Buddha is not to be delimited in time or space, or indeed in any finite terms". Speaking of the first point, the three vehicles belong to a sort of device to attract the beings. In the sūtra, the

first theme is dominant and has more significance, being illustrated by four parables (chs. 3, 4, 7, 8). The second theme is confined to only two chapters (16, 17; in the CSPS, 15, 16), and is supported by one parable (ch. 16).

Now when we turn to the CSPS, one easily recognizes that no other theme is more pronounced than the three-One relationship. It is certainly the central leitmotif of the text. That is evident from the start. Every component of the title of the sūtra is explained in terms of the proposition that the three unreal vehicles eventually give way to the real One Vehicle. Three of the four dharma-wheels have to do with the idea.

How the theme is concretely immersed in the individual chapters can be seen by examining the first paragraph of each chapter, which serves as a synopsis of the content of a chapter. But even before going into the individual chapters we find in the beginning of the introductory chapter the tripartite breakdown of the sūtra entirely on the theme in three variations. The first thirteen chapters show that the cause of three vehicles become identified with the cause of the One. The next eight chapters indicate that the effect of three is to be identified with the effect of the One. The remaining six chapters are concerned with the men of the three who are in the process of becoming the men of the One.

The subject appears as the topic of the initial paragraphs of eleven chapters (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22). They are doctrinally key chapters in Tao-sheng's view. The balance of the sūtra deals with the matters like parables to help explain the main proposition, propagation, entrustment, the stories of some bodhisattvas in their past lives, and so on. The first seven chapters of the commentary-text are the longest. The first four chapters make up the first of two volumes of the commentary. Even the third chapter, not included in the eleven chapters above, on the parable of a burning house, deals in its seven segments with the allegorical theme that three carriages promised to the children end up being presented in the form of one big carriage or vehicle. In his mixed application of the terms, carriage and vehicle, Tao-sheng does not draw a sharp line between the simile and the fact implied therein.

While most of the chapters of the CSPS are in tune with the overtone of the motif, other subject matters are raised consistently. Yet they are somehow connected with the motif as they deal with such problems as the underlying ground for the process of three to One and its epistemological implications. Such concentration on the theme and related ideas suggests that the commentary is not a literary account but rather a thematic exegesis. In this way Tao-sheng by no means deviates from the frame of the sūtra;

rather, he faithfully follows the lead of the sūtra.

Why did the Buddha have to take a circuitous route in order to lead the beings to the One Vehicle? Tao-sheng offers the inequality of innate intellectual faculty in individuals. The idea is rather Tao-Sheng's theorization of what is loosely suggested in the sūtra (9b). It is further reinforced by the notion of subtle, incipient triggering-mechanism (chi) (396d, 398c, 401a, 406b-c, 412a).

That gives rise to the concept of expediency in means (upāya), which receives Tao-sheng's special attention and articulation with the help of Chinese term "exigency" (ch' üan). Due to the dull faculty of the beings forced the commiserating Buddha to invent a device that would make them interested in the path to enlightenment and salvation. That is how he felt the need for a figurative speech like multiple vehicles instead of a straight talk of the One Vehicle.

How the vehicles are related to the One Vehicle, however, is a complicated matter. Although it can be said that Tao-sheng relates essentially what is stated or suggested in the sūtra, he might sound somewhat ambivalent, with respect to the point whether the vehicles have a negative or positive value. Three vehicles, being of exigent and temporary value, are identified as false in a way whereas One is identified with what is real. Nonetheless the two subjects are interconnected in more than a linear,

antithetical form. Three (396d) or two (399d) are false, and are antithetical to the One or Greater Vehicle (399c). Yet they are uplifted to synthesize with the One and cannot properly be thought of apart from this synthesis with the One (401b). One may call it a dialectical process. The process is best expressed by the word "mysterious" or "wondrous" (miao). That expression also fits the nature of One and Great; they are inclusive rather than exclusive.

Such exegesis as described above has a mark of Tao-sheng's own philosophical speculation. The sūtra has at best this to say: "... the Buddhas, by resort to the power of expedient devices, divide the One Buddha Vehicle and speak of three" (13c)<sup>257</sup>. It appears to strike a positive note on three. That is, however, a liberal rendering by Kumārajīva of the original text which has no word for three.<sup>258</sup> The sūtra talks of no falsehood, but that refers to the way the Buddha conducts the beings through the process rather than the device used. As the Buddha states in chapter 3:

Śāriputra, just as that great man, first having enticed his children with three carriages and then having given them only one great carriage ... is yet not guilty of falsehood, though he first preached the three vehicles in order to entice the beings, then conveyed them to deliverance by resort to only the One Great Vehicle.<sup>259</sup>

In connection with the parable of a burning house (ch. 3), later the Buddhists in the Sui and T'ang period were to raise the question whether there are three or four

carriages involved in the story. The great man allures his children to get out of the house on fire with the promise of three kinds of carriage, ox-drawn, goat-drawn, and deer-drawn. But what the children find outside is a single great ox-drawn carriage instead. What is at issue here is whether the two kinds of ox-drawn carriages are identical or different. The problem gave rise to two theories: one involving three carriages while the other involved four. What is Tao-sheng's position? Translated in real terms, the issue is whether or not the bodhisattva vehicle symbolized by the first ox-drawn carriage is identical with the Buddha vehicle. Some modern scholars regard Tao-sheng as the progenitor of the three-carriage tradition, on the ground that the two vehicles, namely, voice-hearers (sravakas) and pratyekabuddhas, are deemed to be false.<sup>260</sup> The following passage, which comments on the sūtra with respect to the phrase "[There are not other vehicles,] whether two (or second) or three (or third)" (7b3), is cited to support the view.<sup>261</sup>

"Two" means the second vehicle, and "three" the third vehicle. Naturally it follows that there is no "first", either. The first does not contradict that which causes "Great" (Vehicle), hence, it is not nonexistent. [Yet], since there is neither "second" nor "third", "first" is gone too. (400b18)

Here the first vehicle refers to the bodhisattva vehicle. It is accorded a special status; it is this vehicle more than

any other vehicle that is to legitimately evolve into One Buddha Vehicle.

On the other hand, one can argue that Tao-sheng would not advocate the four-carriage theory since this would contradict what is said about the dialectical synthesis of three into One. Tao-sheng asserts that there are not three as such apart from the path of three anticipating One.

Alongside of the main thesis we find another recurrent notion in the commentary, namely, gradual approach in the being's attainment of religious knowledge or enlightenment.<sup>262</sup> It poses an apparent contradiction to Tao-sheng's well-known doctrine of instantaneous enlightenment. Nonetheless the idea of progressive realization is closely bound up with the motif we have discussed. In a sense the process involves the two stages, three and One, and denotes epistemologically a graduated approach in a long span of time. But the factor that has a more direct and deeper relevance to the point concerned is the being's inability and inadequacy to apprehend the ultimate reality represented by the One Vehicle (400c). As a matter of fact, the sūtra clearly proposes gradual cultivation, learning-process, and entrance to the path on a number of occasions (18a, 19b, 20b, 21c et passim). In this regard Tao-sheng does not depart essentially from the framework of the sūtra. He may be eclectic in choosing the subject matter for emphasis, yet he

no doubt stays in line with the sūtra. The question of temporal process in acquiring knowledge will be investigated further in next subsection in connectoin with the concept of li.

## 2. An Overview of the Internal Structure of the Commentary via the Term Li

### a. Introduction

By focussing on a single term or concept and subjecting it to a comprehensive examination, we may thereby gain an overview of the commentary from a different perspective, provided there is such a term with philosophical significance that is found astride the entire text. For this task there is no word better suited than li 理. Its presence is ubiquitous, recurrent (139 times) far more than any significant term, including its closest synonym "tao" (101 times). One cannot glance at nearly any of Tao-sheng's own meaningful statements without encountering li, often more than once in a given place. Li may be seen as a key to the inner structure of Tao-sheng's thought as well as to his understanding of the sūtra.

In some cases it might seem appropriate to paraphrase or translate the term loosely, such as "in principle", "it stands to reason that", etc., but as it occurs in the text li



functions generally as an abstract noun. Translated variously in different contexts by sinologists as "principle", "norm", "reason", "(cosmic) order", sometimes capitalized in each case, li in the form of an abstract noun was to become perhaps the most important philosophical concept in the Chinese tradition.<sup>263</sup> Here, however, for obvious reasons li will be left untranslated throughout, just like the better known term tao. The primary purpose of this survey of the term li is to aid us in perceiving the structure of Tao-sheng's understanding of the scriptural text, and consequently of his system of thought; but at the same time light will be shed on Tao-sheng's contribution to the development and enrichment of the concept, which was then still in a somewhat nebulous stage of development, particularly in the Buddhist setting.

Li may be useful for our purposes here all the more because it has no Sanskrit equivalent, at least in the senses used by Tao-sheng.<sup>264</sup> Unlike the term tao, which is used for such technical terms as "path" (mārga), "(six) forms of existence" (gati), and sometimes "truth" (satya), li finds no place in the sūtra. Li remains a pure medium and perhaps a repository filled with the user's trains of thought. It is found to be a fundamental element at the center of most of the text's significant statements.

Despite its recurrence, Tao-sheng himself is not concerned with the concept of li as such. He simply uses it as a convenient device or symbol, representing what lies implicit in a given statement, phrase, or word, or perhaps even some unknown reality inaccessible by words. Our method in this survey will be to focus on the word as it is positioned in various contexts, by itself and against other concepts, parallel or otherwise related, and then we will determine if and how the word in a given case is related to the equivalent part or expression of the sūtra.

b. Syntactical and Contextual Position

The word li occurs fairly evenly throughout the text in all but five chapters (which consist mostly of a single passage), with the frequency proportionate to the size of a chapter. The term is rarely absent from introductory or synoptical statements.

Syntactically, li is found in the position either of subject or object. In a complex sentence or equivalent structure, however, the word can be taken to represent an adverbial phrase or similar expression. When used as a corollary, li is a substantive, and in some cases an adverbial expression.

The term stands more often by itself without a

qualifier, though in many cases it is implicitly linked with something suggested earlier. It remains a question as to whether or not the word found independently has the sense of an entity or universal reality. When accompanied by a modifier in the form of a word or phrase, qualification appears in four different ways.

First, it occurs in the form of a compound. The qualifiers in this category mostly center around the Buddha and related terms including "Thus Come One" (Ju-lai / Tathāgata), "emptiness" (k'ung / sūnyatā), "Greater Vehicle" (Mahāyāna), "One Vehicle" (Ekayāna), "transformative teaching" (hua), "Saddharmapuṇḍarīka", as well as "the Buddha". Modification by other terms is of the same structure as the form with the particle and function word "of" (chih 之) in between, as explicitly demonstrated in two places (403d18, cf. 403b14; 404c8). Besides these nouns, the cases of the adjectives "ultimate" (406b14) and "mysterious" (miao) belong to this category.

Second, there are indicative adjectives such as "this" (此) (408c3) and "that" (其) (405a5) modifying li. Also the negative adjective wu and equivalent expressions (407d12, cf. 402b13) belong here.

Third, the term is often modified by an adjectival phrase or sentence such as the process of three turning into

One (402c5), and "of what the sūtra has elucidated" (410c15).

The above patterns of qualification clearly suggest that li refers to or exists in a particular thing. There are different kinds of li which can be addressed in various ways. But if we assume the immanence of the "ultimate" or universal li, as postulated in the Neo-Taoist system of Wang Pi, then the various ways can simply represent diverse forms of the omnipresent noumenal reality. The other aspect, i.e. particularization, seems to hark back to the way Kuo-hsiang views li. If the assumption turns out to be valid, then the two lines of interpreting reality in terms of li, identifiable in Neo-Taoism will have made their way, in a converged form, into Tao-sheng's understanding of the Buddhist doctrines embodied in the sūtra.

### c. Predicates, Properties, and Epistemic Implications

The adjectival words and phrases that predicate li, especially when it occurs alone without any direct qualification, are numerous and of a wide variety, as typified by expressions like "wide", "distant", "recondite", "profound", "abysmal". One readily identifiable mode of expression predominant among the predicates is "profoundness". These descriptions seem to add up to a multi-dimensional picture of some kind of ultimate realm, if not particularly monist or holistic. It is worthy noting that those adjectives are

taken from the Taoist and Neo-Taoist lexicon, especially from the latter with respect to li. Therefore, li as envisaged by Tao-sheng may share the Neo-Taoists metaphysical aspect before it could further be instilled with something else. It is "round", "immeasurable", "beyond empirical calculations" (402c10) and "mysterious". Yet, one can still "approach" (410a12) and "enter" it (409a5f.), as if it were a place or locus. Nonetheless, all these can be taken at the same time as the attributes of an abstract metaphysical concept. Those spatial references can be transferred without modification to the mystical extra-sensory spiritual reality. Even the denotation of "round" (yüan) can give way to the connotation of "perfect". The object of "entering" can be not only a physical realm but also a spiritual domain. In that respect, li resembles nirvāṇa, which, as Tao-sheng typically puts it, one can, like the Buddha, "enter" (401d13). Li, like nirvāṇa, was understood thus as both a somatic and spiritual locus transcendental to discursive thinking.<sup>265</sup>

Other verbs objectify li, besides the typical "to enter" and "to approach": li is portrayed as something "to perceive", "to be traced to the end", "to know or get enlightened to", "to penetrate", and "to comprehend" (chieh 解). The last term, like "to enter", also has a dual connotation, both concrete and abstract. Those words, all

with a positive overtone, suggest epistemologically a noetic approach in comprehending li, which seems to fall in line with the Buddha's path. Li stands to require a dark merging (ming ,412d2), possibly symbolizing an extra-sensory intuition into a dark realm. It is so profound and lofty that it cannot be paced one and for all in one "sudden step" (408c16) or "one encounter" (401a6), "one enlightenment" (406b13) or "speedily" (410d6); it remains inaccessible or unfathomable to those with superficial knowledge (412d2).

The words of negative overtone are typified in "to go astray (or deviate) from" (kuai 乖) and "to become dark". Kuai especially occurs repeatedly in contexts suggesting the consequences effected by one's departure from li: "the perverted state leading to suffering" (403a12) and "delusion" (405d3). Hence, it follows that the process of learning li can be translated into the process of unlearning delusion: by turning against delusion one becomes enlightened to li (405d3).<sup>266</sup>

In this context li is not restricted in scope to a particular doctrine or theme associated with the Lotus. Li does not seem to be bound by the leitmotif of the sūtra, namely, the three vehicles turning and merging into One Vehicle, though it is often the case. Li embraces the fundamental truths (satya) and path (mārga) the Buddha enun-

ciated upon his own self-enlightenment. In more general terms, li has to do with what the Buddha himself "[empirically] merged with (or comprehended )" (406a17).

Nevertheless, li in this facet does not necessarily transcend or overreach what the sūtra stands for in every sense. Although it is true that the "three"- "One" process is an important part of one's understanding or enlightenment, the sūtra suggests in many places something more than the theme per se as required for gaining the knowledge or enlightenment in the process of becoming a Buddha. The term "unexcelled enlightenment" (anuttarasamyaksambodhi) is a case in point.

It can be said from this line of analysis that li, as long as it has to do with Buddhism, remains a particular category. And yet, depending on how Tao-sheng sees Buddhism, namely, as more a dogmatic or more a universal system, the particular could be either closer to or farther from the universal.

#### d. Li Viewed in Connection with Other Concepts

Aside from those directly relevant words, a considerable number of concepts are involved against which li can be more clearly delineated. Though indirectly or tangentially related in terms of syntax, the primary and the

secondary terms of the comparison are closely connected philosophically; they stand complementary to each other, to say the least. In the following, seven related concepts have been chosen to be collated with li.

(1) Purport (i 義)

On a few occasions, li is found explicitly or implicitly parallel with i, "purport", or "tenor" or "meaning". For instance, the word "carriages", symbolizing or metaphorically interchanging with "vehicle", is interpreted in this frame (397a3); the li underlying the term refers to "to carry the load to everywhere" with special reference to "Great Vehicle" and i refers to "to substitute [pleasure for] suffering" (see also 402b6, 404a7). As we infer from here, li seems to imply some kind of common, universally acceptable organic principle, while i seems to suggest the intended purpose or implicit purport involved.

In another case, an entire chapter (Ch. 3: Parable) is broken down into two major divisions, i and li. I refers to the part prior to the parable proper while li refers to what the latter sets out to expound. I here deals with the recapitulated content or meaning of the parable; li speaks of the real import the story is designed to convey. There is no symbolism involved in the case of i, whereas a great gap interposes the fictional reality represented by the parable



and the actual reality represented by li; in a way, i seems to refer to what is explicit while li reflects what is implicit.

A similar pattern is identifiable in the apposition of li and huai 懷 ("to embrace, harbor") (412b4).<sup>267</sup> As he interprets the title Avalokiteśvara ("One who observes the sound of the world") (Chapt. 2), Tao-sheng attempts to decipher it in terms li and huai in search of the philosophico-religious grounds for the potency imparted to him waiting to be tapped through invocation by the suffering beings. He associated the li of the title with "all-penetration" (or "universal propagation [of the sūtra or doctrine]", t'ung)<sup>268</sup> and the huai, perhaps the embraced or built-in implication, with "universal salvation". Here Tao-sheng finds in the title, or rather reads into it, a personification of the Mahāyāna ideal of universal salvation with the accompanying mission of propagating the message of the sūtra (or with the "penetrating" [and sympathetic] "observation" [of all beings]).

In this variation of the pattern of li and i, li and huai stand complementary to each other, completing a whole picture of the given object in essence. The difference between the two is too subtle to define and pinpoint; it lies somewhere between denotation and connotation from the

semantical point of view.<sup>269</sup>

When used this way, li can thus be tentatively defined as something real or true lying behind symbols and expressions. Yet li as signified in this framework is also discernable in many other places without the parallel term posited alongside. All ambient factors considered, the li of this kind is probably the most basic or typical li, from which the same of other semantic veins could derive, or towards which their practical implications may approximate. And this frame of li, which denotes the reality underlying the words or external representations, can be traced to a distinct line of the indigenous tradition involving the philosophical issue represented by the terms "name" (ming) and "reality" (shih), which will be discussed in the concluding section.

## (2) Linguistic Medium

In light of the recondite and profound nature of li as seen through its numerous predicates, we can easily surmise that words and speech cannot adequately draw out just what li is or what it symbolizes. Surely, li, whatever it is, transcends words (404a4); speaking of the original state, li has no words to express (399b10) it. Yet rather than harp on its ineffable nature, Tao-sheng focuses on the pragmatic

need for words and symbols to serve as a kind of expedient medium particularly for those who have not yet seen li (410c11). Words are to li what "traps and fishnets" are to animals and fishes: once the job of ferrying one over to li is fulfilled, words are of no more use (410c12). In this context, li is portrayed as a sort of locus in the yonder shore, which can nonetheless be reached through the medium of relative order.

The utility of words is epitomized in the Buddha's speeches which fully match with and conform to li (406a14, b11). In this and similar cases, li remains a final norm with which words are to comply. Li lying under different speeches and sūtras is of not different "taste" (rasa) (399d1, 406a2) and "tenor" (397a1). In the temporal context, li represents actual facts mirrored in the recorded words of the sūtra (397b2); what is preached about li also can conveniently be codified in a charm (dhāraṇī) (412b10).

It may be safe to conclude from the above that li appears to have some bearing on the quintessence of the Buddha's soteriological message. Yet it may still allow room for a deeper substratum upon which the latter may be based. Such a probability will find support in the long line of tradition that already dealt with the nexus of language and li, the latter being further connected to the part of reality

(shih 實). This brings li, as considered here, close to li, as taken in relation to i (in the preceding section), as will be discussed further in the concluding section.

(3) "One"

Li has emerged in the discussion above as a single "taste" or force behind diversified approaches and expressions. It is clearly identified with "One Ultimate" (397a1, 399d17); it has "no dual ultimate" (400d15). The predication comes thus in the form of either a substantive or an attributive. "One" is, of course, associated originally with One Vehicle. Therefore, without the term "vehicle(s)" attached, the numbers "one", "two", "three" may still be meant to refer to the particular categories. Yet when multiple "vehicles", especially three, are taken as mere symbols for diverse approaches which are finally reducible to One Vehicle, a metaphor again, there is no clear-cut line between the two categories, namely the particular and the general (see 400d15). At any rate, "One", more often than not, has to do with the entire process of multiplicity-in-means coming to terms with singularity-in-goal rather than the final fruit as such (see 412c5). "One" does not exist as "One" per se, independent of others, such as "two" and "three" (see 400c1, 399b10). "One" in this sense points to

the process of unity or unity itself. Hence, it is possible to equate three with one (408b16). The nexus finds a fitting expression in none other than the word "mysterious" (miao), which is used attributively for both "one" (400b7) and li (403b14). The "mysterious" is expressive of a kind of dialectical process in which "three" are uplifted to and synthesized with the category of One.

The process of the three vehicles giving way to the One Vehicle is the original theme of the Lotus. Even miao is a part of the title, and it is clearly suggested that comprehending such a mysterious Buddha-vehicle requires an intuitive and enlightened knowledge. In that respect, Tao-sheng has schematized it clearly with added emphasis on its positive aspect, rationalizing all the diverse approaches symbolized by three. Thus to sum up, li is presented here as the key term for interpreting the sūtra's theme, and alludes to the monistically envisioned reality.

#### (4) Facts Involved (shih 事)

Li is often found along with shih or "worldly affairs or facts" in a syntactical position of apposition, or in compound or parallel construction. Shih would later become an important term in the most fundamental doctrine of the Hua-yen philosophy, where shih and li are inseparably interrelated without any interposing obstacle. That reason

alone might warrant investigating whether there is any early indication of such a relationship, i.e. two centuries before the Hua-yen formulation.

Li and shih occurring in the same passages, in fact, are similarly predicated: "li is deep while shih is great" (411d6); "shih and li are both abstruse" (396d5). In that regard shih shares or reflects the multi-dimensionality of li. Yet it is evident in other passages that shih is posited as "borrowed material" or "worldly imagery" that helps li to be manifested (408b14ff., 408c3), because li is of such a nature that either it cannot be defined per se, or, being too other-worldly, requires a conventional way of description for the unenlightened (see 401a1). In brief, shih symbolizes a teaching aid subservient to li. Hence shih belongs to the category of expediency-in-means. Included in the class of shih are the Buddha's supernatural wonders (408b15) and parables (401a6).

Thus there is no kind of ontological connection between the two terms. Li as unfolding in this context can be construed as something that can be sufficiently contained within the bounds of the sūtra and the Buddha's doctrine, though li viewed in this connection remains open to a broader implication in line with the Taoist conception of the term, for there is apparently no clearly defined line drawn between

the two realms, the particular and the universal.

Hence as Tao-sheng employs the term shih, no metaphysical implication is evident that can be traceable in the later Hua-yen Buddhism. Yet in other contexts partaking of a monistic perspective, li exudes some self-contained traits of shih in the sense intended by the Hua-yen Buddhists. The omnipresence of li in worldly phenomena is clearly suggested in the words: "Although it is present as the innate makeup for becoming a Buddha in the human body, there is no dharma that li is not [incorporated] in"(404a1). Dharma taken here in the realist sense can be equated with shih. Put differently, "the wondrous li of One Vehicle has no impediments and blockade" (403b14), an expression similar to "no obstruction between li and shih" as used by the Hua-yen Buddhists.<sup>270</sup> The trace of the Neo-Taoist metaphysics may not be obliterated here, but Tao-sheng has not essentially departed from the Buddhist framework. The point is made clear in another place: "Dharmakāya as an incarnation of li is omnipresent" (404b7, cf. 398d13).

One point that clarifies itself in the course of the discussion, as suggested in the quote mentioned above (404a1), is that li is identifiable with the innate nature of man, often called "Buddha-nature".<sup>271</sup> Hence li embraces both the inner, subjective sphere, and the outer, objective

sphere. It emerges as the singular regulating force or principle lying behind or overarching all phenomena; it is self-inclusive (cf. 402c10), comparable in immanency to the notion of "emptiness" (śūnyatā) of the Mādhyamika philosophy.<sup>272</sup>

(5) Suffering (k'u, duḥkha)

As has been observed earlier, li has the function of a remedy for suffering (397a3, 402b6). As a corollary, by turning one's back on li, one is led to perversion and consequently to delusion (405d3) and suffering (403a12). It is natural, therefore, that by remedying or reversing the situation, one can get enlightened to (405d3, cf. 398b18) or abide in li, with the result that all bonds are neutralized (406a17). By going astray from the li designed to effect transformation, one returns to being immersed in desires (trṣṇā) (403a16) and attachment (399c13).

As far as li perceived in this context is concerned, Tao-sheng's interpretation remains firmly rooted in the basic framework of Buddhism. One can then easily identify li with the fundamental doctrines and truths espoused by the Buddha. The sphere of li thus extends beyond the principle of diversity in unity--the theme of the sūtra--having recourse to the Buddhist teaching as a whole. In a more generalized sense, it can also be said that li, as the opposite of "evil"



(408d16), provides or encompasses all the "goods" (402c10), suggesting that li in turn stands as the summum bonum or supreme good.

(6) Tao

The word "tao" can be singled out as the term most synonymously related to li. They are similar in many ways, including grammatical function, usage and general import. Unless they are used interchangeably, they may be designed to convey different contents of meaning. Finding both terms being juxtaposed side by side in many cases, one can assume that they may not be just synonymous; either of the two may represent an emphatic expression, for otherwise they would appear redundant.

Unlike li, tao had already found its way into the Chinese Buddhist glossary. Some of the technically fixed terms involving tao which are identifiable in the commentary as frequently quoted from the sūtra include "(five or six) states of existence" from the Sanskrit word gati;<sup>273</sup> "path" from mārga; "heretics" (lit. "eccentric or unorthodox path") from tīrthikas; "supreme (or unexcelled) path" adapted from anuttarasamyaksambodhi ("unexcelled enlightenment"); and, probably, "middle path"<sup>274</sup> from madhyamā-pratipad. Of these, the term "path", besides referring to the original

source of the word (i.e. the fourth truth (satya) (406c13) of the Four Truths and Eightfold Path, which comprises the contents of the Buddha's first sermon after enlightenment), finds more general applications in the form of compounds or expressions coupled with words like "Buddha", "bodhisatvas", and possibly in many independent occurrences, some of which are modified by particles and adjectives. It is hard to distinguish the tao as the exact equivalent of mārga from the tao derived from a different source of origin.<sup>275</sup> However, as far as the actual substance is concerned, they may not be far apart in the final analysis: in Tao-sheng's system of thought the particular tao of Buddhism may be the representation proper of the unioversal tao. The same can be said of li.

Similarity is also visible in the predicates the two words share. Tao, like li, is "recondite", "mysterious", and "profound and wide". Being also "lofty", tao too covers three dimensions plus the "mysterious" quality, though the expression of depth as such, shen ("deep"), frequently predicating li, is not particularly found along with it. The current pattern such as "li is deep and tao is far-off" (407a3) abounds in various transpositions.<sup>276</sup>

In numerical terms, tao is "one and the same", and "unpolarizable" (cf. 400d15). It is also omnipresent

(398b15), and free from obstacle and blockade (398b16). Concerning how it is "grasped", tao is the object of verbs such as "to know", "to enter", "to exhaustively trace", and "to propagate (or penetrate)", which are all used for li as well.

The attributive adjectives or nouns for tao are the same as, or synonymous with, those for li. The indicative adjectives, including "this" and "such", are used for tao. Like li (402c8) tao is also modified by the phrase "of [the process of] three-[vehicles]-first-One-[Vehicle]-later" (405c12). All those qualifiers (or the process of qualification via nature) indicate the diversity of the term qualified, tao in this case. The range of qualification for, or the spectrum of application of, the term tao appears to be somewhat wider than in the case of li, probably due in part to the longer history of tao's established usage. Yet the patterns of usage for tao are generally comparable to those for li.

Whether li falls within the particular framework of Buddhism, stopping short of being the universal entity as such, still remains a moot point. But the syntactical parallelism of the terms li and tao seems to indicate a larger scope for li than circumscribed by the form of Buddhism represented in the sūtra; for as it appears here, the

term tao, especially when unaccompanied by any qualifier, does not always remain simply specific. No doubt both terms generally symbolize or convey some kind of fundamental, essential reality, or some entity or object.

In actual usage, tao and li are often found idiomatically and technically fixed in one way or another, which can be verified by identifying the various expressions and idioms involving the two terms of our text in light of the Chinese classical sources. (This will be discussed item by item in Part IV below.) As mentioned earlier, Tao had already found its way into the Buddhist glossary.

Both terms nevertheless often appear interchangeable without noticeably altering the context. What is clear is that tao, at least in one sense, is not applicable in the way li is, as the essential or basic principle or truth underlying a given word, phrase, passage or statement. In terms of general structure, however, the dissimilarities of li and tao can be determined only in a subtle way, sometimes only hypothetically. It may be safe to say that the two terms compliment each other, thereby conveying a full picture of a certain reality. If any distinction were to be made, it seems that tao tends more to refer to the external, while li touches on the internal. Or, they can be seen as form and content, respectively: if tao is the religious form, then li

is the philosophical content. Li deals more with the abstract substance, whereas tao deals more with the concrete aspect. From another point of view, tao is the path, way, or means leading to the goal that is li.

As far as the end result is concerned, one is bound to achieve the desired fruit whether the focus is on tao or li. Thus the two terms can be distinguished theoretically, yet practically they may not be different in essence. In this respect, "perfecting the tao" (397c18) may be identical with "enlightenment to li" (405d3), for, in the final analysis, "to consummate tao" (406c17) would not differ in substance from "to consummate li" (398b3).

e. Li and the Process of Enlightenment

As mentioned earlier, li is posited as the object of the noetic process typified by "understanding (or enlightenment)" (wu). It is also the object of such verbs as "to encounter" (401a6), "to grasp" (406b13), "to climb up (or reach)" (408c16). These are nonetheless found in negative expressions, that is, li stands in the distance as that which is impossible for beings to reach or grasp "speedily" or "at once". What constitutes the underlying ground is the "profound", "deep", and "mysterious" nature of li, and the distance between beings and li is widened further by the "murkiness" of beings (400c6). Sometimes the words involved

are modified: li is qualified with the word "ultimate", while "empirical encounter" and "climbing" are modified by "one singular" and "sudden", respectively. Typically, "li, being so recondite, is hard to [fathom] at one encounter (401a6)". What is thus in evidence throughout the text is nothing short of gradualism in the process of being's edification. The position is clearly incorporated with the much-cited Taoist dictum, as Tao-sheng declares: "Li cannot be arrived at instantaneously ... One should decrease [the existential crusts covering up the real essence of being] and further decrease it until one reaches the point of no decrease" (408c16).

This kind of qualification involving such verbs and the approach explicitly suggested by Tao-sheng himself seemingly challenge and contradict what Tao-sheng is well known for having advocated so fervently, namely the doctrine of instantaneous enlightenment. And at issue is Tao-sheng's understanding of li, which as object and content is presumably a key word for determining the kind of process a practitioner should undergo in order to attain to enlightenment, the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice. Faced with the apparent incoherence between what one finds here at first glance and what one can gather from other sources, one must strive to reach a point of contact between the two sources of

information. Or, is it the case that li and its surrounding verbs found in the sūtra concerns the level of consciousness short of "enlightenment" in its true sense? It is true that li often seems to fall in the category of what is less than the ultimate object, requiring correspondingly less than ultimate comprehension, as the verbs involved often imply, but the semantic ranges of both li and the verbs appear to embrace paranormal or mystic apprehension.<sup>277</sup> Also, the adjectives attributing or predicating li, such as "dark", "wondrous", "recondite", and "profound", invariably convey the implication of such a sui generis domain, and its correspondingly extraordinary perception. In terms of schematized steps, li as expounded in the Lotus encompasses the tenth stage (bhūmi) (410c15), the acme of the process. It is also said that the natural frame of enlightenment involving the endowment for enlightenment innate in man goes beyond the vista of the tenth stage (409c8).

In search of the plausible answers or clues to the problem posed in the text, one may consider several factors surrounding Tao-sheng and the text. What is said of li in respect with the stages alone can effectively rule out the alternative that li is not the object of ultimate enlightenment, leaving the first possibility to be considered, namely that Tao-sheng apparently contradicts himself.

Yet along with the first case, there are still other possibilities to be pondered. One is that Tao-sheng may have shifted his initial position on the issue of enlightenment, and accordingly the concept and epistemological implication of li, if the association is proper. There is no record telling of any modification of an historically significant doctrine that generated a good deal of debate and controversy.

Another possibility is that the ideas unfolding in the commentary may not necessarily represent Tao-sheng's own original thinking. As a supporting sign for that view one may cite Tao-sheng's own acknowledgement in the preface of the commentary where he seems to declare that he "edited" the materials he gleaned, both old and new, including a lecture on the Lotus given by a certain master in his youth (396d4ff.). Unless the statement is dismissable as a self-effacing, modest mode of expression, the question then is: How much of his own idea is reflected in the commentary, an otherwise authentic document of Tao-sheng's thought? By way of examining this possibility, and the previous one as well, we may peruse the commentary to see if the rest of the doctrines and themes attributed to Tao-sheng are identifiable in the original form, on the assumption that one doctrine cannot be readjusted without affecting others, especially in



an integral system of thought like Tao-sheng's. Any major change in such an important doctrine would not occur without having any impact or ripple effect on Tao-sheng's thought as a whole, which might in turn be reflected in other individual ideas. As was investigated and discovered earlier (II.2.C.), there is no clear indication that any of those ideas concerned were modified as Tao-sheng acquiesced in other masters' conceptions. For example, Tao-sheng's important doctrine of universal Buddha-nature is indelibly represented with the mark of Tao-sheng's own expression in the text.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, it is highly improbable that the developmental shift of such a significant idea would have gone unrecorded anywhere, unnoticed by an historian, or untouched by Tao-sheng himself.

This brings us back to the remaining possibility listed in the beginning, namely Tao-sheng's apparently conflicting theories for the same question. However, put conclusively, in our hypothetical schema the two conflicting elements need not remain incompatible. As mentioned earlier, the question of the enlightenment process is assumed to be more complex than the polarity suggested by the terms "gradual" and "sudden". Hypothetically, the schema of process is basically two-pronged,<sup>279</sup> so that two different approaches associated with Tao-sheng may not be incompatible

with each other in that they represent two different phases. From that point of view, what Tao-sheng speaks of here can be seen as referring to the first phase of the process in its entirety. In that scheme it still holds true that the culminating point of the process should be an instantaneous, pinpointed breakthrough, which Tao-sheng somehow does not happen to mention in the commentary. Thus the process of realizing li or the ultimate, whatever it is, is undertaken progressively, yet ideally there should be a consummate moment of awakening. The culminating point is not entirely inscrutable in the text, for some expressions clearly suggest it. The adjective "great" qualifying "enlightenment" (398b9, 407c7, cf. 404c5) is a case in point. It becomes more manifest in the sentence: "the great enlightenment is not far [from now]" (408b5). And the suggested two-layer structure of the process is in full view in the passage:

Internally he harbors wondrous understanding, and externally he has further practiced the six virtues to be perfected (pāramitās), which means that he is advanced in terms of both spirituality and things required to do. Thus, for him right awakening can come [any moment] in a short while ("in the morning or in the evening") (410d10f).

It may be debatable whether this "great" or "right" enlightenment is equivalent to "becoming a Buddha" as intended in the sūtra, which as seen in the prophecies of Buddhahood granted by the Buddha to a certain group of

bodhisattvas (see chs. 6, 8, and 9) is something that seems to require numerous aeons to achieve. But Tao-sheng daringly rejects the literary interpretation of the prophecy by demythologizing it, calling it "untrue" (401b5). Tao-sheng thereby brings the process of realization closer to the human dimension and initiative, down to the here and now.<sup>280</sup> Also, such level of "right" enlightenment may not differ in substance from anuttarasamyaksambodhi or "supreme and right enlightenment". Hence, the spectrum of wu or enlightenment and accordingly li as its object may not be limited to anything short of the ultimate apprehension or realm symbolized by the "fine part" at the end of the "coarse" (408c17). Viewed in the hypothesized schema, what "gradual" and "sudden" represent may not be two alternate processes, but two alternate approaches for the first half of the process, to be called later "cultivation" (though Tao-sheng still uses the term for the whole process referred to as "enlightenment"). As far as the key term wu or enlightenment is concerned, it can refer to the whole process or any part of it or either half, depending on the context; there is no precise division of application or use of separate words.

By stressing the gradual cultivation Tao-sheng generally remains in line with the sūtra which suggests nothing but a gradual approach with reference either to teaching by

the Buddha or to learning or understanding by beings (see 400a16), as symbolized in the gradual transition of three vehicles to One Vehicle. The need for the slowed process of knowing arises out of two causal factors: (1) the individual potentiality or faculty, and (2) the social, collective milieu which is typified in "murky and evil age" and "final period (or later day)". Besides occurring in the phrases connected to li, the gradual approach is ubiquitously found in the text. And it can be assumed that all the cases have to do with the preparatory part of the process, not the final phase of momentary illumination. The internal connection between sūtra and commentary is in evidence in Tao-sheng's comment on the passage telling the Buddha's conjuring up and transforming of numerous cosmic realms in gradual order:

Why is [the Buddha's] transformation [of the realms] gradual? The reason why [the Buddha] does so is that he wants to show that li cannot be attained to instantaneously. One should grind the coarse until one reaches the fine; one should decrease and further decrease until it reaches the point of no de-crease. (408c16)

This passage exemplifies Tao-sheng's phraseology. Here he rephrases a section of the story in the sūtra and the frame is interwoven with the words and pattern borrowed from the Chinese source, the Tao-te ching (ch. 48) in this case. Laid bare in this mixed texture is Tao-sheng's own proposition that "li is not instantaneously reachable".

This description of li is diametrically opposed to the image of li inferable from the theory of sudden enlightenment, because the fundamental ground underlying the theory is that li is unpartitionable and consequently can be comprehended only in its entirety once and for all, not bit by bit.<sup>281</sup> In view of the interconnection between the ontological perception and epistemological implication with regard to li, any modification concerning the process may have to be translated into a corresponding change in Tao-sheng's conception of li. It also follows that since there is no trace or evidence of any restructuring of the theory, li can likewise be taken as a double-faceted conception. The part of li addressed in the commentary may well be one aspect different from the part subject to a momentary transformation. Yet "mysterious" (or wondrous) li seems to account for something more comprehensive than a linear conception, which may require an equally "mysterious" perception.

#### f. Concluding Remarks

Occurring in the text in a large number of cases, outnumbering any other substantive, the term li has been found through the above scrutiny to have a wide range of implications. Tao-sheng may not be credited with making the term a noticeably richer metaphysical medium, let alone

coining it. It might be fair to say that li was already in the making as a philosophical concept. Nevertheless Tao-sheng is still unique among his contemporaries in experimenting with such an extensive use of the term. Probably every possible variety of meanings developed or evolved so far may have come into Tao-sheng's vocabulary as found in the commentary.

However, the primary aim of this survey as stated at the outset was not so much to study the concept per se, as to investigate it as an intermediary and repository of Tao-sheng's understanding of the sūtra and his line of thinking in general. Out of this analysis conducted in such a direction some facts have come to light. In some cases--especially when unmodified--the term li still remains equivocal or ambivalent. Taken out of context, the term is open to identification with a sort of universal principle or "cosmic order". In general, however, it seems that li, whether qualified or not, stays within the particular domain of Buddhism, the Buddha, or the sūtra involved. Yet it is assumed that there is some kind of interconnection molded between the two domains: how li the particular is related to li the universal hinges on the way Tao-sheng views the Buddhist system and related doctrines with respect to the universal reality or truth. In the eyes of Tao-sheng, the

Buddhist perspective in this respect may appear by no means dogmatic, as claiming the "exclusive path" to salvation.

Also, the motif of the sūtra that "three vehicles", representing diverse approaches, merge into "One Vehicle", is a subject Tao-sheng constantly focuses on and returns to again and again. This "One" may not be kept captive within one system or another, while "three" may not apply only to the ramifications of a single framework, just as li as conceived by the Neo-Taoists may not be restricted to one established tradition or other. For the possible metaphysical implication of li, Tao-sheng must have been influenced by the Neo-Taoists or school of "Dark Learning". But he went beyond the scope of meaning exploited by the Neo-Taoists. If we take the general pattern and common property of the concept to be a basic internal structure penetrating or embedded in the external representation or expression, Tao-sheng is obviously in the line of tradition culminating in Neo-Taoism. The pattern implied is ming-li or "names and principle", one of the six meanings associated with li throughout Chinese history according to T'ang Chün-i.<sup>282</sup> It is a variation developed from the pattern of ming-shih, "names and reality". In Wang Pi's system, the pattern is translated into "words" and "idea" (i 意). Tao-sheng breaks down further the part of "reality" or "meaning" into li and i

(義 "connotation"), with li pointing to the more fundamental, deeper substructure as well as denotation.

Li thus remains open to various forms of religious systems. Being simply a pattern or structure, li can theoretically accommodate any form of expression or idea. Naturally, in the case of the commentary, what is conveyed in li appears almost always to be connected to the words or doctrines of the Buddha represented in the scripture concerned. In short, Buddhism remains the primary frame of reference for Tao-sheng throughout the cases of li recurrent in the commentary. Far from being any transcendental object, self (ātman) or a positive entity (bhāva), li is a convenient interpretative tool or symbol, never put in the position to commit any violence to the fundamental principles and truths set down by the Buddha and Buddhist interpreters. Hence, whatever is said of li refers, first and foremost, to none other than the sūtra and related matters.

On the part of li as such, however, the original vestige of the term inherited from the Chinese sources may not be written off completely. Rather than interfering or playing havoc with the influx of a new input, li remains wide open and conducive to the acculturation and fertilization of the incoming system in the indigenous cultural soil. The concept has been experimented with and tried on the foreign



content and, as it turned out, has successfully found a fitting application in the latter. Its capacity as a receptacle or convenient tool has been seen to have expanded to a more dynamic range rather than petrified in the traditional frame. The two elements have entered into such correlation that they stand reciprocally to contribute toward the evolution of the courses historically assigned to them. And to that extent, Tao-sheng, through the full exploitation of the potential implications of the term, paved the way for the forthcoming Buddhist and Chinese traditional thinkers to help develop their unique systems by exploiting further the concept-term li.

#### D. Traces of Tao-sheng's Doctrines

The CSPA as his only complete work available and possibly Tao-sheng's last major writing is, as suggested at the outset of the present undertaking, considered to be a rich source for a study of Tao-sheng's thought manifested in many distinct themes. Although Tao-sheng's thought has been outlined earlier, a separate investigation of the CSPA to determine, for one thing, the extent of possible influence of the Lotus on Tao-sheng's thought in the making is in order. In our earlier attempt to reconstitute his individual doctrines, we turned to the work only when necessary for

additional information. Now, the text will be scanned for any vestiges of the doctrines envisaged and held on to up to the point of time by Tao-sheng with or without undergoing some modification. Thereby we may also grasp the scope of the literature as an authentic vehicle of Tao-sheng's ideology and see how those ramified ideas are integrated with the doctrinary frame of the sūtra, as well as with each other. We will follow the order of examination established earlier, with some items added to the basic themes.

#### 1. Sudden Enlightenment

The problem involving Tao-sheng's theory of enlightenment viewed in the light of the CSPA has been partly dealt with in connection with the concept of li in the last section. This important question now deserves a review in the context of the whole text.

In brief, it has been suggested that a key to the question lies with the term li and that its indivisible nature presupposes or dictates the instantaneous pattern of illumination. Contrary to such a premise, however, li, remaining a key recurrent term in the commentary, is posited as something to be realized or awakened to in a progressive fashion. Most typically, as Tao-sheng puts it, "Li cannot be apprehended instantaneously; it requires one to grind and further grind the coarse [part of it] until one reaches its

nucleus" (408c).

A graduated approach is apparently the dominant position of the commentary on the question, whether a relevant statement involves li or something else. The orientation is abundantly clear either explicitly or implicitly in numerous expressions. A point of emphasis, for instance, is "a tiny bit of goodness" (396d, 297a, 400d). What is suggested here may not just symbolize an ethical point of departure; it may encompass and reach over "ultimate knowledge" or perhaps supreme goodness (summum bonum). It is obvious that the term denotes a practically basic step of cultivation toward the goal of salvation. What is required naturally is to accumulate one bit of goodness, whatever it means, after another (400d). By the same token, the fundamental faculty one is born with, which enables one to achieve enlightenment, has to be learned, cultivated, or activated, in accumulation to the point of no learning or cultivation (409c).

Against this enormous amount of information and apparent evidence contradicting the line of argument Tao-sheng is said to have vehemently advocated, one may have to review and straighten out the question of enlightenment in a new light. Barring the possibility that Tao-sheng himself redressed and overhauled his theory, one may attempt to

resolve the problem in terms of the following two hypotheses.

Firstly, as mentioned earlier, Tao-sheng had to be conditioned by the inviolable boundary delimited by the direction and scope of the Lotus. The latter is built upon the theme proposing a circumlocutory course toward the goal of comprehending what is ultimately real, that is, One Vehicle, in this case. Hence, if anything, the sūtra viewed as such stands for a gradual path. That is clearly worded in Chapter 5: "By gradual practice /All to obtain the Fruit of the Way",<sup>283</sup> and again, "By the gradual cultivation of learning, / You shall all achieve Buddhahood" (20b).<sup>284</sup> The arch cause that makes such a course necessary lies in the dull or stupefied faculty of the beings. On both counts Tao-sheng is in conformity with the scripture. Yet that is still short of accounting for the discrepancy of Tao-sheng's position, for there is no ground to believe that chronologically Tao-sheng had not been exposed to the Lotus before he thought of the idea of suddenness. Already there were four Chinese translations of the Lotus and these were probably available to Tao-sheng before Kumārajīva translated it in 406. To say that he realized the basic idea of the sūtra and its implications only later is to underestimate his acumen.

Secondly, one may have to take enlightenment as a

process in which two aspects, gradual and sudden, can be found organically compatible. In the first hypothesis one aspect may represent an alternative to another. Here one encounters a more complex, at least two-pronged process. The term "enlightenment" appears to embrace varied levels of knowledge, ranging from understanding of a fact to unobjectified illumination. A long arduous practice is required to bring about the final fruit of transformation which can be reduced to an instantaneous phenomenon.

From this comprehensive point of view one can still identify some expressions suggestive of a higher level of consciousness against overwhelmingly many phrases and sentences expressing an advancing approach. The word for "sudden" does not occur as such in the text<sup>285</sup>, but we come across such words as "one single" and "great" modifying the word "enlightenment". The intent is clear in the expression "enlightenment proper" (410d) and in the context involved. As much as there is "ultimate knowledge (or wisdom)" (397a, 411b) to attain, there is "ultimate illumination" (411b) to come by.

There are also some middle terms by which two aspects can be distinguished. Tao-sheng talks of ten stages (bhūmi) as if the tenth stage is still short of enabling a bodhisattva to realize a certain aspect of reality (409c).

One term with phenomenological significance in association with enlightenment is "fetters" (lei 累), which refers to bondage of existence or birth-and-death (samsāra) and identifiable with defilements (kleśa). Fetters can be subjected to gradual suppression, but their annihilation comes along with complete realization or encounter with li (406a).<sup>286</sup>

Viewed from this hypothetical perspective, the CSPS merely helps unfurl the whole spectrum of the question, not the contradictory facade. Perhaps a more complete picture may involve a schema based on the comprehensive process in which the factors included in the first possibility, such as alternativeness and individual difference in ability, are accountable. A complex schema with several variations was to unfold in the later tradition of Chinese Buddhism, but the germ of such a multi-dimensional structure was already in the making in Tao-sheng, though the order of two aspects in practice might not be uniform.

One may conclude from such an analysis that the prevalence of one aspect over another in the commentary is the result of Tao-sheng's exercise of his position that it is a matter of focus and emphasis, or a question of priority. The predominance of gradualism in this text coincides with the thrust of the Lotus.<sup>287</sup> To view the commentary through

the single vision of either one aspect or another is tantamount to reducing and oversimplifying the problem of enlightenment to a one-aspect phenomenon. Also, this would not do full justice to Tao-sheng, either.

## 2. Buddha-nature

The idea of Buddha-nature is conspicuous in many parts of the text. It is rather integrally incorporated in the commentary as Tao-sheng's own narrative of the sūtra in his reading. The Buddha-nature inherent in man is a basic presupposition that makes the interaction between the Buddha and beings possible, leading to the latter's realization of the Buddha's teaching (412b4, cf. 403d1) and, by extension, to their edification or enlightenment.

The concept is often phrased in terms of the Chinese philosophical notion of natural provision (fen). As Tao-sheng puts it, "The beings are all possessive of the natural endowment of great enlightenment. (All, without exception, are potential bodhisattvas)" (409c3, 398b, 400b, cf. 408d3). Parallel statements abound, as typically he declares: "All the beings are bound to become the buddhas" (401a12, cf. 408b16, 408d3).

The notion finds expression in still another Chinese term, chi or a subtle triggering-mechanism (412b4 et passim).

Yet this spiritual spring-force is connected with Buddha-nature in such a way that the former represents the outer kinetic stratum of being, that can be activated when the occasion arises, while the latter refers to the substratum. It is the outer part that gives an individual variance from one being to another whereas Buddha-nature remains universally equal. The beings have the mechanism for triggering enlightenment as much as the nature (412b).

Lying in the depth of being as part of its nature, the endowed potential is presented not only as a foundational and functional potential but, like li, also as the object of understanding or enlightenment,<sup>288</sup> also subject to accumulative learning. Yet, while learning may aid one's discovery of one's potentiality for enlightenment, learning by itself is insufficient to bring about enlightenment (409c). Thus two aspects of the enlightenment process, namely, gradual learning and instantaneous awakening, are indicated here. That bears out that the two theses that is, sudden enlightenment, and Buddha-nature remain parallel, the one entailing the other. It further suggests that two cardinal themes are firmly placed in the commentary.

### 3. Miscellaneous

One can enumerate the subject matter Tao-sheng was associated with in terms of the expository writings he is



said to have composed. Two major subjects discussed above are equivalent to the expositions (lun): "One achieves Buddhahood through sudden enlightenment", and "Buddha-nature is something one will come to possess in the future [when one gets enlightened]." The rest will be investigated in the following:

a. Good Deed Entails No Retribution

What the two key substantive terms, namely "good" and "retribution", exactly represent is open to debate, yet it seems obvious that the two refer to different dimensions, religious and worldly, or sacred and profane. But, for the sake of simplifying the problem, let us follow what Chitsang, the San-lun master, quotes Tao-sheng as saying in his exposition. "One minuscule part of good deed all counts toward achieving Buddhahood, not making one receive the retribution of birth-and-death (saṃsāra)".<sup>289</sup> Here, whereas "retribution" is defined clearly, "good deed" still remains equivocal as to which dimension it points to. Nonetheless the "one minuscule part of good deed" made its way into the commentary as an emphatic entry expression which occurs several times (396d, 297a, 400d).

One bit of good conduct is presented as the initial step toward the goal of ultimate knowledge (396d). It is also reflected as the starting point in the diagram of four

dharma-wheels embracing the Buddha's career as a teacher. Tao-sheng does not spell out the practical implications of it, but we can infer from the above-mentioned quotation that it may not be of ethical nature but is likely to be noetic in its linkage with ultimate knowledge. In his interpretation of "good deed" Chi-tsang speaks of "unattainable good" which results in "unattainable reward" and is linked with ultimate knowledge.

The idea of quantitative accumulation naturally denotes progressive advance toward the set objective or (supreme) enlightenment, as clearly expressed (400d15); so the method mirrors the overall path which the commentary suggests the hapless beings should opt for. Tao-sheng links means and goal as if the whole is, after all, the accumulation of parts (397a2). However, that does not complete the whole picture. There is something implicit in that process. It is suggested in the sūtra. "Gradually acquiring merit,/Then quickly achieving the Buddha Path" (50b23). Tao-sheng's metaphysical speculation partakes of a holistic tendency. This being the case, it presupposes something more than the accumulation of all the parts. That is the domain of one single, instantaneous illumination.

- b. There is [in Reality] No Pure Land in [the Realm of] the Buddha

Tao-sheng tackles the question of the Pure Land in chapter 15: "The Life Span of the Thus Come One".(410b) He confronts there the sūtra-phrase "My Pure Land is not destroyed" (43c12).

Tao-sheng does not flatly reject the concept as such, but he attempts to prove that the genuine purity embodied and symbolized by the Pure Land is in fact not connected to any material and physical land, because purity and land composed of "stone and sand" are in contradiction. He drives home the point that the Pure Land is formless as the Dharma-kāya is, whose life-span is not limited to the present one. Thus the Buddha's description of the Pure Land as indestructible represents a ploy to deepen the beings' anticipatory aspirations.

In chapter 6, in support of the premise that there is no land as such in connection with the Sage, Tao-sheng says that the Sage, having penetrated li, is completely free of the fetters which give rise to things and images like land (406a).

### c. The Dharma-kāya is Without Form

Tao-sheng speaks of the Dharma-kāya, namely the Pure Land. The predicate, "pure", descriptive of the Pure Land in its essence, can also be an attribute of the Dharma-kāya

(410b). The notion of Dharma-kāya, which was originally a part of the Mahāyāna concept of triune body (trikāya), is interwoven with the notions of the Sage and li. The Sage, being in the state of unconditioned (wu-wei/asamskṛta), is spatio-temporally omnipresent (409d). The Dharma-kaya is the manifestation of li, which pervades all dharmas, and so it is ubiquitous (404b), penetrating and filling up all over (402d). The substance (t'i) of the Dharma-kāya illuminates the ultimate (411b).

In Tao-sheng's view, even the Form-body (Rūpa-kāya), the corporeal component appearing to the beings in response to their needs, is "without fixed, real shape" (409d). It holds more true of the Dharma-body. Situated beyond the scope of the Form-body, it certainly transcends the representation of form.

In suggesting that the Dharma-kāya is omnipresent by being formless, Tao-sheng borrows the Taoist cosmology and terminology. Absolute negation of one thing often presumes and leads to absolute affirmation of another. Here in this concept the two perspectives, Buddhist and Taoist, finds a synthesis.

#### d. On the Two Truths

The two truths, i.e. the absolute or real and the relative or conventional, do not occur by name in the text.

Nonetheless, the essence of Tao-sheng's conception of them in other sources (that is, the necessity of the conventional truth as a means and the eventual identification of two domains yet under the dominion of the primary) is organically incorporated in the motif of the Lotus. Three vehicles belong to the conventional truth, while the One Vehicle symbolizes the primary and the eventual convergence of the two.

Li, also a symbol for the ultimate truth, remains immutably single and same-natured under the variegated representations. The monistic pattern found in Tao-sheng's metaphysics, which is traceable to the Neo-Taoist philosophy, also applies to the concept and is not in conflict with the Buddhist (particularly the Mādhyamika) philosophy.

One can also view in this context Tao-sheng's lament at the start of the commentary that the sacred (tao) and the profane (su) differ in approaching the subtle words [of the Sage] (396d).

- e. [The Buddha's] Response [to the Beings] is Made in [Varying] Conditions (or Avenues of Approach)

Two key terms, "response" (ying) and "conditions" (yüan), are found separately in the commentary. "Response" or reflex, which occurs more frequently, signifies what the Sage does after the incipient, subtle triggering-mechanism

(chi) in the beings actively beckons (k'ou) him their need and gets stimulated (kan). It represents a part of the process of awareness or edification involving an interaction between the Sage and the beings. "Conditions" in the Buddhist terminology represents secondary conditions or causes (pratyaya), rather than primary causes (hetu). Tao-sheng is familiar with the distinction (399d). In Tao-sheng's curriculum of enlightenment, the Buddha-nature represents the primary cause.

What the title of Tao-sheng's writing suggests is that the Buddha's response requires concrete conditions to express itself-conditions, which are bound to vary in accordance with the existential situations of the beings. The Buddha's acts of response, according to Hui-ta's quotation of Tao-sheng's treatise, range from "being born in the state of suffering" to "opening up the Tao by way of the Dharma of goodness".<sup>290</sup> That scope generally applies to the Buddha appearing in the sūtra, and in particular, the last act seems to fit into the thrust of the commentary.

- f. Explaining [the Proposition] that [a Bodhisattva], upon Entering the First Thought of the Eighth Stage, is About (or Wishes) to Attain Nirvāṇa

The title remains somewhat vague. A key may lie in the word yü 慾, which usually denotes wish or unfulfilled desire.

Does this mean, then, that a bodhisattva in the eighth stage has not yet in reality achieved nirvāṇa, in spite of his hope? The word here rather denotes imminency, so the title can read: "... is on the point of attaining nirvāṇa."

Whatever the word may suggest, it is certain that the eighth stage is highlighted here. It is true that Tao-sheng constantly looks to the tenth stage and beyond in search of ultimacy in perception and knowledge (409c, 410c). But he also gives a special meaning to the eighth. A sharp line of demarcation is drawn between the seventh and the eighth: the former is compared to a small tree, while the latter is a great tree (406a). In the seventh a bodhisattva has suppressed the bondage of the three realms and disposed of passions (400b). In the eighth he obtains a higher level of concentration (samādhi) (400b), and is even able to prognosticate the future development of the Buddha's preaching (399d).

The punctuation of the eighth stage conforms with the report that Tao-sheng was the sole advocate of the "great sudden enlightenment", while other masters were the proponents of the "small sudden enlightenment", whose key stages were the eighth and the seventh respectively.<sup>291</sup>

E. Select chapters for a comprehensive textual analysis

As another way of exploring Tao-sheng's view of the Lotus as well as the latter's contribution to his general line of thinking, we will select three chapters (3, 15 and 24) for a comprehensive investigation with respect of structure, subject matter, and phraseology. The three chapters are representative in two ways of twenty seven chapters making up the text: they represent (1) three different lengths; (2) three segments of the sūtra divided up in accordance with what Tao-sheng identifies as three themes, i.e., "cause" (chs. 1-13), "effect" (Chs, 14-21), and "men [involved]" (22-27). All are connected to and undergo the three-vehicles-turning-One process, which is the central motif of the Lotus.

This comprehensive reading will emphasize how the Buddha's message in a given chapter of the sūtra is reflected in Tao-sheng's exegesis. The commentary seems to develop Tao-sheng's own storytelling as distinct from the story of the sūtra. There is a big difference in the length of the chapters, some of which are certainly out of proportion when compared with other chapters of the commentary. What factors account for this difference and what is his criterion for choosing the passages, phrases, and terms to annotate?

Besides a different version of storytelling, the text



shows a different phraseology and diction, undoubtedly influenced by Taoist and related patterns of thinking. Does the obvious discrepancy in form and expression entail the same in actual substance? Therein may lie the nature and scope of Tao-sheng's originality as a Buddhist thinker and his contribution as a Chinese Buddhist.

These questions can also address the relationship of the particular and the universal categories raised earlier, especially in the discussion of li in connection with Tao-sheng's understanding of the text in particular and Buddhism in general.

#### 1. Chapter 3: Parable

##### a. Position

This chapter may still deserve to be selected, if for no other reason than that it is the longest chapter in the whole text. It belongs to the first thematic section (chs. 1-13) in Tao-sheng's classification. It is one of the first four chapters, which are the longest four of all chapters, accounting for the first roll or half of the text, and is certainly far out of proportion with the corresponding chapters of the sūtra.

It may not be unnatural that the first few chapters are relatively longer than the later ones because they contain new concepts. But if that is the sole reason, four

chapters in a row would be still too many. In any event, it is evident that Tao-sheng thought the chapters, especially chapters 2-4, were important. We may cite what Tao-sheng says about the three chapters at one point (407b14). He associates them with the expression "this wisdom" in the sūtra (27b14). The word "this" implies that "wisdom" need not be something abstract. It refers to what is mentioned earlier in the sūtra, toward the end of the previous chapter (ch. 7), in both metric (27b8) and prose parts (26a21), more specifically, "Buddha-wisdom" (or "Buddha-knowledge").

The "Buddha-wisdom" symbolizes the final objective of the Buddhist practice. Nowhere is this wisdom defined. Nonetheless, there is a pregnant passage in the sūtra that bespeaks something about it: "Within the One Buddha Vehicle he speaks of a threefold distinction" (26a22, 27b1). Thus it has something to do with the three-vehicles-turned-One-Vehicle process, the latter either being the means or goal inasmuch as the Buddha-path (tao) may be the means or the ultimate end. If that is the case, one can conjecture that Tao-sheng puts stress on the theme of One Vehicle, at least as a partial component of "wisdom". As far as the theme of the sūtra is concerned, Tao-sheng did not veer far from the route charted out by the sūtra. Hence, Tao-sheng's recognition of the motif of the sūtra is identified as a

primary factor responsible for the length of the chapter. The sūtra in fact presents the theme in this chapter with the support of an edificatory parable.

b. General Structure

The chapter is composed of fifteen paragraphs. The first is strictly an introduction with an interpretation of the title. The next three correspond with the first three paragraphs of the sūtra which, in Tao-sheng's analysis, deal with the purport (i 義) of the discourse under way, expressed in stages. The next seven paragraphs deal with li underlying the discourse, expressed in as many steps of the Buddha's approach. In the twelfth paragraph, the Buddha explains the "internal meaning" or implication of the parable, it too is divided into seven parts. The remaining paragraphs (except the last one) make up the metrical part (gāthās). It contains seven matching themes as well. In this way Tao-sheng structurally breaks down the entire chapter in accordance with the patterns of i and li, or intent and implied principle.

The first three paragraphs outline the three major issues of the i. The first paragraph states that Śāriputra's joy is caused by his realization of One Vehicle, and is an outcome of the maturation of his understanding and the

deepening of his doubts. The second explains that what has been known as the path of Hīnayāna does not really exist. What looked like different paths have been actually directed toward the Buddha path. The third states that those with self-esteem (which constitutes a barrier to faith-building and realization) have been led to realize that all beings possess an innate faculty for enlightenment, making them feel joyful.

As listed in paragraph 5 (401d5), the seven paragraphs that clarify li represent the seven steps of the process: (1) there are ensuing calamities and misfortunes in the house; (2) only the Buddha realizes the gravity of the situation; (3) the Buddha, having realized it, has the great compassion for all sons arising in him; (4) he first tells them about the dreadful happening in the house before he offers them the joy of three vehicles; (5) he offers them the joy of three vehicles (or promises them as a ploy); (6) he actually gives them the joy of One Vehicle; (7) the promised three vehicles have never been given and (the Buddha) appears to have committed falsehood (but he has not).

The question then is this: To what extent is this schematization textual, that is, reflective of the sūtra? Is there a visible gap between the gist of the sūtra and Tao-sheng's interpretation? Because this question might require

a third objective standard or criterion, it is perhaps better to ask: Is there any point of contact between them and any goal-oriented coherence and logical clarity in Tao-sheng's exegesis, or is there an obvious misunderstanding and distortion of the text? At a glance, the outlines of the two sections given above do not betray any sign of radical deviation. In fact, the methodical anatomy of the entire chapter does not allow much room for any out-of-the-way maneuvering. The synopses given by Tao-sheng contradict the central meaning of the sūtra. However, he shows a tendency of formalizing what the Buddha suggests, while still staying within the frame of a story. For example, the utterance "we will equally enter into the Dharmahood" (10c5) is transformed into the comment that "all the beings are bound to become the Buddha without exception" (401a13). Here one who is equipped with some basic knowledge germane to Tao-sheng will not fail to recognize that what is suggested here is none other than the notion of universal Buddhahood associated with the Nirvāṇa Sūtra, the controversial topic of the period that Tao-sheng was responsible for. Furthermore, the dictum takes on an added emphasis with the word "without exception" (401b1) and finds a Chinese style of expression in "endowment" (fen) (of enlightenment) (401b15) (cf. #398b9, 407a11, 409c3,7). In such a way Tao-sheng gives his own

articulate reading of the sūtra without distorting its message.

As regards the synopses of the second set of classifications (consisting of seven paragraphs), they show a peculiar metaphorical mixture of the original parable and Tao-sheng's own story of salvation involving the Buddha and beings, with no clear distinction drawn between the two lines of storytelling in terms of vocabulary used. He replaces "father" (see 403d4) with "the Buddha" without any explanation. Other expressions, such as "self-realized", "great compassion", "fire", "joy", "sons" (401c7), "vehicles" (ch'eng 乘) (unlike "carriages" (chū 車)) (see 402a7), and "house" (403b6) are used both ways. Only a few words including "calamities" are not used for Tao-sheng's own narrative. Now let us examine how the coordination is substantiated in each part and whether there are variances.

### c. Content Analysis

#### 1. Part 1 (Para. 1) (401a5)

This paragraph explains the title "parable" and serves as an introduction to the background of the chapter. The Buddha's employment of a parable becomes necessary for those who have not yet comprehended the li because of their inferior faculties. Tao-sheng's own creative thought begins to show from this point. The notion of the difference in the

roots of individuals is not Tao-sheng's own; yet it is not an idea that is clearly defined in the original chapter of the sūtra, either. He employs the word li as the object of wu (comprehension, understanding, or enlightenment). Li is a new term which does not occur in the sūtra. Li does not refer here to an ontological entity, but it signifies the essential content of the Buddha's discourse. Another potentially significant term drawn from a source outside the sūtra is shih 事, "worldly facts", here taken to be the teaching aid for describing li. This combination is not used in the same way as it was later in Chinese Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism in the sense of the relative-absolute interrelationship.

Thus this analysis suggests that Tao-sheng's ingenious and wide use of the Chinese terms helped him to bring out the real meaning of the sūtra more clearly. The terms by no means would make a stumbling block to the contemporary reader's understanding of the sūtra.

## 2. Part 2 (Paras. 2-4) (401a8-c4)

This part covers the sūtra from the beginning (10b) to 11b13 (Hurvitz, 58:16). What is said in it is the following: Śāriputra expresses his appreciation for the Buddha's telling him about the true aspect of the three

vehicles as an expedient device. The Buddha's granting Śāriputra the prophecy of his future enlightenment follows. The congregation becomes joyful over the scene. Śāriputra requests the Buddha to clarify his doctrine for the sake of the multitude.

Tao-sheng carefully follows the story as he selects some representative passages and succinctly draws out the implications. If we recognize that the theme of the sūtra, namely the process of three vehicles turning One Vehicle, is embodied in this part, though in a somewhat diffused form, we can see that Tao-sheng does not differ from the sūtra. Not only does "One (Vehicle)" occur in every paragraph but also the synopses are either implicitly or explicitly related to the theme. In paragraph 3, the relationship between "three" and "One" is identified with a dialectical process. He declares: "the three is identical with none other than One; there are no separate three" (401b11). Here Tao-sheng stresses the positive aspect of the three -- an overtone identifiable throughout the commentary.

Presented as a corollary of the process is the theory that all beings are bound to become buddhas (para 2). Also, as a parallel it is suggested that all beings are possessive of the innate endowment of the potential to become buddhas (para. 4). Here Tao-sheng adds one more dimension to what



the sūtra intimates. The sūtra focuses on the Buddha's effort to lead all beings in his salvific path, characterized as "gradual", from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna, as posited by Tao-sheng (para 2). Viewed from the position of the beings, salvation remains external to them. Tao-sheng, however, goes one step further and associates it with the capacity within the beings, whereas the Lotus does not particularly touch on or dwell on the subject of the Buddha-nature.

We have already observed in Part 1 (para. 1) that individual difference in root or fundamental ability (ken) accounts for the speed of enlightenment or comprehension, typified as "early" or "late". Both the sūtra and the commentary generally acknowledge the fact of "difference". Yet, a careful comparison reveals that they diverge in application: the sūtra is oriented toward the collective state of the beings, while Tao-sheng is more concerned with individual differences in the ability to grasp li or the ultimate reality. Tao-sheng still talks of "unclean ages" (para. 3) drawing on the sūtra but that does not apply to the present age, which is "clean".<sup>292</sup>

The priority of the inner over the outer is evident in the statement: "Śāriputra harbours enlightenment inwardly, issuing forth comprehension outwardly." The frame of the inner (nei) and the outer (wai), borrowed from the

Chinese tradition, appears again in the passage referring to Śāriputra: "The Tao [of the Sage] is so great that it combines with kingliness" (para. 4), obviously a rephrasing of the dictum descriptive of a Chinese archetype of man: "Sageliness within and kingliness without."<sup>293</sup> Here too, focus is directed to the inner part. The prophecy of future enlightenment which Śāriputra receives from the Buddha is interpreted in terms of this traditional framework. Tao-sheng ascribes the prophecy to Śāriputra's own inner cumulative enlightenment (para. 3). In fact Tao-sheng even perceives that the Buddha's bestowal of the prophecy is not meant to be real at all, but is merely a technique to attract those who aspire to it. This reading is tantamount to a bold rejection of the literal interpretation of the sūtras, and shows Tao-sheng's strong conviction and critical mind. In this respect he sees in this sūtra what he sees in the Nirvāna Sūtra; the two sūtras are linked together by Tao-sheng through, for instance, the idea of Buddha-nature.

Tao-sheng's interpretation of the prophecy of future Buddhahood for a certain person in terms of cumulative effect of comprehension or enlightenment (wu) betrays what can be characterized as a rationalist bent of his thinking and methodology for salvation. Basically in Tao-sheng's approach, salvation lies in exercise of one's own

intelligence to yield enlightenment; what is essential is rational knowledge or wisdom (prajñā). In the sūtra, there is a link between the prophecy and realization, yet it is not an exclusive and explicit relationship.<sup>294</sup> This approach is borne out by the frequent use of the word "wu", as either a verb or a noun. It occurs fourteen times in the first four paragraphs, and its synonyms, such as "to encounter (empirically)" (wu, para. 1), "to understand" (chieh 解, two times, para. 4), "to know (chih 知)" (four times, para. 4). The word is expressive of the act by which the beings respond to the Buddha's teaching. Although the act involved is not identical with the ultimate stage of realization or the attainment of Buddhahood as such, there is no reason to think they are unconnected.

The object of enlightenment is either One Vehicle or the principle of universal salvation. The notion of universal salvation finds expression in the sūtra in the concept of identicality of the Dharma-nature. There is no valid way of determining what enlightenment means in empirical terms. However, both objects appear to represent an essential part of the process because the two objects are interrelated and they are also related to other concepts (especially those of Mahāyāna origin). A good example is found in paragraph 4:

His virtue being thick, his concern (for others) is likewise deep; the Tao is so great that it combines with kingliness. Sāriputra, having finished his induction into enlightenment, wants to make others with the same thought share his profound understanding. (401b15).

What is indicated here is none other than the Mahāyāna ideal of wisdom (prajñā) and compassion (karuṇā) in unity, and that ideal is practicable only because of what those objects represent.

Then how does one attain knowledge of this comprehension or wu? It is evident in the context that the primary source of knowledge (pramāṇa) is the Buddha's utterance (śabda). It is, of course, not self-sufficient. Complementary to the revelation, direct perception (pratyakṣa) is necessary. Inference (anumāna) may be involved in this process, too.

(3) Part 3 (Paras. 5-12) (401c-402d)

What follows next is Tao-sheng's seven paragraph analysis of the parable itself. Tao-sheng finds symbolism at its best in the parable. Almost every part of the story of a burning house seems to analogically correlated with what he pictures as the condition of beings' saṃsāric existence and the Sage's effort to save them from it. The intended allegory is most effective and straightforward at the point where three "carriages" and one big "carriage" are described,

symbolizing three vehicles (ch'eng / yāna) and One Vehicle (Ekayāna) respectively. The two sets of situations are brought so close that Tao-sheng does not feel it necessary specifically to identify the "elder" or "(great) man", father of the sons, with the Buddha.<sup>295</sup>

His penchant for meticulous details seems to go too far sometimes. For instance, he dissects the word "thirty" of "thirty sons" into "three" and "ten", "three" referring to "three vehicles", and "ten" meaning "many" (para. 6). Such a syllabic dissection of a word is possible in the Chinese rendering of the term but it sounds over-analytic.

Nonetheless, the actual purport of the parable is also offered by the Buddha in the sūtra (13allff) though in a less systematic form of analysis. Later in the section following the equivalent part of the paragraphs under discussion, the Buddha himself illustrates in what way the story and his path for saving the beings are comparable. It has been already clarified at the end of the story that the main theme and conclusion of the parable, i.e. that the father did not commit any falsehood by giving the sons one great carriage instead of the promised three carriages, represents the Buddha's device of three vehicles as the harbinger of One Vehicle, the original and final. Subsequently here more parallels are drawn metaphorically

between the burning house and "the burning house of the three worlds", and between father and the Buddha, as well as between "three carriages" and "three vehicles". And the Buddha's compassion is cited as in the commentary. Tao-sheng also employs those frames bringing them from behind, yet he goes beyond them to make a more systematic and elaborate analysis. Attesting to this is the fragmentation of the whole story to yield seven sub-themes expressed in mixed metaphors: (1) diagnosis of the pressing situation of suffering, (2) self-realization of such suffering, (3) arising of compassion to save all from suffering, (4) explaining the fearful condition, (5) giving the imaginary joy of three vehicles, (6) giving the utmost joy of the true One Vehicle instead and (7) justifying the plotted change.

Tao-sheng clarifies that what is to be saved from the fire of samsaric transmigration is not "bodily life" (sūtra, 11a4) but "wisdom-life" (hui-ming 慧命) (paras. 6, 7, 12). The formula the Buddha has prescribed for helping to save the wisdom-life is incorporated in the term li. Li encompasses what lies under the three vehicles and One Vehicle, and the process from three to One, as well as the Great Vehicle. The li which is applicable to "one" and "Great" in particular is not the ordinary li: it is "mysterious" (or "wondrous") (miao) (paras. 10, 11). It denotes something underlying what

the Buddha preaches, and justifies such devices as three vehicles. The idea of reality and the notion of skillfulness in means find a harmonious fusion in li.

Notwithstanding li and other terms originated in the indigenous Chinese philosophical glossary, Tao-sheng does not depart from fundamental presuppositions in the framework of the sūtra. Li is the antidote to suffering; "carriage" symbolizes the joy replacing the endless road of suffering (para. 10). The conditions of suffering which the children or beings are in, which is the theme of the first paragraph of the sūtra, are described in the typical numerical idioms such as "three realms", "five desires" (paras. 7, 9), three or five "evil destinies" (paras. 6, 9) couched in the metaphor of fire (para. 9), and six sense-data "guṇas", (para. 9). The notion of the great compassion in the Buddha as he extends his task to saving all beings is exclusively dealt with in the first sūtra-paragraph (para. 8). Also the matters touched on include the concept of Middle Path. The key terms, and especially the way they are expressed in the last two concepts, are found also in the native Chinese systems. Yet, the spirit and main thrust apparently remain Buddhist. Certainly the whole content and implication they convey are made richer.

Thus in this pattern of exegesis, so well organized

in keeping with the content of the sūtra, there seems not much room for Tao-sheng to manoeuvre. Yet, he was still able to exercise his creative imagination liberally. His acumen and critical mind are as discernable as ever in his interpretation of the final, seventh sūtra-paragraph (para. 12).

Tao-sheng tersely makes the point that the Buddha's munificence in keeping the wisdom-life intact as the effect of the device surpasses and justifies whatever the Buddha does concerning three vehicles and One Vehicle including denial of even the smallest carriage reversing his original intention. Therefore, one big carriage means an unexpected extra boon for the children.

(4) Part 4 (Para. 13) (402d9)

Here the Buddha explicates the implications of the parable. And Tao-sheng itemizes them into the "internal meanings" in accordance with the seven divisions of the parable, finding them in the same order, but with some variance in arrangement between the internal meanings and the elements of the parable within individual divisions. As discussed earlier, some of the key terms as equivalent counterparts of the parable have already been employed by Tao-sheng in his more scrupulous analysis.



## (5) Part 5 (Paras. 14-15) (403a7)

Tao-sheng appropriately finds the same themes repeated in a double set in the first half of the long metric portion which takes up the rest of the chapter. He discovers that only the seventh theme is not treated in the first set. It is not unnatural that Tao-sheng, might not suspect anything about the structure of the text, far from knowing that the metric portion (gāthās) represents a different layer of tradition in the formation of the sūtra.<sup>296</sup> Not knowing anything of textual criticism, he accepts the text as it is as if the gāthās were an integral extension of the prose section.

## (6) Part 6 (Para. 16) (403b11)

In the second half of the gāthās section the Buddha recapitulates the point of all the teaching devices used and advises and admonishes to have faith in and to propagate, the sūtra. It is outlined in this one-paragraph final part. The basic ideas drawn out are the wondrous profoundness of the li or tao of One Vehicle, which necessitates a device for the men of low intelligence and suggests its nature of all-encompassing propagation. Accordingly, its embodiment, the sūtra, embraces all the doctrines (i) and all the goodnesses. Tao-sheng is thereby fully in compliance with the self-adulation of the sūtra. And it has turned out what the sūtra

stands for worthy of adoration is the philosophical essence of the message it carries, identifiable in none else than the Path of One Vehicle in its full implication of li, which can only be predicated as mysterious or wondrous (miao).

## 2. Chapter 15: The Life-span [of the Thus Come One]

### a. Position

This chapter has been chosen because of its middle position in the sūtra with respect to location and size, and because of the divisional theme involved that the "effect" of the three vehicles becomes that of One. Besides, the title itself suggests what appears to be potentially significant in unraveling Tao-sheng's overall understanding of the text. Tao-sheng's pattern of thinking is fundamentally a rationalist approach, especially if we take li, a key term in his writing, as the most relevant indicator of that approach. But is this view compatible with the concept of long lifespan, eternity, or immortality of the Buddha as espoused here, which goes beyond the boundary of the rational way of thinking?

### b. Structure

The chapter of the commentary is one of the longer chapters in the second roll, whereas in comparison the corresponding chapter in the sūtra is one of the shorter chapters. It is obvious that Tao-sheng finds the chapter to

be significant. The chapter consists of four parts in eight paragraphs. The first part explains the title and the aim of the chapter. Tao-sheng comments on the Buddha's account of his eternity in the second chapter. The third discusses a parable to illustrate his point. The fourth part deals primarily with the true meaning of "Pure Land".

### c. Content Analysis

#### (1) Part 1 (Para. 1) (409c14)

The dark illumination, the region of the Sage, is beyond the realm of images, and not subject to life-span. Yet because of the sentient being's delusion and their attachment to life the Buddha devised the topic of "long life-span". The incalculable life-span of the Buddha as depicted in the sūtra remains a linear conception and still stops short of immortality or multi-dimensional unit. In Tao-sheng's view the notion of life-span is inapplicable to the Sage. In drawing the gist of the chapter, Tao-sheng often uses the Taoist terminology. In a way he partakes of the Taoist cosmology and Weltanschauung. Yet, when we consider the concept of Dharma-kāya, which occurs in next part (410b18), Tao-sheng is speaking still from the Buddhist perspective.

#### (2) Part 2 (Paras. 2-4) (409d2)

.Tao-sheng substantiates the above-mentioned premise

by positing two factors, long life-span and [the present life started at around] Gaya. He theorizes the mutually exclusive inter-relationship of two, inferring that if one is true the other will turn out to be false. To that extent the style of argument only partially resembles that of the Mādhyamika. He goes on to conclude that longness and shortness apply only to the sentient beings while the Sage remains in the unconditioned (asaṃskṛta) state (para. 2) and omnipresent spatio-temporally (para. 3). And yet it can also be said that because of the interdependence of the two factors longness and shortness are also valid (para. 3). Tao-sheng, however, also makes a passing remark on life-span from a relative point of view in paragraph 4.

(3) Part 3 (Para. 5-7) (410a2)

The parable, as Tao-sheng rightly points out in the beginning of para. 5, analogizes the contradiction that the Buddha exists for ever in reality, and yet he says he is about to pass into extinction. Besides this general intent of the parable there are a few more basic terms identifiable in the parable to represent those in the real situation, such as the physician symbolizing the Buddha, the sons representing the beings, and the faked death of the physician allegorizing the Buddha's nirvāna. However, as in the case of chapter 3, Tao-sheng finds the healing process in the parable and the process of saving the sentient beings by the

Buddha in complete agreement down to every detail. To cite some of the main elements of the schema, for example, "poison" is compared to delusion (huo 惑, moha), "taking the medicine" to the attainment of the purport the Buddha aims at, "healing" to the removal of delusion, and "saving" to reviving the wisdom-life.

As has been become evident in the above, Tao-sheng's approach, which is displayed in this description of the sentient being's condition of suffering, points, as an epistemological key, to noetic apprehension of the given information in essence and of reality in terms of both cause and effect. Attesting to it are recurrent terms involved in the process. Those key terms include the following nouns: [the Buddha's] purport (chih 旨, five times), li (five times), and the true (chen 真), and "to comprehend" (chieh, four times), along with the following verbs "to know" (chih), and "to understand" (wu). Of these three, "to comprehend" is most important. Chieh also denotes "to dissolve", satisfying the two versions of storytelling concerned, namely, of the sutra and of Tao-sheng, and the metaphorical style of Tao-sheng's phrasing. It applies to "condition" and "ignorance" (twice) in the sense of "to dissolve".

Viewed from the content analysis of the present part, one can safely say that Tao-sheng essentially remains in line with the Buddha's fundamental propositions, especially with

reference to the twelvefold chain of causation (pratītya-samutpāda). There is the overtone of the deluded state, yet many of the factors, including "ignorance", are mentioned or implied. Even "delusion" can be regarded as the common element overarching them.

The process in either version winds up in the declaration that the Buddha has not committed any wrong-doing by purposely deceiving the beings about his life-span. Here again Tao-sheng merely intones the ultimate theme of the sūtra, namely, the diversity-in-means in unity-in-goal, in which the result justifies the means.

Along those lines one can see that Tao-sheng faithfully follows the lead of the text and embraces the concept of the Buddha's life-span on the verge of eternity, which appears in a way to transcend the ken of the rationalist approach which is otherwise attributable to Tao-sheng's pattern of thinking.

(4) Part 4 (Para. 8) (410b13)

Annotating some select passages from the stretch of verses which ends with "My Pure Land is not destroyed", Tao-sheng attempts with logical coherence to clarify the true intent of the "Pure Land" and related ideas.

Starting off from the proposition that the Buddha appears to be nonexistent in the world due to the sentient

beings' impurity, and establishing that the impurity refers to none other than that of name-and-form (nāma-rūpa), the constituents of the self, Tao-sheng reasons that the formless (ultimate) has nothing to do with purity or impurity. What the purity or freedom from defilement really means is that there is no "land" as such. Hence, the purity of "Pure Land" means in reality "no land" and that is what the Buddha intends to mean by it. It can also be an attribute for the Dharma-kāya, the ontic substance (t'i 體) "omnipresent" and "absolutely pure", which is not subject to burning like the sins of the beings. Tao-sheng glosses "Pure Land" as an innocuous expression invented to help make them more searching and inquisitive.

It has thus become evident that the myth of the "Western Paradise", being conceived of as a certain locus, finds no place in the cosmic order that Tao-sheng envisions. His bold departure from a literal interpretation of the concept reveals again his incisive and analytic mind, which is characteristic of his way of thinking in general.

3 Chap. 24: [The Gateway to Everywhere of the Bodhisattva] He Who Observes the Sounds of The World (Avalokiteśvara)

a. Position

The reason for selecting this chapter for analysis is twofold: first, it is of short length; second, it belongs to the third of the three segments in Tao-sheng's classification

of the sūtra (chs. 22-27). It is supposed, therefore, to reflect the segmentary motif that the "persons" of three vehicles turn out to be those of One Vehicle.

#### b. Structure

The chapter is composed of a single paragraph, which is still longer than some other chapters (21, 26, 28) long enough for Tao-sheng to make his own pregnant statement. The theme of the chapter as developed in the sūtra is simply the efficacy of invoking the name of, thinking of, or worshipping, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-yin), who, thanks to this specific chapter, was to become a kind of a mythological figure, the object of faith and source of inspiration of the Chinese Buddhists for long time to come, as witnessed by numerous artifacts in various forms devoted to the figure.

#### c. Content Analysis

The frame in which the theme is presented in the sūtra is plain and simple. As to the reason the bodhisattva is so named, the Buddha declares to the living beings that if they hear of this bodhisattva and call upon his name, he shall heed their voices and all shall gain deliverance (mokṣa). This introduction is followed by the exemplification of various efficacies.

Obviously not stopping at so simple an explanation of



the external structure of the name, Tao-sheng goes deeper in search of the reason for making this alternative available the rational ground for the efficacy, and how it works, that is, the inner structure of the process involving the name.

As the general premise, Tao-sheng suggests that resorting to the title is a part of the Buddha's diverse exigetial methods necessitated by the divergence in the subtle triggering-force (chi) in individual beings. As to why the particular name has been singled out for glorification, Tao-sheng claims that it is designed to foster devotional feeling for a given object and the acquired ability to concentrate on one thing makes it possible to encompass everything. The object happens to be the bodhisattva and there is no esoteric or mythological reason involved.

Then how is "deliverance" from bondage (mokṣa) made possible through just hearing the name? Taking issue with apparently universal application implied here, an opponent with the traditional view on the matter may question the direct efficacy of deliverance on the ground that the sage as the initiator of the process would not be able to uplift those with no religious nexus or triggering force (chi), implying that there is some class of beings without the potential. In response to the hypothetical question Tao-sheng analyzes the chemistry of interaction between the two

factors, namely what makes Avalokiteśvara what he is, and the nexus of enlightenment innate in the beings. Avalokiteśvara's raison d'être is all-embracing propagation (t'ung 通) of the truth (li) and his avowed goal is all-inclusive salvation. He is "the gateway to everywhere". The beings, having the nexus of enlightenment, then make an active contact with the sage. The sage is equipped with the practical art (tao) of propagation. And since that tao has been extended, deliverance may not be an empty word. Tao-sheng concludes with a utilitarian view that the consequence attained by glorifying the name is bound to be great. Tao-sheng tries to bring home the point that actually all the elements of mechanism working in the process of salvation are represented in the single appellation of Avalokiteśvara. Here Tao-sheng reveals his analytic mind in the undertone of rationalistic reasoning at its best. His account here is also impregnated with the idea of universal Buddhahood which he advocated.

In the final passage Tao-sheng repeats what he stated at the end of the previous chapter, namely, that the path (tao) is one and the same though there are different people involved, namely, bodhisattvas or Buddhas. That is a clear reference to the segmentary theme that men of three [vehicles] are none other than men of One [Vehicle].

#### d. Vocabulary

What is indisputably clear in Tao-sheng's style of writing in this chapter is the ubiquitous presence of Chinese philosophical terms and phraseology. In fact, the major terms and expressions of Tao-sheng's own statements are mostly borrowed from the Chinese texts, conspicuously the I Ching. However, Tao-sheng does not necessarily follow the original meaning associated with the given term or phrase. For example, the word t'ung 通 of the phrase 遂通 (412b4) means "penetration" in the same phrase in the I Ching, whereas Tao-sheng uses it in the sense of "propagation" (liu-t'ung 流通) of the Dharma enunciated in the sūtra (see ch. 9, 407d12). Terms like "sage", "exigency" (ch'üan), "li", "tao", "root-force" (ken), "triggerring mechanism" (chi), "to contact" (k'ou), and "to respond" or "reflex" (ying) invariably have their roots in the Taoist and related vocabulary. Yet they are readjusted to fit into the new contexts under the altruistic system of Mahāyāna which aims at universal liberation from bondage. It is the case that borrowed details are subsumed under the controlling framework connected with the sūtra. Tao-sheng's unique imprint is engraved not only in the way he lumps together old forms and new contents but also in the making his own statement therein. For instance, the doctrine of universal Buddha-nature which Tao-sheng was noted for championing finds a

traditional pattern of expression in a passage (412b2&4). And again the doctrine was not of Tao-sheng's own creation, but an emphatic recount of an idea imbued in the Nirvāna Sūtra.<sup>297</sup> Far from incompatible with the tenet of the chapter, the doctrine sheds more illumination on the Buddha's doctrine and reinforces the original purport.

#### 4. Summary and Conclusion

Above has been a comprehensive analysis of the sample chapters of diverse length undertaken in order to look critically and textually into the way Tao-sheng reads the text of the Lotus in terms of structure, content, and phraseology and how his understanding of the text is integrated into his system of thought. To collate and summarize the findings:

##### a. Structure

As to the difference in length, the major factors that affect the length of the chapters are found to be the order, theme, and length, of the equivalent chapters of the sūtra. There is no coherent standard, especially in the order and length. The first four chapters are accommodated in the first roll, the half of the text, probably because of the thematic significance and also because there are many significant terms and phrases for the first time which occur here. Besides, and still in connection with the three

determinants, when the theme and structure of the sūtra-chapter are of more complex nature that takes up more space in the commentary, Tao-sheng makes a thorough structural analysis as in the case of ch. 2.

b. Content

Whatever the length of a given chapter is, Tao-sheng never loses sight of its central idea. He sums up the idea usually in the first paragraph, in the form of a proposition; concurrently or immediately thereafter he explains why the chapter is titled as such. The preface is followed by a series of selected words, phrases, sentences, or passages with annotation, which appear random but can still be cohesive in the sense that they somehow reflect the inner current of Tao-sheng's thinking. The main stream of his thinking is concentrated in most cases on the Buddha's path of saving as many beings as possible by utilizing various methods in tune with their receptivity and other existential factors. Tao-sheng properly views all the topics under discussion in the chapters as converging on the leitmotif of the sūtra; they deal with the variations or explanations of the latter, or propagation of the sūtra one way or another.

Tao-sheng follows the story of the sūtra his own way of storytelling. Yet when there appears an expression of the parable involved or an analogy apparently not quite congruous with the plot of his story, Tao-sheng points it out and

refers to it as the Buddha's "tentative (or borrowed, metaphorical) expression" (chia-ts'u)<sup>298</sup>. The version of his story, nonetheless, does not represent any departure in substance from the Buddha's purport explicitly implied or as found in the latter's own explications of the parable in the ensuing paragraphs.

Tao-sheng's general tone of thinking, perhaps typical of a commentator of a religious text, shows some tendency of reducing the religious dogmas or messages to philosophical statements. Yet there seems to be little risk of reductionism, for the quintessential intent is largely retained and, after all, more than anything else, the Buddha's approach is intellectual apprehension of the real. Nonetheless, the role of the Sage in the process is essential; he blandishes the beings into the path of salvation he has empirically tested and realized. In light of the complex process involved, Tao-sheng's perspective may not be categorized as merely philosophical. The process of acquiring religious knowledge requires of the beings diverse sources, all the typical means prescribed in the Indian and Buddhist tradition, "philosophical" or "religious". The sources of knowledge (pramāṇa), namely, authority or testimonial (śabda), direct perception (pratyakṣa), and analogy (anumāna) are involved or implicit in the process of knowing as envisaged by Tao-sheng in the text.

### c. Phraseology

The vocabulary of the text especially in Tao-sheng's meaningful or pregnant statements is heavily tinged with traditional Chinese terms of philosophical significance. Some typical patterns and idiomatic expressions traceable to Taoist-related texts are found to constitute the basic framework of Tao-sheng's statements. But the borrowed terms and expressions do not appear to interfere with the original ideas they are supposed to convey. They are largely contained within the category of the Buddhist system, often making it more articulate and richer; old receptacles and new contents are in harmonious coalescence.

### F. Significance

The CSPS poses itself as a significant document with extraordinary historical value. As the first commentary ever written on the Lotus -- a work which itself was to become an increasingly important scripture in the East Asian scene, set many archetypal patterns for the forthcoming commentators and founding masters of the Chinese Buddhist schools. It became the "basis" for the other interpreters as they shared the "mysterious meaning" Tao-sheng set out.<sup>299</sup> It is thus evident that the radius of seminal influence to be exerted by the patterns set in the CSPS was not confined to external structures; it was inclusive of the content, meaning, and spirit of the Lotus excavated by Tao-sheng.

Most probably, the CSPA is the first exegetical commentary in a full-fledged form in Chinese Buddhism. No other extant commentary written in Chinese prior to the CSPA shows such an organized structure. Seng-chao's commentary to the Nirvāṇa Sūtra which is in the collected edition along with Tao-sheng's (CNS), for instance, preceded the CSPA but it stops short of being such a kind, and lacks in many features found in the CSPA. In that respect, it is probable that the work made a far-reaching impact beyond the area circumscribed by the Lotus, whether individual writers realized or acknowledged it or not.

Thus being the first in some respects, the CSPA naturally had considerable effect on the interpretation of the Lotus. The fact alone that Tao-sheng attached such a major importance to the scripture by writing a commentary foreshadows the rise of the Lotus as a basic text in the Chinese Buddhist tradition. The Lotus emerged as one of the most influential of the scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism".<sup>300</sup>

Tao-sheng's attempt at schematization and resultant rationalization of the Buddha's diverse, if not mutually contradictory, doctrines under a single teaching program in four units (396d) long prefigures the p'an-chiao systems, the substructural paradigms of the T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen doctrines which evolved later. This proposition nonetheless is closely linked with the motif, namely, diversity in unity,



which was to be underlined especially by the T'ien-t'ai syncretists. As for the p'an-chaio, the T'ien-t'ai and the Hua-yen Buddhists owed Tao-sheng more than the general idea of it. In their p'an-chiao schemas are found the two components, "sudden" and "gradual" teachings, for whose conception, as fully seen in the CSPS, Tao-sheng was primarily responsible.<sup>301</sup> Thus one may say that the essence of Tao-sheng's understanding regarding the Lotus found its way into some of the more important theoretical works in Chinese Buddhism.

It would be too presumptuous to claim that Tao-sheng originally conceived all the ideas found in the CSPS. Incorporated in the text are, as Tao-sheng himself professed it in a humble manner (396d), many ideas and interpretations attributed to his senior masters. In the analysis of Fuse Kogaku, the CSPS represents the line of tradition in the making regarding the Lotus in the earlier period of its introduction into China.<sup>302</sup> In that respect, Tao-sheng stood in the middle of the tradition and the commentary is a compendium of his own perception and the views which he inherited.

Finally, the CSPS, which, in many respects, symbolized the culmination of Tao-sheng's scholarship in many respects, serves as an invaluable source of his philosophy and doctrines, especially given the dearth of other extant works.

NOTES TO PART III

<sup>1</sup>Liebenthal, "A Biography", p. 92. Other scholars including Ōchō and Hurvitz mention Kumārajīva for that matter. See Part V, Translation, [Preface], note 6.

<sup>2</sup>T51.54b.

<sup>3</sup>Fuse, "Hoke koryū no kenkyū", especially p. 32ff.

<sup>4</sup>Found in T9.384-389. See Wogihara Unrai, "Muryogi to wa nani ka", in Nippon Bukkyō Gakkai nempō, no. 7; Ōchō Enichi, "Muryōgikyō ni tsuite", in IBK, vol. 3 (1954), pp. 4563-462.

<sup>5</sup>T55.111b.

<sup>6</sup>T51.56a.

<sup>7</sup>T55.1164c.

<sup>8</sup>T440a.

<sup>9</sup>T28.328-331; compare CSPS, 397b-398a.

<sup>10</sup>See, For example, T34.127a, matching with CSPS, 409d.

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, T34.277a, matching with CSPS, 409d.

<sup>12</sup>See Translation of the Text, Notes to Preface, n. 15.

<sup>13</sup>Ōchō, "Jikudōshō sen ...", p. 227; summed up in Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 201.

<sup>14</sup>See T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, 97. However, Ōchō, "Jikudōshō no ...", p. 155 treats Tao-sheng as though he had been the earliest commentator to do so. Cf. Sakamoto Yukio, Hokekyō no Chūgokuteki tenkai, p. 6 (summary in English).

<sup>15</sup>Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 81, n. 2.

<sup>16</sup>See Fuse Kogaku, Hokekyō seiritsu shi, pp. 244, 263, & 288; Kern, trans., Saddharma-puṇḍarīka, Introduction, xviii; Winternitz, History of Indian Literature, II, p. 302ff.

<sup>17</sup>I am referring to Liebethal's article "The Word Conception of Chu Tao-sheng", MN, 12(1956). I will juxtapose most of his translation in the notes to Translation (Part V).

<sup>18</sup>See T'ang, op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>19</sup>Yang, A New Practical Chinese English Dictionary, p. 1240.

<sup>20</sup>For example, tao from mārga, fa from dharma, miao from sad, as well as other non-substantives like tzu-jan in the sense of "of its own accord".

<sup>21</sup>Fang-p'ien is a direct rendering of upāya-kauśalya, but ch'üan 權 is a pure Chinese concept.

<sup>22</sup>There are four commentaries as the basic texts of Neo-Taoism, by the two founders of the school, Wang Pi and Kuo Hsiang: on the Tao-te ching (CLT), I Ching (in part) and the Analects, by Wang, and on the Chuang-tzu (CCT) by Kuo. The primary texts of this analysis are the commentaries on those scriptures except one on the Analects, plus the three scriptures. For Chuang-tzu and the commentary, I have used the Chuang-tzu chi shih (hereafter, CTCS) (Taiwan, 1972).

<sup>23</sup>See T52.266a2.

<sup>24</sup>See III, 2.

<sup>25</sup>One who was closest to Tao-sheng in this regard may be Chih Tun (314-366). See Paul Demiéville, "La pénétration du bouddhisme dans la tradition philosophique chinoise", Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, 1 (1956), 19-38, especially 28-31.

<sup>26</sup>CSPS, 398b2-3. Cf. Kuo Hsiang, Commentary to the Chuang-tzu (hereafter, CCT), chs. 3, 4, and 33.

<sup>27</sup>CSPS, 398b4, and d5. Cf. I Ching, shuo-kua, ch. 1.

<sup>28</sup>CSPS, 406a17 and 407a13.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 405d3.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 410c11.

<sup>31</sup>See CSPS, 402c5, 404c7, 406a12, 408a13, and 410c15. Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CCT, chs. 1, 3, 6, 27 and 33.

<sup>32</sup>Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle", in Chan, Neo-Confucianism, Etc., p. 57.

<sup>33</sup>See Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 2 (CTCS, p. 40): 物物有理 事事有宜 "Every being has (its own) li, every affair has its own proper raison d'être." Also see ch. 22 (CTCS, p. 325).

<sup>34</sup>See ibid., chs. 4, 5, 26, and 27. Li is also identified with tzu-jan (self-sonness) in chs. 14 and 15, Wang Pi, Commentary to the Lao Tzu (hereafter, CLT), ch. 42. Tao-sheng follows the suit in his commentary to the Nirvāṇa-sūtra (hereafter, CNS), T37.377b10.

<sup>35</sup>T'ien-li 天理 originally in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 2 (CTCS, p. 56), found in Kuo Hsiang, CCT, chs. 2 (CTCS, p. 28), 6 (CTCS, p. 104), 15, and 23.

<sup>36</sup>Chih-li 至理, ibid., chs. 2, 6, and 14.

<sup>37</sup>Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, p. 317.

<sup>38</sup>Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 2.

<sup>39</sup>See Wang Pi, CLT, ch. 42.

<sup>40</sup>Traceable to Kuo, CCT, chs. 2 (CTCS, p. 38), 6, 14, 33, it is originated in Wang Pi; see Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle", Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies, n.s., 4, no. 2 (1964), reprinted in Chan, Neo-Confucianism, Etc., pp. 58-9.

<sup>41</sup>Chan believes that the idea was already established in the Chuang-tzu, see ibid., p. 49. Tamaki Kōshirō, Chūgoku Bukkyōshisō no keisei, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1971), p. 477ff., holds that an archetype of the theory is found in Tao-an (312-385).

<sup>42</sup>理超數表 . . . 彌綸無極 CSPS 402c10.

<sup>43</sup>For example, the word mi-lun ("fulls up and covers") is found in I Ching, shuo-kua, pt. 1, ch. 4, and wu-chih occurs in the Tao-te ching, ch. 28; Chuang-tzu, chs. 6 and 11; CCT, ch. 3 and 6.

<sup>44</sup>See CSPS, 402c9f., 403b14f., and 405d14.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Tao-sheng's Commentary to the Nirvāṇa-sūtra, T37.380c2: 真理自然 "The true li is self-so." See Kuo

Hsiang, CCT, ch. 5 (CTCS, pp. 91 and 99).

<sup>46</sup>In seven places (402b17, 403d6 *et passim*) plus one presented as the word from the sutra (T9.17b17), which is an adverb, rendered as "of themselves", or "of its own accord", in Hurvitz's tr. Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma, pp. 89-90.

<sup>47</sup>See, for example, CCT, ch2 (CTCS, p. 121).

<sup>48</sup>See CSPS 403d6:

<sup>49</sup>See CNS, T37.549a29f.; Liu Kuei-chieh, "Chu Tao-sheng ssu-hsiang chih li-lun chi-ch'u", in Hua-kang Fo-hsueh Hsueh-pao, no. 5 (Dec. 1981), p. 358.

<sup>50</sup>See CSPS 405d3, 407c12f.

<sup>51</sup>The word fan occurs in *ibid.* Pen is used in 409d16 and 407c13. Cf. Pien-tsung lun, T52.226c7, where fan-pen is found. Also see CNS, T37.380c-81a in which Tao-sheng dwells on the two notions. A synonym, kuei, is used with pen in 407c13. A synonymous phrase fu-kuei is used similarly in the Lao Tzu, ch. 28. Wang Pi identifies fu, the 24th hexagram in the I Ching, with fan-pen. See T'ang Yung-t'ung, "Wang Pi's new interpretation of the I ching and Lun-yu," trans. by Walter Liebenthal, Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 10 (1947), 147; Fung Yu-lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, I, 180-1; Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan, p. 278. The idea of return to the original nature is touched on also in Kenneth Ch'en, "Neo-Taoism and the Prajna School during the Wei and Chin Dynasties", Chinese Culture, 1, No. 2 (1957), 33.

<sup>52</sup>CSPS 401a12.

<sup>53</sup>CSPS 408b16, 409c3.

<sup>54</sup>See Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 2 (CTCS, p. 33)  
: "The myriad beings in the heaven and earth are all existent in conformity with their proper allotments." For Wang Pi's idea of it, see T'ang, op. cit., 144.

<sup>55</sup>The term occurs also in CSPS 412b15.

<sup>56</sup>CSPS 408d4 and 409c3.

<sup>57</sup>CSPS 398b9, 408d3, 409c3.

<sup>58</sup>CSPS 412b4. For the rendering of the term chi, see

Wing-tsit Chan, A source Book in Chinese Philosophy, p. 784.

<sup>59</sup>See CSPS, 398c3, 406b5, and 412c15.

<sup>60</sup>What appears implicitly becomes explicitly in the word "true-self" (chen-o 真我) found in Tao-sheng's Commentary to the Nirvāṇa-sūtra, T37.452a, 453b, and 463a. For the notion of self-nature, see Lao-tzu, ch. 17; Nakamura, op. cit., p. 278.

<sup>61</sup>CSPS, 408c16.

<sup>62</sup>TR. by Wing-tsit Chan, The Way of Lao Tzu, p. 184. Cf. Chuang-tzu, ch. 22 (CTCS, p. 319).

<sup>63</sup>至理無言...理無所言 CCT, ch. 2 (CTCS, pp. 38-39).

<sup>64</sup>See CSPS, 406a14.

<sup>65</sup>CSPS, 404a4.

<sup>66</sup>CSPS, 400d10.

<sup>67</sup>See CSPS, 410c11.

<sup>68</sup>See CSPS, 410c14.

<sup>69</sup>See CNS, T37.461a4f.; Liu Kuei-chieh, op. cit., p. 359.

<sup>70</sup>CSPS, 410c12. See also Tao-sheng's biographies in T55.111a2ff. and T50.366c14ff., which quotes him as saying: "The purpose of words is to explain the Truth (li 理), but once Truth has been entered, words may be suspended, . . . -- few have been able to see the complete meaning. Let them forget the fish-trap and catch the fish. Then one may begin to talk with them about the Way (Tao)." (Tr. by Derk Bodde in Fung Yu-lan, op. cit., p. 270).

<sup>71</sup>Section 4. Translation of the section is found in Hellmut Wilhelm, Change (New York, 1960), pp. 87-8.

<sup>72</sup>See CSPS, 399b18.

<sup>73</sup>See 399b14 and d17, 406a15 and b12.

<sup>74</sup>The two facades of language, negative and positive can also be traced to the metaphysical schools of Wei and

Ch in times prior to Tao-sheng's period to which Wang Pi and another Neo-Taoist Hsi K'ang (223-262) belong. See Fung, op. cit., p. 184f.

<sup>75</sup>See, for example, CSPS 398d16, 411c18, 412blff.

<sup>76</sup>Two terms are found in the same phrases in synonymous situations in CSPS 398d13, 405d3, 407a3, c3, d12, 409d2, 411c6.

<sup>77</sup>See Arthur F. Wright, "Review of A. A. Petrov's Wang Pi (226-249): His Place in the History of Chinese Philosophy", Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 10 (1947), 83.

<sup>78</sup>T'ang Yung-t'ung, "Wang Pi's New Interpretation of the I Ching and Lun-yü", pp. 145-6.

<sup>79</sup>Found in CSPS 398d4 and 402c10. The compound li-shu 曆數 "calendrical number" meaning "fate", but here in the context, "course" or "consequence", is located in the Chuang Tzu, ch. 27 and the Confucian Analects, Book 20, ch. 1.

<sup>80</sup>CSPS, 398d4. Cf. 402c10.

<sup>81</sup>CSPS, 396d10.

<sup>82</sup>Ch. 17: 至精無形... 無形者數之所不能分也。

<sup>83</sup>See Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle", p. 64. For an overall survey of this point, see T'ang Chün-i, "Lun Chung-kuo che-hsüeh ssu-hsiang-shih chung li chih liu-i". (On the six meaning of li in the history of Chinese philosophical thought), The New Asia Journal (Hsin-ya Hsüeh pao), vol. 1, no. 1 (1955), 65-77.

<sup>84</sup>To one of them he wrote a commentary, see T55.111b5. P. C. Bagchi, India and China, p. 102, says: "The real Buddha was the Dharmakāya Buddha, the Tathātā or the ultimate reality which could not be defined in words."

<sup>85</sup>CSPS, 409c. T'ang Chün-i, op. cit., 75ff., lists k'ung-li as one of the six meanings of li.

<sup>86</sup>內聖外王之道, found in Chuang Tzu, ch. 33 (CTCS, p. 463).

<sup>87</sup>See Fung Yu-lan, A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, p. 8.

<sup>88</sup>CSPS 407d5. Its variations are found in 397d1, 398a13, 399d2, 407d5, and 411c18.

<sup>89</sup>德充於內應物於外, CCT, ch. 5 (CTCS, p. 85);  
 . . . 神滿於外, ch. 21 (CTCS, p. 316).

<sup>90</sup>CSPS 401b16.

<sup>91</sup>The voice-hearers (śrāvakas) of Hīnayāna are classified as belonging to the category of the inside while the Bodhisattvas of Mahāyāna belong to the outside, the inside having a limited area of application and the outside having an unlimited area. See CSPS 397b15f. and 399d2.

<sup>92</sup>Listed as one of the five features characterizing Kuo Hsiang's philosophy in Wing-tsit Chan, An Outline and an Annotated Bibliography of Chinese Philosophy (New Haven, Conn., 1969), p. 55.

<sup>93</sup>CSPS 401d10.

<sup>94</sup>The monistic perspective can be traced as far as the Chuang-tzu, see chap. 33. The monistic tendency of Tao-sheng viewed from a slightly different perspective, see Itano Chōhachi, "Dōshō no tongosetsu seiritsu no jijō", Tōhō gakuho, Tokyo, 7 (1936), 164ff.

<sup>95</sup>CSPS 399d7.

<sup>96</sup>CSPS 412b4.

<sup>97</sup>Tao-sheng is quoted in the eulogy for him by Hui-lin, T52.265c: "Teaching (chiao 教) is what causes conversion (hua) to happen. If one binds oneself to teaching, then one will be deceived into pseudo-conversion." So much, there is a clear distinction between chiao and hua, which are sometimes coupled to make a compound found in CSPS 411b8, and the sūtra (t.927c), "teaching and converting", (Hurvitz, p. 158).

<sup>98</sup>CSPS 400all.

<sup>99</sup>CSPS 399b14.

<sup>100</sup>I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:2.

<sup>101</sup>I Ching, on Hexagram kuan.



102 See Chuang-tzu, ch. 13, the first few paragraphs; Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 6 (CTCS, p. 121): 故聖人常遊外以弘內無心以順有, tr. found in Chan, A Source Book, p. 333.

103 Found in the Chuang-tzu, chs. 6, 12, and 14.

104 CSPS, 398b3f.

105 CSPS, 398d15f.

106 See, for example, Chuang-tzu, ch. 13 (CTCS, p. 216): . . . 爲之累 ". . . snare him in entanglement." (Watson, The Complete Works, p. 151); CCT, ch. 1 (CTCS, p. 7), ch. 12 (CTCS, p. 182).

107 Fan-nao 煩惱, see Yabuki Keiki, "Tongogi no shushōsa Jikudōshō to sono kyōgi", in Ono Shoichiro, ed., Bukkyōgaku no shomondai (Tokyo, 1935), p. 792.

108 CSPS, 409d6.

109 CSPS, 404b7f.

110 CSPS, 405d14, 404b7, cf. 410b18.

111 See Kuo Hsiang, CCT, chs. 7 (CTCS, p. 130), 9 (CTCS, p. 152), 12 (CTCS, p. 187), and 14 (CTCS, p. 234). The term is also found in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 14. For a discussion on the subject, see the article by Fukanaga Kōji, "Sōjo to Rōso shisō", in Tsukamoto Zenryū, ed., Jōron Kenkyū (Kyoto, 1955), p. 259ff.

112 "Hataraki", Fukunaga, ibid.

113 Found in Tao-sheng's vocabulary too: CSPS 412b15.

114 See CSPS, 402a4.

115 See CSPS, 403d18.

116 Legge, The Texts of Taoism, I, 70.

117 A. Rump and W. Chan, tr., Commentary on the Lao Tzu by Wang Pi, p. 82.

118 理至則迹滅 CCT, ch. 1 (CTCS, p. 11).

119 夫聖人因物之自行故無迹然則所謂聖者  
我本無迹故物得其迹迹得而強名聖則聖者乃無迹之名  
也, CCT, ch. 28 (CTCS, p. 426).

120 See CSPA, 401b1.

121 See CSPA, 403d18 and 407b2. Also see 401a11, 407b11, 412d4.

122 See CSPA, 399c3 et passim.

123 Ch'üan occurs in at least nine places (399c4 et passim) while fang-pien is rarely found (400d11).

124 CSPA 412a15. The word wu-fang 無方 "with no set pattern" is found in the Chinese texts associated with Neo-Taoism in similar contexts. See Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 12 (CTCS, p. 184): 感應無方 ; I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:4; "has no spatial restriction" (Chan, A Source Book, p. 266).

125 See CSPA, 399d9 and 400d16.

126 See Thomé H. Tang, "The World and the Individual in Chinese Metaphysics", in Charles A. Moore, ed., The Chinese Mind, p. 246.

126 Ch. 37, tr. by Chan, The Way of Lao Tzu, p. 166.

127 聖人久於其道天下化成 , Hexagram 32 (Heng), tr. by Legge, op. cit., p. 239. The same intent is seen in Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 11 and ch. 12; Chuang-tzu, ch. 12; Lao Tzu, ch. 57; Wang Pi, CLT, ch. 2. Legge, Confucius. Confucian Analects, the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean, p. 416, says, while commenting on the Doctrine of the Mean: "The 'giving its development to the nature of other men' indicates the Sage's helping them, by his example and lessons, to perfect themselves."

129 Wang Pi, CLT, ch. 29, tr. by Rump/Chan, op. cit., p. 89.

130 扣聖 , CSPA, 403a9 and 17, 404b15, 412b4; cf. 402b18.

131 Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:8 and 10; Chan, A Source Book, p. 267 ("subtle activating force"), also see p. 784; appears also in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 18, rendered as "mysterious workings" (Watson, The Complete Works of Chuang-tzu, pp. 195 and 196, and "great machinery (of evolution)" (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, II, p. 10). Note that 幾 in the Chuang-tzu

is interchangeable with 機; see T'su-hai 辭海 (Hong Kong, 1976), p. 486. Compare 復機微至 (CSPS 404c5) with 幾者動之微 (I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:5).

<sup>132</sup>Ch. 7 (CTCS, p. 135f.), ch. 18 (CTCS, p. 277), et passim.

<sup>133</sup>CTCS, p. 135f.

<sup>134</sup>Chi-ken or ken-chi. See BGDJ, I, 424c.

<sup>135</sup>T9b and c et passim.

<sup>136</sup>CSPS 401a, 406c.

<sup>137</sup>In ch. 6. Legge, The Texts of Taoism, I, 238; Watson, p. 78: "Deep in their passions and desires, they are shallow in the workings of Heaven."

<sup>138</sup>深根寧極然後反一無慾也, CTCS, p. 103; cf. p. 137.

<sup>139</sup>各用其性天機玄發, CTCS, p. 208 (ch. 13).

<sup>140</sup>天者萬物之總名也, CTCS, p. 24 (ch. 2). Cf. CTCS, p. 10 (ch. 1).

<sup>141</sup>CSPS, 398c3, 403d1.

<sup>142</sup>Note that Ch'eng Hsüan-ying (of T'ang), who annotates Kuo Hsiang's comments in the CTCS version, glosses chi in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 7, with "spiritual chi", in CTCS, p. 136.

<sup>143</sup>See the actual usage of the term in light of the contexts in CSPS 397b8, 398c3, 400a5, 403d1, 404b17; cf. 396d11f. Hajime Nakamura glosses it as hazumi (impetus, momentum, or chance) in BGDJ, I, 213b14ff.

<sup>144</sup>Cf. CTCS, p. 208 (see note 120 above).

<sup>145</sup>See CSPS, 296d11f., 398c3, 406b5, 412c15f.

<sup>146</sup>See CSPS, 397b8, 412b2.

<sup>147</sup>See Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 91.

<sup>148</sup>Chuang-tzu, ch. 22: 應物無方. See Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 12 (CTCS, p. 184): 應感無方, ch. 24

(CTCS, p. 378): 應物宜而無方 ; I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:10.

<sup>149</sup>See CSPS, 406b1: 應物 , 410c10: 應物無窮 , and 397b8.

<sup>150</sup>See I Ching, Hexagram 31 (Hsien): 二氣感應以相與天地感.

<sup>151</sup>Fu 俯 (-ying): CSPS 403a9, d1 and d17f, 404d14; Ch'ui 垂 (-ying): 397b8. Another possible synonym may be ch'ü 曲 (412a18), if we take it to mean "stoop" as Chan, A Source Book, p. 266, translates the word in I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:4, but it sounds more accurate in the sense that Legge takes it (I Ching, p. 354): "by an ever-varying adaptation" (he completes (the nature of) all things without exception). The two phrases with the term, of Tao-sheng and the I Ching, are strikingly similar, which will be discussed later.

<sup>152</sup>See I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, II:2.

<sup>153</sup>See CSPS, 398b2.

<sup>154</sup>See CSPS, 409b11ff.

<sup>155</sup>See CSPS, 398b2.

<sup>156</sup>盡理 ibid.

<sup>157</sup>遂通之道 CSPS, 412b4f.

<sup>158</sup>遂通天下之故 , I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:10.

<sup>159</sup>Joachim Wach, Types of Religious Experiences (Chicago, 1972), p. 107, says: "Mahāyāna Buddhism is a religion of salvation", referring to Th. Stcherbatsky, The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word Dharma (London, 1923), p. 3.

<sup>160</sup>T9.8a22, 9a22.

<sup>161</sup>See CSPS, 399d6, 401c7, 402a2 & d8, 410b11, 411b4, & 412d5.

<sup>162</sup>In ch. 32, tr., Watson, The Complete Works of Chuang-tzu, p. 356. It should be noted that the expression chien-chi 兼濟, "to combine saving (with the original mission or objective)" (CSPS 402a1) is found here in the same paragraph.

163 Ch. 37, tr. from Arthur Waley, The Way and Its Power (New York, 1958), p. 188.

164 不禁其性則物自濟, CLT, ch. 10; Rump/Chan, op. cit., p. 31: "If you do not inhibit the nature of things, things will succeed by themselves."

165 若有為則有不濟也, CCT, ch. 18.

166 CSPTS 402alf. Cf. Mencius, Book VI, pt. A, 7:3: 聖人與我同類者. "The sage and we are of the same kind." D. C. Lau, tr., Mencius (Penguin Books, p. 1970), p. 164.

167 See, for example, the title of chapter 2, Chuang Tzu.

168 A. C. Graham, "Chuang-tzu's essay on seeing things as equal," in History of Religions, vol. 9, No. 1 (Aug. 1969), p. 144. See also Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 2 (CTCS, p. 34): 所謂齊者豈必齊形狀同規矩哉...則形雖萬殊而性同得故曰道通為一. The Buddhists and Buddhist-Taoists of the period were steeped in this line of Taoist thinking. For example, Hui-yüan (334-416) writes: 內延釋邊之茲使天下齊己物我同觀. T52. 33a7f. See also Pien-tsung lun 辯宗論, compiled by Hsieh ling-yün (385-433), T52.226a1: 物我同忘有無一觀. Nonetheless, the notion is not unique to the original Chinese thought; see H. V. Guenther, Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma (Delhi, 1973), p. 241: "But before reality, which is one experience, is split up into subject and object, there is oneness with reality and sameness (samata) of self and object. It is this one-ness of reality in Buddhism which is the root of infinite compassion toward suffering mankind."

169 See Fung, Chuang-tzu, A New Selected Translation with an Exposition of the Philosophy of Kuo Hsiang (Shanghai, 1933), pp. 11, 45, and 61.

170 平等 (samatā), CSPTS, 396d18.

171 CSPTS, 397a2.

172 CSPTS, 412a18. Cf. 拔濟, 401c7.

173 曲成萬物而不遺, I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:4. Translation adopted from Chan, The Source Book, p. 256f., except "employs diverse approaches" instead of "stoops" for the word 曲. See note 130. See also Huo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 2 (CTCS, p. 37).

174 大慈 : 401c7, 402d18, and 403a13; 大悲 : 404a15, 407d18, 409b7f., cf. 404a18 and 408d18.

175 See the Chuang-tzu ch. 25: 聖人之愛人也... 其愛人也終無己人之安之亦無性也, "The love of the sage for others... His love of others has no end, and their rest in him has also no end: all this takes place naturally" (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, II, p. 116). Nonetheless, the sage remains free of desire, as is said in the Chuang-tzu (ch. 32) that to desire to save others belongs to the exercise of petty man's knowledge (see note 144 above). And the Neo-Taoists make it clear: "... the Neo-Taoists defined the Sage as follows: 'Not even to have desire for this state of non-desire, this is the constant quality of the Sage (聖). To have desire for this state of non-desire, this is the distinguishing quality of the worthy (賢).'" (Kenneth Ch'en, "Neo-Taoism and the Prajñā School during the Wei and Chin Dynasties," p. 40). But ironically, Tao-sheng describes the sage explicitly as having the desire to save beings (CSPS, 397d6; see 402a2 and a15).

176 Ch. 27. See A. Waley, The Way and Its Power (New York, 1958), p. 177, note 4.

177 BHS, p. 14.

178 The word in this sense (like indriya) is found in the technical terms "five" or "six feelings" (406d) which can be either Buddhist or Confucian/Taoist. But in wider, sectarian contexts, indriya may connote such virtues as confidence (śraddhā), strenuousness (vīrya), inspection (smṛti), absorption through concentration (samādhi), and discrimination (prajñā). See Guenther, op. cit., p. 240.

179 CSPS, 406c3.

180 CSPS, 408b14f.

181 CSPS, 404b15; cf. 404b9f.

182 CSPS 404c11 and 405d4. Cf. Pien-tsung lun, T52. 225c8ff. Liebenthal renders the word with "vice" in The Book of Chao (Peking, 1948), p. 188. Chan uses "human desire" in "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle," p. 51. Also see Chang Chung-yüan, Tao: A New Way of Thinking (New York, 1977), p. 137: "passions".

183 (本) CSPS, 403d17 and 404d3.

- 184 (惑) CSPS 404b17.
- 185 CSPS, 407c5.
- 186 CSPS, 404b17.
- 187 CSPS, 401d15.
- 188 Cf. "innate tendency", T'ang, "Wang Pi's New Interpretation," p. 144.
- 189 See, for example, CSPS, 405d4.
- 190 時情 CSPS, 398b7, c16; 401b12; 群情 398c6, 407d 13; 408c12. Cf. 時心 398c8.
- 191 E. Conze, Buddhist Thought in India (Ann Arbor, 1969), p. 80.
- 192 For a comprehensive discussion on the question, see T'ang Yung-t'ung, "Wang Pi Seng-jen yu-ch'ing i shih" 王弼聖人有情義釋 in his Wei Chin Hsüan-hsüeh lun kao 魏晉玄學論稿 (Peking, 1957) pp. 72-83, especially p. 72f. (The quotes of page 72 are translated by D. Bodde in Fung, A History of Chinese Philosophy, II, p. 188).
- 192 See Fung, ibid., pp. 32, 161, 414, and 161.
- 194 See T'ang, "Wang Pi," p. 83. Cf. The Doctrine of the Mean (Chung Yung), ch. 1.
- 195 See, for example, I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, II:12.
- 196 See Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 18 (CTCS, p. 272): 斯皆先示有情然後尋至理遣之若云我本無情故能無憂。
- 197 CSPS, 400b4, 403c8, 406c4, and 411c18. Cf. I Ching, Hsi-tz'u chuan, I:1.
- 198 CSPS 397d6, 399a16, 402a3, 14 et passim. See Pien-tsung lun, T52.225a11. Yu is listed in the Neo-Confucian glossary as one of seven feelings.
- 199 See Tao-te ching, ch. 3.
- 200 The expression 情篤 ("[their] emotion turned earnest"), in CSPS 398c, 399a-b, 410d, and 412d, is also found in Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 32 (CTCS, p. 449). Cf. two senses in which ch'ing is used in Hui-yuan's writings: "(a) propen-

sities, innate tendencies (usual in the I Ching), and (b) emotions, volitions, feelings." (R. H. Robinson, Early Mādhyamika in India and China, p. 280, n. 25).

201<sup>1</sup>CSPS, 406c4; 405b1, 3.

202<sup>2</sup>CSPS, 398d16.

203<sup>3</sup>CSPS, 406a16f.

204<sup>4</sup>See above note 84. Nevertheless, the word is separately found in CSPS 405d and 406c. In 397d5, Tao-sheng identifies lei with fan-nao (klesa) from the sutra, T9.1c7, "anguish" (Hurvitz, 1:5).

205<sup>5</sup>CSPS 406a17. Cf. 397d5f: Pien-tsung lun 225c24: 求理以除累。

206<sup>6</sup>CSPS, 400c7.

207<sup>7</sup>聖人之情應物而無累於物者也, quoted in T'ang, "Wang Pi seng-jen," p. 72. See above note 155. A similar usage is found in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 33: 無累於俗。

208<sup>8</sup>推至理以遣累 CCT, ch. 18. Cf. CSPS 406a17.

209<sup>9</sup>CCT, ch. 33: 累於形名。

210<sup>10</sup>CCT ch. 12: 有心則累其自然。 Cf. Pien-tsung lun. T52.225c27.

211<sup>11</sup>Ibid., T52.225c and 227b.

212<sup>12</sup>Tao-sheng uses the word 障 "veil" or "hindrance" in 400b10, 402a8, 402b14, and 煩惱 (klesa) "depravity" in 400c, 405d, and 406c. Cf. 惑 "delusion" (moha) in 402a8 and 407c7.

213<sup>13</sup>In ch. 32: 若是者迷惑於宇宙形累不知太初。 See Watson, p. 356; Legge, The Texts of Taoism, II, 206. See also CTCS, p. 454: 累則迷惑; Pien-tsung lun, T52.225a12: 迷惑嬰累。

214<sup>14</sup>See CSPS, 401d8.

215<sup>15</sup>See CSPS, 396d13ff.

216<sup>16</sup>See CSPS, 399b10, 400c1, and 400d16.



217 See CSPS, 400b6, 402b12, 403b14, and (for the process) 398b13.

218 See CSPS, 396d16, 397a4f., 399b5f., 399d3, 399d6.

219 T9.7b26f.; Hurvitz, p. 31. Cf. Kern, p. 42: "the Tathagatas, &c., use, skillfully, to designate that one and sole Buddha-vehicle by the appellation of the threefold vehicle."

220 CSPS, 400c13.

221 一數之始而萬物之極也, Wang Pi, CLT, ch. 39, tr. Rump and Chan, p. 119. Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 12: 一者有之初.

222 See CLT, ch. 42.

223 Tao-te ching, chs. 10 and 22; Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 33: 歸根抱一.

224 CSPS, 405d3f. Cf. 411d9.

225 Rump/Chan, op. cit., p. 128.

226 See CSPS 396d17, 397a1, 400a14f, 400c3, and 407a6. For one unity, see 400a14 and 403d2, and compare Lao Tzu, ch. 47 and I Ching, Hsitz'u chuan, II:5.

227 Cf. Lao Tzu, ch. 39: 得 — (also see Chuang-tzu, ch. 22).

228 See CSPS, 399d11: 源極 "source-ultimate". For Wang Pi, Tamaki Koshiro, op. cit., p. 190, identifies Wang Pi's philosophical orientation with the search for "the (ontological) root-source" (根源的主體).

229 See Chuang-tzu, ch. 12 (first and second paragraphs). A. Waley, The Way and Its Power, p. 171, translates 聖人抱一 (Lao Tzu, ch. 22: "The Sage clasps the Primal Unity." (See also p. 153). Tamaki, op. cit., p. 191, speaks of the idea of unity discernible in Wang Pi's commentary to the Confucian Analects.

230 See C. S. Medhurst, the Tao-teh-king (Wheaton, Ill., 1972), p. 10. The act of "union" is described in the term kuei 歸 (to return, belong to, or merge), used commonly by Tao-sheng (CSPS, 397a) and Neo-Taoists.

231 CSPS, 396a, 399b8d et passim.

232 See chs. 34 and 42.

233 中正之道, CSPS, 398b11.

234 CSPS, 402c17. 正道 398b15, 403d6, and 410a10. For the first term, cf. Chuang-tzu, chs. 6, 12, and 26.

235 See the Doctrine of the Mean (Chung-yung), ch. 6: 執其兩端用其中 "He took hold of their two extremes, determined the Mean," (Legge, Confucius, p. 388); Confucian Analects, XIII:21 (Legge, ibid., p. 272).

236 See the Doctrine of the Mean, ch. 1 (Legge, p. 384).

237 See Confucian Analects XI:13: "hit the point" (Legge, p. 241). See also Fung Yu-lan, The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy, tr. E. R. Hughes (London, 1962), p. 106: "Now this means reaching the point of being exactly good, by which is meant achieving the Mean."

238 中則不過正則不邪 on Hexagram sung (Chou-i ching i tung-chieh) 周易經翼通解 (Taipei, 1974), p. 62. Cf. CSPS 403d18f. For the term "non-depravedness" (不邪 see Confucian Analects, II:2 (Legge, p. 146).

239 Translated also in Fung, The Spirit, p. 107.

240 時中, The Doctrine of the Mean, ch. 2; in I Ching, Hexagram meng (Wilhelm, p. 406; Legge, p. 217).

241 動進中道 CSPS 402c17. This should be considered along with the fact that Tao-sheng is glossing the phrase 行步平正 ("whose tread is even", Hurvitz, p. 60) (T9:12c23), 平 and 正 being recurrent terms in the I Ching and other texts.

242 Ch. 20, Chan, The Source Book, p. 107; Legge, Confucius, p. 413.

243 CSPS, 411c12f. (理暢)黃中 (...理既宣揚於口(天?)下).

244 See I Ching, Hexagram K'un (in Wen-yen): (君子黃中通理...暢於四支玄黃者天地之雜天玄而)地黃, Wilhelm/Baynes, p. 395; Legge, p. 421. See also remark by Wilhelm: "Yellow is the color of the middle and moderation." Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CCT ch. 2 (CTCS, p. 52): 至理暢於無極.

<sup>245</sup>See Choui-i ching i t'ung-chieh, pp. 39 and 42.

<sup>246</sup>Tao-sheng is said to have been exposed to the Mādhyamika doctrine in the earlier stage of his life and he wrote a commentary on one of the Prajñā-pāramitā sūtras, Hsiao-pin (Aṣṭasāhasrikā); see T55.111b). There are some traces of the doctrines in the commentary (see Ocho Enichi's article on Tao-sheng in Yukio Sakamoto, ed., Hokeyo no Chūgokuteki tenkai, p. 158f.), but they are far from being significant.

<sup>247</sup>CSPS, 412a13.

<sup>248</sup>CSPS, 397b17 et passim.

<sup>249</sup>無壅滯 found in CSPS 389b15 (for Tao) and 403b14 (for li).

<sup>250</sup>At least in nine places including 398d, 400a, 405d, 407a, c, and d, 411c.

<sup>251</sup>The period belongs to that of "domestication" (ca. 317 - 589), according to Arthur F. Wright, Buddhism in Chinese History (Stanford, Cal., 1971), p. 42ff. So, in the era in which Tao-sheng lived, domestication had yet to be completed. See also K. Ch'en, Buddhism in China, p. 57ff.

<sup>252</sup>shuo-kua, ch. 1. See Wilhelm/Baynes p. 262: "By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the law of their nature to the deepest core"; Legge, p. 423: "They (thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of (every) nature"; Fung, History, p. 445, note (tr. by Bodde): "They plumbed li to its depths and completely penetrated the nature." Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CCT, ch. 31 (CTCS, p. 448): 窮理致命 which can be regarded as an abbreviation of the sentence concerned in full, "窮理盡性以至於命".

<sup>253</sup>For the quotes of the four-letter phrase by Tao-sheng's contemporary Buddhists including Seng-chao and Seng-jui, see part IV, ch. 1, note 42 (for the phrase in 398b4).

<sup>254</sup>Itano Chōhachi, "Eon Sōjo no shinmeikan o ronjite Dōshō no shinsetzu ni oyobu," Toyō gakuhō, 30 (1943), IV, 503-504.

<sup>255</sup>Prebish, ed., Buddhism, p. 102.

<sup>256</sup>SLED, preface, xviif.

257 SLFD, p. 64.

258 Cf. Kern, op. cit., p. 82: "in this way, Sariputra, one has to understand how the Tathagata by an able device and direction shows but one vehicle, the great vehicle."

259 SLFD, p. 64.

260 See Ocho, "Kiju Dosho san...", p. 263ff.; Maruyama Koyu, Hokekyogaku kenkyu josetsu, p. 15.

261 See Ocho, ibid., p. 267.

262 See Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 201: "But the commentary contains two central ideas, the gradualness of the Buddha's teaching method... and the idea that differentiations exist on the side of the Buddha's listeners".

263 "Arguable" only with respect to tao. Yet it can be said that li is more broadly and commonly based when all three major religions, namely Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, are considered together. Wing-tsit Chan qualifies it with "in the last 800 years", in "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept li as Principle", Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies, n.s., 4, no. 2 (Feb. 1964), 123; reprinted in Chan, Neo-Confucianism, Etc., Essays by Wing-tsit Chan, p. 45.

264 DCBT, p. 359, lists li with the Sanskrit words siddhānta, hetu, pramāṇa. But more often than not they are technically associated with the doctrines of the Indian Buddhist Schools, especially in the Yogacara texts mostly translated by Hsuan-tsang (ca. 596-664).

265 Other eminent Buddhist thinkers like Chih Tun (314-366) and especially Seng-chao (384-414) had already identified li with nirvāṇa; see Chan, op. cit., p. 64. Cf. Th. Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa, p. 25: "[Nirvāṇa] has to be realized within oneself. This is possible only when there is complete extinction of craving for sense-pleasure."

266 This resembles the Taoist approach of "reversion", see III.A. The idea underlying the approach is the original purity of human nature. From this one can infer that Tao-sheng's theory of the Buddha-nature is connected to both traditions, Chinese and Buddhist.

267 This combination is unusual, occurring only once. I strongly suspect that the letter huai is a copying error of i 義. Nevertheless, even if it is correct and is Tao-sheng's coinage, there is not much difference in meaning between them.

268 I take the word t'ung (occurring also in two more places in b4 and 5) to mean--as is the case in ch. 17--liu-t'ung 流通 or "to propagate" rather than "to penetrate", which may sound too general and abstract, let alone being out of context. See ch. 17: 410d14ff., 411a5ff; cf. ch. 18: 411a13ff.; ch. 26: 412d1ff.

269 The two words concerned, i and li in that order, with a similar implication under discussion, have found their way together into the current Chinese usage in the form of a compound, i-li, "the scope or sense of a passage" (Mathews' Chinese-English Dictionary, p. 449); "principle, reason" (Liang Shih-ch'iu, A New Practical Chinese-English Dictionary, p. 863). However, in the Japanese and Korean traditions the same compound means "sense of duty, sense of honour, obligation, justice, . . ." (A.N. Nelson, The Modern Reader's Japanese-English Character Dictionary, p. 725), which is akin and so traceable to the meaning "moral principle" taken by a line of tradition including Book of Rites, Mencius, Hsun-tzu; see Wing-tsit Chan, op. cit., pp. 48 and 51.

270 See Liu Kuei-chieh, "Chu Tao-sheng ssu-hsiang chih li-lun t'e-se chi ch'i chia-chih i-i", in Hua-kang Fo-hsueh Hsueh-pao, No. 6 (July, 1983), pp. 397 and 399.

271 See Fang Li-t'ien, Wei Chin Nam-pei-ch'ao Fo-chiao lun-t'sung, pp. 169 and 172.

272 Two words, k'ung and li are coupled together in that order in 408c1, 409c6.

273 Cf. "three evil paths of transmigration (gati)" 三惡趣 (401d1), 趣 being interchangeable with 塗 (402a10) or 道.

274 中道 (402c17) is traceable in the Taoist texts including the Chuang-tzu, chs. 6, 12, and 26. For discussion see the previous section, III, A.

275 Mārga may be implied in "completing the tao" 成道 (397c18) and "achieving the tao" 得道 (398c2). Yet tao here can be related to the Taoist terminology.

276 See 405d3, 406a6, 409d2.

277 See Ōchō, "Jiku Dōshō no tongosetsu," p. 107.

278 See 400b9, 401a13, 408b16, 409c3.

279 Hypothetically the process as a whole is made up of two factors, "cultivation" (hsiu 修) and "enlightenment" (wu 悟), subject to two temporary elements, "gradual" (chien 漸) or "sudden" (tun 頓). They are coupled in such a way that four alternative approaches are produced. Tsung-mi (780-841) of the Hua-yen school formulated for the first time the comprehensive schema of the process; see his introduction to the Ch'an source book: Ch'an-yuan chu-ch'uan chi tu-hsu, in T48.399-413.

280 Tao-sheng's "existentialist" approach may be seen in his frequent use of the term shih-ch'ing (400a5 et pas-sim), referring to a kind of collective sentiment of a given time or moment, and in his interpretation of the Buddha's prophecies of some bodhisattva's enlightenment in a remote future, which Tao-sheng treats in very rationalistic and realistic terms (see 401b5; cf. 408d8). Cf. CVS, T38.392a17: "Enlightenment in Mahayana basically does not consist in forsaking the life-and-death realm in the near in order to seek it again in the far".

281 See PTL, pp. 224-228, especially 225a2, b15 and 26ff.

282 T'ang Chün-i, "Lun Chung-kuo che-hsüeh ssu-hsiang shih chung li chih liu-i" ("The Six Meanings of li in the History of Chinese Thought"), in Hsin-ya Hsüeh-pao ("New Asia Journal"), Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 65ff.

283 SLFD, p. 108

284 SLFD, p. 109.

285 The word occurs only in the CNS, p. 391c2. See Itano, "Eon Sojo...", p. 488.

286 Cf. PTL, p. 225cf.

287 Yet the Lotus too at one point suggests two aspects: "Gradually acquiring merit, /Then quickly achieving the Buddha Path" (50b23: SLFD, p. 284).

288 See CNS, p. 547c16. Cf. CNS, p. 448c23.

289<sub>T34.505a20</sub>.

290<sub>HTC</sub>, vol. 150, p. 421b.

291<sub>See HTC</sub>, vol. 150, p. 425b-c.

292<sub>Cf.</sub> 11b25.

293<sub>See Chuang-tzu</sub>, ch. 33;cf. Tao-te ching, ch. 25. See V (Translation), ch. 3, note 8.

294<sub>For identification of two terms</sub>, see 403d4.

295<sub>See Moritz Winternitz</sub>, A History of Indian Literature, Vol. 2, p. 302ff.; Jan Hendrik Kern, tr., Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or The Lotus of the True Law, introduction, xviii ff.

296<sub>See I Ching</sub>, Appended Remarks (Hsi-ts'u chuan), pt. I, ch. 10; see V (Translation), ch. 25; note 11.

297<sub>For a comprehensive sketch of the debate</sub>, see Itano Chohachi, "Dosho no busshoron", *Shina Bukkyo shigaku*, 2, 2(1938), 1-26.

298<sub>410a13</sub>, 15, and 18 (ch. 15).

299<sub>See T85.440a</sub>.

300<sub>SLFD</sub>, Preface, ix.

301<sub>See Hurvitz</sub>, Chih-i, p. 197, n. 1.

302<sub>See Fuse Kogaku</sub>, "Hoke korū no kenkyū", p. 33.

## PART IV

### CONCLUSION

At the outset of our endeavour (in Part I) we proposed that the CSPA, Tao-sheng's only surviving writing in its original form, be counted first of all as an authentic microcosmic receptacle of Tao-sheng's philosophico-religious speculation in general and his distinct ideas in particular, mounted on the content of the Lotus. Simultaneously, the study was set to yield the fruit of how Tao-sheng understood and interpreted the Lotus, which is significant in its own right. The first complete rendering of the text into a modern language will be provided in the following part.

In our attempt to elucidate the nature of Tao-sheng's Buddhism as represented in the text, we have had occasion to examine both internal and external evidence, viewing it in its proper cultural, historical and doctrinal context. The result has been a comprehensive study of Tao-sheng as a whole.

What new light has been thrown on the subject? Tao-sheng has been shown to be a uniquely integral thinker, one firmly rooted in personally acquired religious knowledge. His ideas are coherently related, all emanating from the depth of the foundation of his apprehension. As we pry into the inner structure of Tao-sheng's expressions and



statements, the edifice of his thought appears very profound and large. Many new aspects, such as that of "gradual enlightenment", suggest that Tao-sheng's influence must have been greater than what individual sects, the components of Chinese Buddhism, acknowledge or show in their doctrines and literature.

In sum, one may view the entire spectrum of Tao-sheng's thought through a certain vista. Situated in a historical juncture of two traditions, indigenous and foreign, he was to opt for one of three courses, that is, reject one, accept another, or reconcile the two somehow. It seemed safe to speculate, however, that a form of assimilation was a matter of course for Tao-sheng and his contemporaries, whether they themselves were conscious of it or not.

The syncretic viewpoint, broadly speaking, may not be isolated from the main doctrine of the Lotus. One Vehicle denotes, among others, the unity of all diverse means and paths, after all. Tao-sheng merely expands the range of application from one particular system to a different cultural tradition composed of multiple systems.

We can view Tao-sheng as revealed in the CSPPS from such perspective not only with respect to the overall cultural patterns involved, but also in connection with many philosophically contrasting aspects such as language and reality, mysticism and rationalism, theory and praxis. Ontologically, two realms of the absolute and the relative or the sacred and the profane had to be reconciled somehow. By

the same token, epistemologically, subitism and gradualism had to find a common ground. For that matter one may say that Tao-sheng forged a compatible unity of "true emptiness (k'ung/śūnyatā)" and "mysterious existence (yu)". That description more properly refers to the two lines of Mahāyāna tradition, represented by the Prajñāpāramita Sūtras and the Nirvāna Sūtra respectively. Tao-sheng found a formula unifying them in the Lotus.<sup>1</sup> The CSPA, therefore, marks a culminating point of Tao-sheng's scholarship.

To delve into the points made above, as regards the intercultural aspect, the main tool of the text for glossing and interpreting the Buddhist concepts and doctrines was the Chinese philosophical patterns and terminologies, and it was found that the essential message remained Buddhist more than anything else. There was no evidence that the original content of the Lotus, as carried by the vehicle borrowed, was somehow distorted and perverted. Convenience and communicability were not achieved at the price of original substance in this case. There might be some idiosyncratic renderings and interpretations, but the fundamental presuppositions of Buddhism remained intact. Rather, the Indian content found a new carrier in the Chinese form.<sup>2</sup> At worst, Tao-sheng may be said to have constructed his own pavilion on top of the existing edifice. But it seems fair to say that he helped extend the expanse of the Indian system to a wider horizon. The Chinese terms and patterns in turn were tried out on a different system and proved to be

applicable to another tradition, thus becoming universalized to some extent. Also, from a slightly different point of view, the epistemologically-oriented Indian thought and the ontologically-oriented Chinese thought<sup>3</sup> found a confluence in Tao-sheng. In this sense, Tao-sheng helped add another dimension to both systems being nurtured in Chinese soil. It marks a crucial point, if not the beginning of a long process of challenge and response to result in ideological enrichment, which consummated in the rise of Ch'an Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism.<sup>4</sup>

Such an upshot, borne by Tao-sheng's ingenious grafting of symbols of different cultural origin distinguishes Tao-sheng from earlier and contemporary Buddhist writers who tried in various ways to translate foreign concepts using native terms. Most typical of them was the use of the ko-i method, a crude form of identifying parallel categories or concepts in the Taoist literature, tried at one time or another by Chu Fa-ya, Tao-an, and Hui-yüan. But there is no such direct identification or matching forced upon in Tao-sheng's phraseology. It is true that Tao-sheng often interprets the Buddhist ideas in terms of the Chinese philosophical framework but his style is more refined and indirect and is not dominated by word-for-word equation. In Tao-sheng's writing the Buddhist framework remains central, Tao-sheng also shows a highly advanced form of artistry, in his peculiar style of writing. By comparison, Seng-chao, also an advanced contemporary thinker, is less able to integrate the Buddhist message and the medium of the

Chinese language.<sup>5</sup> Tao-sheng's style of composition also does not belong in the kind of naive syncretism found in the PTL, in which Hsieh Ling-yun, a contemporary Neo-Taoist and dilettante Buddhist, interprets Tao-sheng's doctrine of sudden enlightenment as a sort of median theory composed of the Buddha's idea of attainability of Truth and Confucius' view of oneness-and-finality of Truth.<sup>6</sup>

Such a syncretic tendency of high order or synthetic orientation pervades Tao-sheng's views of other aspects. Tao-sheng recognizes basically dualistic facades the single, monistic reality. One may be explicitly stressed while another may be only implicitly suggested in the text, but, overall, a balance is reached in Tao-sheng's thought as a whole. The supposed balance between the gradual process of learning, which is underscored in the text, and the momentary opening-up of consciousness, implied there and reported elsewhere, symbolizes a pervading characteristic in Tao-sheng's pattern of thinking.

The bifocal approaches stem from the profound, unfathomable depth of the reality<sup>7</sup> and human inadequacy. Tao-sheng shares the traditional view that language is not adequate to convey the meaning or reality intended by the Buddha. If it is assumed that words represent the level of discursive thinking or consciousness, it follows from the inadequate nature of language that there is the ineffable aspect of reality which, when translated epistemologically, requires a transcendental apprehension or illumination.

An element of mysticism if, nonetheless, can be detected behind the overriding overtone in the text, namely, the philosophical strain of rationalist thinking. By "rational" I mean to contrast in not only with the mystical but also with the mythical and sentimental or emotional. Against the sometimes mythical and grandiose setting of the Lotus, Tao-sheng attempts to take a rational approach by interpreting the mythological fact and happenings involved in the narrative of the scripture as the symbol of something rationally expressible. What approach is illustrated in his explanations of the glow emanating from the brow of the Buddha (398b) and of the efficacy of reciting the name of Avalokitesvara (chap. 24) and of charms (dhāraṇi) (chap. 25). Often Tao-sheng does not hesitate even to assert that the Buddha's statements are unreal, he frequently uses the phrase "false (or temporarily valid at best) saying" at the risk of sacrilege, in the sense that they are devices designed to allure the beings (401b, 408d et passim). It should be also noted that Tao-sheng, with respect to the Chinese tradition, inherited the traits of the rationalist line of the Neo-Taoist philosophy found in Wang Pi and Kuo Hsiang rather than the sentimentalist.<sup>8</sup> The term li, sometimes rendered as "reason" (or Reason),<sup>9</sup> may be regarded as a key to that approach.

Exactly what methodology Tao-sheng advocates epistemologically for attaining religious knowledge remains equivocal. Yet it might be characterized basically as "noetic illumination",<sup>10</sup> which still involves different

sources of knowledge inclusive of intuitive perception, reasoning, and testimony. There seems to be nothing untenable for Tao-sheng in the description of Seng-chao by Robinson: "In short, he attempted to be rational, he aimed at a mystical goal, and he did not assert that there is any incompatibility between these two objectives", except that for Tao-sheng the two methods may remain essentially complementary to each other.

There is no question that Tao-sheng was equipped with the theoretical apparatus of how to acquire religious knowledge. However, this does not mean that he was merely theory-oriented, rather than practice-oriented. He was not just a philosophical theoretician. Essentially he was a religious practitioner, in the sense that the theory is a reflection of practice. For Tao-sheng the two are inseparably interrelated. Viewed as such, the spectrum of Tao-sheng's contribution in ushering in the Chinese Buddhism in the true form may not be limited to one aspect or another.<sup>11</sup> If we consider Chinese Buddhism in its proper sense, not in essence as a far-fetched departure from Mahāyāna Buddhism but still as an outgrowth of it through eclectic development, we can put Tao-sheng on the forefront of that tradition more than any other contemporary figure. He was eclectic in stressing and developing many noteworthy subject matters in accord with, not in deviation from, the Buddhist doctrine.<sup>12</sup> Because of his originality and his relative independence from Neo-Taoist patterns of thinking, the label Buddho-Taoist may not do full justice to Tao-sheng.<sup>13</sup>

## NOTES TO PART IV

<sup>1</sup>One can also cite the KSC, p. 110c29, stating that Tao-sheng penetrated and synthesized the essentials of both Mahāyāna of Nāgārjuna and Hīnayāna of Saṅghadeva, as one can consider that Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna become unified in the Lotus.

<sup>2</sup>See Fang li-t'ien, op. cit., p. 171. Cf. Robinson, op. cit., p. 106: "Throughout his life, Hui-yüan strove to pour foreign wine into native bottles, to find "hidden meanings" in Chuang-tzu and the I-ching, to interpret the Chinese tradition as an upaya by which the Buddhas had prepared the way for the Dharma".

<sup>3</sup>For this point see Mikiri Jikai, "Jiku Dōshō no hannya shisō", p. 47.

<sup>4</sup>See Fang Li-t'ien, op. cit., p. 237; Thomé H. Fang, "The World and the Individual in Chinese Metaphysics", in Charles A. Moore, ed., The Chinese Mind, p. 256: "His concept of the importance of Reason in gaining an insight into Ultimate Reality even anticipated the Neo-Confucianism of the Sung Dynasty (960-1279). In short, Tao-sheng was, in the one hand, the culmination of the line of thought in the linkage of Buddhism with Taoism, and, on the other, a bridge over which several schools of Buddhism were to make headway in alliance with some schools of Confucianism", Itano, "Doshō no busshoron", p. 23.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Dumoulin, op. cit., p. 60: "In the work of Seng-chao the synthesis of Buddhism and the Chinese view of life was stated convincingly for the first time", and p. 61, on Tao-sheng "He, too, belongs to the early generation of Chinese Buddhists who combined the Law of Buddha with Chinese thought and thus planted it in Chinese soil".

<sup>6</sup>PTL, p. 225a, translated and discussed in Fung/Bodde, A History, II, p. 275ff.

<sup>7</sup>See CSPA, 299b18f.

<sup>8</sup>See Fung, A Short History, p. 217.

<sup>9</sup>For example, see Thomé Fang, loc. cit.

<sup>10</sup>Robinson, op. cit., p. 160. Cf. Hu Shih, "Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in China", p. 15: "Tsung-mi was very fond of quoting Shen-hui's dictum: 'The one word 'Knowledge' is the

gateway to all mysteries.' That sentence best characterizes Shen-hui's intellectual approach."

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, Thomé Fang, loc. cit.: "His theory of sudden awakening by reverting to the inmost nature of the mind anticipated the later philosophy of Ch'an (Zen)."

<sup>12</sup>See Dumoulin, op. cit., p. 65: "Tao-sheng's doctrine encountered vigorous opposition... In no sense did he feel himself to be an innovator; rather, he was convinced that he was defending the true Buddhist teaching in accordance with Buddhist tradition... There is no justification to assume a break with the past."

<sup>13</sup>For a view on Tao-sheng's contribution for Chinese philosophy as a whole, see T'ang Yung-t'ung, Wei Chin hsüan-hsüeh lun-kao, pp. 112-119. especially p. 119.



PART V

TRANSLATION

Maio-fa Lien-hua Ching Shu<sup>1</sup>

Composed by Chu<sup>2</sup> Tao-sheng

[PREFACE]

The subtle words<sup>3</sup> are so profound and abstruse, being mysteriously separated from hearing and seeing, that those who are led to [seriously] approach them and take an interest in them are very few whereas those who just [superficially] touch and sneer at them are many. Is it not simply the case that the sacred order (Tao)<sup>4</sup> is in complete opposition to the secular order<sup>5</sup>?

In my youth, I had the opportunity to attend some lectures<sup>6</sup> sitting humbly in the end row of the hall. I happened to find myself interested in the profound ( ),<sup>7</sup> which was rich<sup>8</sup> and broad in both<sup>9</sup> letter and meaning, and recondite in both the fact involved [as explanatory medium] (shih) and [the underlying] principle (li).<sup>10</sup>

Since what is stored in one's memory does not [endure] like mustard-seed kalpa and rock kalpa,<sup>11</sup> one would find it impossible to keep it intact forever. Somehow on the days when there were lectures I just jotted down what I had heard of during the day. To give an account of and record what I had heard earlier was like [re]producing a drum sound.<sup>12</sup>

Then, during the third month in the spring of the ninth year of the Yüan-chia era (432 A.D.),<sup>13</sup> while residing at the Tung-lin ("Eastern Grove") Monastery (ching-she)<sup>14</sup> on

Lu-shan, again I put them in order and rearranged them. In addition, After collecting and consulting various versions, I edited them into one<sup>15</sup> roll.

It is hoped that numerous enlightened 'men of virtue'<sup>16</sup> may realize this, if they happen to examine this work. I hope they may be led by the ever-abiding ( )<sup>17</sup>, but ([not be misled by what I may have mistaken]), so that they may not abandon the Path (Tao) due to my own insignificance.<sup>18</sup>

[Explaining the Title of the Sūtra]

0.1 [396d10] "THE FINE [OR WONDROUS]<sup>19</sup> DHARMA". The ultimate image is without form; the ultimate music is without sound.<sup>20</sup> Being inaudible and subtle,<sup>21</sup> and in the sphere beyond the reach of trace<sup>22</sup> and speculation, how can [Dharma] be expressed in terms of form?<sup>23</sup> This is why the sūtras and different doctrines are different in words. Yet, how can li [underlying the sūtras and doctrines] be of such nature? It is only because the fundamental ability (or subtle triggering-mechanism) (chi)<sup>24</sup> and receptivity of the ordinary people are not equal; there are myriad avenues of approach for prompting enlightenment. Hence, the Great Sage showed different treatises for different groups and manifested various teachings [for them].

0.2 From [the time of his enlightenment] under the bodhi tree till [the time of] his nirvāṇa, [the Buddha] preached (or turned) altogether four kinds of dharma [-wheels].<sup>25</sup>

First, the good and pure dharma-wheel, which begins with the discourse on one goodness,<sup>26</sup> and ends with that on the four immaterial heavens.<sup>27</sup> [Its aim] is to remove the impurities of the three [evil] paths<sup>28</sup>. Hence, we call it "pure".

Second, the expedient dharma-wheel. This means that one achieves the two kinds of nirvāṇa<sup>29</sup> by means of 'the constituents of enlightenment with outflows.'<sup>30</sup> It is [thus] called "expedient device" (fang-p'ien).<sup>31</sup>

Third, the true and real dharma-wheel. It is meant to destroy the falsehood of the three [vehicles] and thus establish the good ("beauty") of "the One [Vehicle]."<sup>32</sup> Hence it is called "true and real".

Fourth, the residueless (wu-yu / aśesa) dharma-wheel. This refers to the discourse on the [dialectical] merging and returning<sup>33</sup> [of the three Vehicles to the One], and thus to preach the mysterious and eternally abiding meaning. [Hence] it is called "without residue".

0.3 The sūtra recognizes the Greater Vehicle (Mahāyāna) as its source of origin (tsung)<sup>34</sup>. "The Greater Vehicle" refers to the universal<sup>35</sup> and great wisdom, and it begins with [397a1] one goodness<sup>36</sup> and ends with the ultimate wisdom. By "universal" we mean that li has no different intentions (or tenors) but merges into the one ultimate.<sup>37</sup> "Great knowledge"<sup>38</sup> refers to just what one obtains at the end [of the process]. Speaking generally of what counts from

beginning to end, all the tiny goods accumulated are included there.<sup>39</sup> What does "Vehicle (yāna)" mean? Its li lies in ferrying all beings to yonder shore; the implied idea (i) underlying it is to relieve them of suffering (duḥkha).<sup>40</sup>

0.4 What is meant by "Wondrous"?<sup>41</sup> Speaking of all sorts of speeches made by the Tathagata and the teaching he promulgated, what sūtra would not be "wondrous"? The reason why this sūtra is specifically designated as "wondrous" is as follows: It is because the expedient three [vehicles] he previously taught are not real and now he declared that the three are nonexistent. As such, the words match li fully, and the falsity that appeared previously no longer remains. Hence, it is called "Wondrous".

0.5 What is "Dharma? In essence (t'i) there is nothing that is not dharma; in truth there is no falsehood.

0.6 "Lotus Blossom (Punḍarīka)" is the term that praises the present sūtra. Indeed, of the worldly images none is more wondrous than that of the lotus blossom. The beauty of the lotus blossom is its glory in the first opening of its bud. At the peak of the first budding, seeds fill inside while colours, fragrance, and taste become fully mature; then we call it "punḍarīka". [The Buddha's] proclamation that the three are existent no more resembles this. When empty talk is gone, what remains is the true speech. As the authentic speech spreads, the fruitage of [the three] returning to the

One becomes manifested [397a10] in them.

0.7 What is "Scripture" (Ching/Sūtra)?<sup>42</sup> The warp (ching)<sup>43</sup> and woof of the [conventional] world [etymologically] refers to the uncoloured silk. The warp and woof as referred to here would manifest their true illumination on those who cultivate this scripture.<sup>44</sup>

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

(Synopsis of the Sūtra<sup>1</sup>:) (the sūtra opens with the description of the setting, typical of the sūtras. The Buddha, surrounded by a huge number of followers consisting of various classes of beings, enters into samādhi (concentration). Subsequently there appear some portents: the raining of the māṅdarava flowers, the trembling of the earth, and the emitting of a ray from between the Buddha's brows, which illuminates the universe and all the phenomena in it. These omens are designed to get the audience psychologically prepared to hear the Buddha promulgate what will turn out to be shockingly new doctrine that will dialectically negate the path of the three vehicles they have hitherto trodden. Nonetheless they cannot comprehend what these signs stand for. Maitreya turns to Mañjuśrī to resolve their doubts. Mañjuśrī, recalling the experiences he has had in the course of many aeons, tells them that it must be the case that the Buddha is about to preach the sūtra named Saddharmapundarīka.)

1.1.1 "INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER." As regards the topic, initiating a speech and beginning a discourse must be done gradually. As [the Buddha] is about to issue (ming)<sup>2</sup> the subtle words, he thus manifests auspicious omens first. This [chapter] is organized as a general, organic introduction from which the rest of the chapters evolve;<sup>3</sup> it is [like] the

sun and moon of the Dharma Blossom (or Lotus). Here [the Buddha] also intends to shock the vision and audition of the beings so as to solemnize the mood of those who wish to hear [his words].

1.1.2 What this sūtra expounds can be divided into three sections in all. The [first] thirteen chapters from "Introduction" (1) to "Comfortable Conduct" (13) illustrate that the cause (yin/hetu) of the three [vehicles] becomes the cause of the One. The eight chapters from "Willing up out of the Earth" (14) to "Entrustment" (21) distinguish the effect (kuo/phala) of the three [as identical with none other than that of the one]<sup>4</sup>. The six chapters from "Bhaiṣajyarāja" (22) to "Samantabhadra" (27) equate the men of the three [vehicles] with the men of the One [Vehicle]. Such division is designed to brush off the feeling that [the vehicles] are blocking [each other] and are different and to obliterate the impasses that helped divide the lines [of the Buddha's teaching].

1.2 "THUS"<sup>5</sup> (1c16, 1:1)<sup>6</sup> This is the phrase of the transmitters<sup>7</sup> of the sūtra. How is it that the sūtras have been transmitted through generations and the voice of the Buddha has not been cut off? Because there are [397b1] certain factors that make it possible. It resembles certainly the possession of a passport (lit., sealed tally)<sup>8</sup> by a person, with which he will not encounter any check point that he will not be able to pass through. The sūtras have five facts<sup>9</sup> established in the beginning [of the first

passage] in order to make the path (tao/mārga) pass [down the generations] without difficulty. "Like" [of "like this" or "thus"] is the word suggesting that the words match li. When the words and li are in mutual accord, this is spoken of as "like". "This" (or "right") [of "like this" or "thus"] refers to the fact that everything the Thus Come One (Tathāgata) said is not wrong. This [word] points to all that the Buddha preaches.

1.3 "HAVE I HEARD". He intended to transmit it to those who did not [directly] hear it. If there were just words [heard] but no information about transmission, it means that he merely followed the words he heard<sup>10</sup> [that could be subject to fictional construction and distortion]. The importance [of a document as an authentic scripture] lies not so much in preaching [as such] as in transmission. It can be said that the Tao values one who forgets oneself.<sup>11</sup> [The reader is advised to] forget about (or cast off) "I" and to follow the word "heard". "Heard" means that the words came from the Buddha himself; it clarifies that they did not come forth from [the hearer's] "my" mind. In this way, the sūtras have been handed down from generation to generation and the wondrous track [of the dharma wheel] has not ceased.

1.4 "AT ONE TIME". Even though words be in accord with li, if they do not match the occasion (shih)<sup>12</sup>, they will also be empty statements. Hence, next comes "at one time". What "time" means is that the "subtle, triggering mechanism-

force (chi)" within the beings stimulates (kan) the Sage and the latter is able to deign to respond [appropriately and helpfully] (ying)<sup>13</sup> to them; when religious interaction between the ordinary people and the Sage does not miss a favourable opportunity (chi)<sup>14</sup>, we call it "at one time".

1.5 [397b10] "THE BUDDHA WAS DWELLING IN THE CITY OF KING'S HOUSE (RĀJAGRĀHA)". Although there is no place where the Dharma-body is not present, if the place where the preaching took place were not recorded, it would look vague and diffuse.<sup>15</sup> Given that [the transmitter] had to introduce it in order to give evidence for the preaching, and there were five places in this mountain [namely, Rājagṛha], which is intended to be the one where the preaching took place? It was at the monastery on Gṛdhrakūta mountain ("Vulture Peak").

1.6 "TOGETHER WITH [TWELVE THOUSAND] GREAT BHIKSUS".<sup>16</sup> If it is said that [the transmitter] heard [the preaching] by himself, one would find it difficult to believe other factors, too. If he simply said "we" and "everybody" [vaguely, not specifically] it would not be any better than ("excepted from being")<sup>17</sup> a solitary [witness]. [So] he lists all the [specific] co-hearers. These are all that I have mentioned as [the five factors] witnessing the sūtra.<sup>18</sup> "Bhikṣu" is a general term referring to those who are in the process of destroying evils.<sup>19</sup> Why are the voice-hearers (śrāvakas) listed first and then the bodhisattvas? This has to do with the difference of inner and outer; Inner-



directedness has a limited scope while outer-directedness has not restrictions.<sup>20</sup> Hence, it should be in that order. It also suggests that the Buddha's transformative teaching covers all, starting from the near extending to the distant; there is no place where [his] Tao is not existent.<sup>21</sup> "Great" (Mahā) refers to the assembly<sup>22</sup> of people that can [counter] 96 kinds [of heretical views or arguments]<sup>23</sup>.

1.7.2 "ĀJÑĀTAKAUNḌINYA". "Ājñā(ta)" means, in Chinese,<sup>24</sup> "attaining the unlearned knowledge." "Kaunḍinya" is a surname. [397c1]He was the first one who attained the Tao. Hence, the name.

1.7.2 "MAHĀKĀŚYAPA". "Mahā" means "great". "Kāśyapa" is a surname. Since he was a senior and virtuous, he was thus called by the name. "Kāśyapa" is a Brahman surname.

1.7.3 "URUVILVA [-KĀŚYAPA]". It is the name of a papaya grove. As he stayed always in the wood, the place became his name.

1.7.4 "GAYĀKĀŚYAPA". Gayā is the name of a town. He stayed by the town. Thus, it became his name.

1.7.5 "NADI [-KĀŚYAPA]". It is the name of a river.<sup>24</sup> He was born at the bank of this river. Because of this, he got the name.

1.7.6 "ŚĀRIPUTRA". [Śārī] refers to his mother's name. His mother's eyes were like those of the śārī bird (stork).

Hence, this name. "Putra" means "son". This Śāriputra's mother was highly talented and skillful in debates. She was known all over the land. Therefore he came to have the name Sari- after his mother's.

1.7.7 "MAHĀMAUDGALYĀYANA". His first name was Kolita. The surname came from a Brahman clan.

1.7.8 "MAHĀKĀTYĀYANA". It was a surname of a Brahman [clan] of South India. So what originally used to be a surname became his name.

1.7.9 "ANIRUDDHA". In Chinese, it means non(a)-extinction (nirodha) (i.e. "unextinguishable").

1.7.10 "KAPPHINA". It is the first name; it is untranslatable.

1.7.11 [397C10] "GAVĀṂPATI". "Gavaṃ" means cow (go); "pati" means foot (pad). When he was born, his feet were like cow's feet, hence, his name, "cow-feet".

1.7.12 "REVATA". It is the name of a constellation. He was born when the constellation appeared in the sky. Thus he got the name.

1.7.13 "PILINḠAVATSA". Pilinga is the first name: vatsa is a surname.

1.7.14 "BAKKULA". The name means "fertile and prosperous".

1.7.15 "MAHĀKAUSTHILA". It means "a great knee".

1.7.16 "(MAHĀ)NANDA". It means "joy" (ānanda). He was the Buddha's younger brother.

1.7.17 "SUNDARANANDA". He was called Yuna (?). It means "handsome" (sundara) and "joy" (ānanda).

1.7.18 "[PŪRṂA MAITRĀYAṆIPUTRA]". Purna is a surname; Maitrayaniputra is a first name. Also it means "fulfilled wish". Maitrāyaṇi was his mother's name. His mother's talent for debate<sup>26</sup> and great wisdom were known to many people. People<sup>27</sup> honoured his mother. Hence, the son's name was taken after his mother's surname.

1.7.19 "SUBHŪTI". It means "good and lucky". It also means "empty birth" (su-bhū).

1.7.20 "ĀNANDA". He had a handsome appearance. People were delighted to see him. He was born on the day of the Buddha's enlightenment. Thus he was called "Joy" (Ānanda).

1.7.21 "RĀHULA". In Chinese, it means "not-letting-go" (not released). He was [397d1] in the womb for six years. He thus came to be called "Not-letting-go".

1.7.22 "KNOWN TO THE MULTITUDE". All these voice-hearers (śrāvakas) had 'their virtues firmly established within and their fame bruited without'.<sup>28</sup> [People], far and near, admired them [wholeheartedly]; who could not know them? This is why the names are listed and their virtues are praised.

1.7.23 "Great" [of "great arhants"] tells that the Dharma of the Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna) is identical with the path of the bodhisattvas.

1.8.1 "MAHĀPRAJĀPATĪ". (1c26, 1:15) Listed next are the group of mendicant nuns (bhikṣuṇīs). Mahāprajāpatī means, in Chinese, [the one who] loves the path (tao) greatly".<sup>29</sup>

1.8.2 "RĀHULA'S MOTHER YAŚODHARĀ". [Yaśodharā] means, in Chinese, "keeping hearing from afar".

1.9 "EIGHTY THOUSAND BODHISATTVA-[MAHĀSATTVAS]". (2a2, 1:17) The voice-hearers basically take the exhaustion of suffering as the aim [of life]; hence, it was said earlier (1b) that they had their bondages (lei)<sup>30</sup> destroyed. In the path of bodhisattvas in which a person sets himself to embrace all [beings]<sup>31</sup> he does not stay [in the world] just to get rid of bonds of existence (chieh)<sup>32</sup>; he only wish to acquire such ways to help save the beings.<sup>33</sup> [As such]<sup>34</sup> they [i.e., the bodhisattvas] are the only people to be equipped with the magic charms (dhāraṇi) and the four kinds of unhindered] powers.<sup>35</sup> Hence, their wondrous techniques for wheeling and uplifting<sup>36</sup> [beings to salvation] are introduced first, being followed at the end by talking about the innumerable people to be saved.

1.10 "HAVING MADE OFFERINGS TO VARIOUS (INCALCULABLE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF) BUDDHAS". This refers to the

conduct which took place in the past [life].

1.11.1 "CULTIVATING THEMSELVES WITH COMPASSION;". [The passage] following this phrase illustrates the merits of the bodhisattvas in three kinds of deed (karman).<sup>37</sup> Having sympathy for, and taking care of, the weak and the deprived is what is meant by "cultivating themselves with compassion". The word "body" [of "cultivating themselves" or, literally, "cultivating body"] [397d10] implicates mouth and mind as well.

1.11.2 "HAVING PENETRATED GREAT WISDOM. This word ("great wisdom") refers to what they have obtained for themselves. "Penetration" means "[making] to the substratum".

1.11.3 "HAVING REACHED THE YONDER SHORE". This refers to what they have reached at the ultimate end.

1.11.4 "THEIR FAME HAVING BEEN BRUITED WIDELY IN COUNTLESS WORLDS". While their virtues were established internally their fame spread out. Their merit and fame having been established, the news spread out.

1.12.1 "ŚAKRO DEVĀNĀM INDRAḤ". (2a15, 2:13) He is the second god emperor, in charge of four regional god kings.<sup>38</sup> He commands the dragons (nāgas) and demons (pretas), not letting them offend the beings unrestrainedly but making them always cultivate meritorious virtues. He makes the sun and the moon shine clear and bright. He often acts as a main interlocutor who draws out remarks or sermons<sup>39</sup> [from the Buddha]. Hence, he is mentioned in the beginning [of the paragraph].

1.12.2 "EIGHT CLASSES OF GHOSTS (PRETAS) AND SPIRITS (DEVAS)". Spirits can have different forms and can change their appearances, sometimes into gods or men. Therefore, they belong to the category between the two, to be placed second.

1.13 "THE FOUR GREAT GOD KINGS". In the east of Sumeru is [the king] called Dhṛtarāṣṭra, in the south Virūdhaka, in the west Virupakasa, and in the north Vaiśravaṇa. They are controlled by Śakro Devānāṃ Indraḥ.

1.14 "THE EIGHT DRAGON KINGS (NĀGARĀJA)". All these dragon kings are named "Joy".<sup>40</sup> They were reincarnated in human form. They resided in [398a1] Rājagṛha. When suffering from drought, the king and ministers went to them to seek help. Immediately the sweet rain fell. The rain soaked the whole country. Seeing the rain fall, people were so much pleased. Hence, the name "Joy".

1.15.1 "THERE WERE FOUR KINNARA KINGS". (2a:24, 2:29) In Chinese [Kinnara] means human-cum-inhuman; they appear handsome, but their heads have one horn. They are god emperors' spirits in charge of music.

1.15.2 "THERE WERE FOUR GANDHARVA KINGS". They are also the gods' music spirits. But they differ in that they have no horn.

1.16.1 "ASURA KINGS". "A": means "no"; 'sura' means "wine". In the past [life], they belonged to a Brahman clan, they led a

clean life, abstaining from drinking. Hence, the name.

1.16.2 "GARUDA". In Chinese, it means "flying in the sky". They are the spirits of the birds with golden wings.

1.16.3 "VAIDEHI'S SON, KING AJĀTAŚATRU". Vaidehi is the mother's name. King Ajātaśatru means, in Chinese, "hatred (śātravaṃ) [harbored] prior to birth". When he was in the womb, he kept harboring evil will against King Bimbisāra. Hence, the name "Hatred before birth". He was born of Vaidehi. Thus he was called Vaidehi's son.

1.17.1 [398a10] "AT THAT TIME, THE WORLD-HONORED ONE, SURROUNDED BY THE FOURFOLD MULTITUDE". (2b7, 3:18) The utmost virtue [of the Buddha] was so weighty that its majesty exceeded that of the sun and the moon. Hence, it brought men and gods to join together and intermingle with the same thoughts of respects; the feeling of joy imbued all the beings, causing the false to go and the real to return.

1.17.2 "SHOWERED WITH OFFERINGS, AND PAID RESPECTS".<sup>41</sup> "Offering" is made by giving valuables, while "respect" is expressed by solemn manners.

1.17.3 "REVERED AND ADMIRE".<sup>42</sup> "Reverence" means "to respect" and "to honour". Their affections in this case surpassed that for the ruler or father. To paraphrase "admiration", it means that as they were pleased with the virtues [of the Buddha] within, [their pleasure] overflowed

into chanting without.

1.17.4 "PREACHED A SCRIPTURE OF THE GREAT VEHICLE". The three vehicles are [traces, which are used provisionally] in compliance with the external [conditions]. [However], traces are diametrically opposed to li. Holding on to the letters and deviating from the import<sup>43</sup>, how could they not be startled [by] the doctrine of the One Vehicle? [The Buddha] is about to preach the Dharma Blossom. Therefore, first he [attempts to] guide and reach out to their psychological makeup by preaching "the Immeasurable Doctrine" (Ananta-nirdeśa). Since they have stayed in the traces (chi) so long, when they hear suddenly that there are [in reality] no three [vehicles], they will not suddenly deviate from what they have been fond of so far. If they deviated from what they have been fond of so far, then they would turn back while they gaze at [the other] shore. Returning while gazing at the shore means that the great path (tao) is abandoned. Therefore, [the preaching of One] should be done gradually.<sup>44</sup> What is "the Immeasurable Doctrine"? It refers to something for which there is no external mark (lakṣana) at all. There is nothing like "many or little" and "deep or shallow". It precisely speaks of and implies the conduct of the Buddha. The import of his words contains [398b1] something [ultimately] real; we call it the Doctrine Immeasurable. Li



is [so] broad that it liberates [one who gets in it] from the long passage of suffering; it is none other than the Greater Vehicle.<sup>45</sup> Only the bodhisattvas can learn it. [Thus] he preached it for them.

1.17.5 [e] "A DHARMA TO BE TAUGHT TO BODHISATTVAS". The bodhisattvas are those who have not consummated li yet. [Hence], he ought to teach them about it.

1.17.6 "[A DHARMA] WHICH THE BUDDHA KEEPS EVER IN MIND". The Buddha has consummated li: he "keeps ever". He has never forgotten or lost it: he [keeps ever] "in mind".

1.17.7 "[HE ENTERED] THE SAMĀDHI OF [THE ABODE OF] THE IMMEASURABLE DOCTRINE (ANATANIRDEŚAPRATIṢṬHĀNASAMĀDHI)" 'Movement and quiescence'<sup>46</sup> apply only to the beings, but certainly not to the sage. 'The tracing of the li to the end and the consummate realization of their nature (hsing)<sup>47</sup> is referred to as the samādhi of the Immeasurable Doctrine. All that he will say after he rises from the samādhi should not allow any error. Thus he has to verify it.

1.18 "MĀNDĀRAVA FLOWERS". (2b10, 3:26) As [the Buddha] entered and reached the samādhi,<sup>48</sup> his spirit moved the heaven and earth. In the heaven appear the flowers of rain; on the earth there is shaking (earthquake). As heaven and

earth move, how can men remain silent?<sup>49</sup> Now that good omens have appeared there will certainly be an extraordinary preaching. The general mood at the time is rather full of imaginative thought, and their doubts deepen. As deep doubts pile up, awakening, [if it happens] would necessarily be deep, too. Four kinds of mādāra flowers poured from the heaven are designed to show the unreality of the four kinds of fruition.<sup>50</sup> The trembling of the earth is meant to demonstrate [the nature of] the non-abidingness (or transitoriness) of the four kinds of fruition. Also shown is the fact that the six kinds of living beings are all endowed with [the capacity for] great enlightenment.<sup>51</sup> It shows also [the truth of] impermanence (anitya).

1.19.1 [398b10] "SINGLE-MINDEDLY THEY BEHELD THE BUDDHA". (2b16, 3:36) Knowing for certain that there will be an extraordinary preaching, they wait to hear the unusual speech.

1.19.2 "AGLOW FROM THE TUFT OF WHITE HAIR BETWEEN HIS BROWS". This is intended to illustrate the right middle-path<sup>52</sup> of the One Vehicle and the nonexistence of the two vehicles which are an illusion and hindrance. Its being present in the forehead signifies the mark of 'impartiality'.<sup>53</sup> When such a glow shines, the [noble]

knowledge will certainly become manifest.

1.19.3 "ILLUMINATED ... THE EAST". The east is the cardinal of all directions. This is to show [analogically] the mystery that the One Vehicle is [identical with] the three vehicles. Also expressed herein is that one who becomes enlightened to [the meaning of] the Greater [Vehicle] is [no less than the one who has been] so darkly merged [with the ultimate foundation] that he cannot exhaust his illumination.

1.19.4 "EIGHTEEN THOUSAND WORLDS". Although it illuminated in one direction, [the Buddha] intended to show that there was no place that such light could not illuminate. Thus by [the expression] "eighteen thousand" he meant to demonstrate that his illumination was not limited to one [direction].<sup>54</sup> That it illuminated throughout the regions above and below implies that 'there is no place where the Tao is not present'.<sup>55</sup>

1.20.1 "THERE COULD BE FULLY SEEN ... IN THOSE LANDS". "Those" and "these" [lands] were [made] mutually visible to expressing the fact that the right path penetrates formlessly, without obstacle and without obstruction.<sup>56</sup>

1.20.2 "SIX KINDS OF LIVING BEINGS". The six "courses" illustrate that they were in such a state of existence

because of their delusion (moha).

1.20.3 "THERE COULD ALSO BE SEEN ... THE BUDDHAS". Since the deluded condition of the six kinds of living beings<sup>57</sup> was shown, it seems necessary [to cite] also those who reversed the course of delusion. Those who reversed [398c1] the course of delusion were none other than the Buddhas.

1.20.4 "AND THE SŪTRADHARMAS PREACHED BY THOSE BUDDHAS COULD BE HEARD". Those who wanted the know-how (or knowledge) for reversing the deluded state are required to hear the Dharma [preached]. What is said next (or as well) is that they heard the sūtra preached.

1.20.5 "WHO THROUGH PRACTICE HAD ATTAINED THE PATH". All of them are those who turned around from the course of delusion.

1.20.6 "THE VARIOUS BACKGROUND CAUSES AND CONDITIONS". It is illustrated here that the spiritual capacities of the living beings are not equal. The ways for attaining enlightenment are varied in myriad ways: [the beings achieve it] sometimes by means of alms-giving (dāna) and morality (śīla), or sometimes through spiritual transformation. Hence the word "various".

1.20.7 "THERE COULD ALSO BE SEEN THOSE BUDDHAS WHO ACHIEVED

[PARI-]NIRVĀṆA". These [Buddhas] are here shown to be contrasted with the present [Buddha]. They were supposed to realize that the Buddha's nirvāṇa was not long away, but the beings were in such state of mind that they were far from realizing it; they were urged to seek for the Dharma diligently.<sup>58</sup>

1.21 "MAITREYA HAD THIS THOUGHT: ... WE HAVE HAD THESE PORTENTS". (2b4, 4:18) Now that the congregation had been mired so long emotionally in a standstill, they held hard on to the idea<sup>59</sup> intensely. When they saw all of a sudden the unusual mark they had never seen before, they were at a loss with doubts arising within themselves. Maitreya, who was in the rank to become the next Buddha<sup>60</sup>, saw that his mind was becoming inquisitive like the others. Sharing the [doubtful] thought with the rest of the congregation, he availed himself of the opportunity (chi) (or the subtle triggering-force in him) and became puzzled. As the doubts piled up inside to a great degree, enlightenment could also be incited quickly. Maitreya was positioned as the principal questioner to ensure that the one who sought to resolve the doubts would duly attain illumination.

1.22 "THEN HE QUESTIONED MAÑJUŚRĪ, ... [398c10] A GREAT RAY EMITTED". (2c5, 4:34) The reason why earlier, when [the

Buddha] first entered the samādhi, [the phenomena of] the raining flowers and the shaking earth appeared, was that he was going to expound the One Vehicle. This indicates that the transformative teaching<sup>61</sup> of the One Vehicle would follow later. However, [to preach] the One Vehicle was [the Buddha's] original purpose of convening the meeting. Therefore, Maitreya now first questions the emission of the ray. The way [the questioners] are arranged first or later in that order represents some meaning and intention in each case. It seems proper that the question about the rain flowers and the shaking of the earth follow next. [Yet], it is omitted and not mentioned [in the prose section]. That question then must be included in the gāthās.<sup>61</sup>

1.23.1 "QUESTIONED IN GĀTHĀS:" (2c8, 5:4) The composition of the gāthās is dictated generally by the following four aims; first, for the sake of those who will come later; second, for the sake of those who have not yet been enlightened [through the prose section]; third, to expand in the gāthās what has been briefly touched on (or left out) in the long lines (or prose); fourth, to chant and dance in tune with intense emotion. Maitreya has asked only the essentials in brief. Now he speaks about them in full detail. The reason underlying the appearance of Mañjuśrī's name at the start is for the sake of drawing the congregation's

attention; they regarded him highly and when they were to hear him speak later their affection for him would be very intense.<sup>63</sup>

1.23.2 "I WILL NOW TELL THEM BRIEFLY". (3a6) Since what he has seen and heard is so vast, it will be difficult for him to tell them in complete detail.

1.24 "I SEE IN THAT LAND". (3a6, 7:4) Many lines that follow this chant are [the recounting of] what has appeared earlier [in prose], [398d1] [including] "the various background causes and conditions [of the bodhisattva-mahāsattvas], their various degrees of belief and understanding (adhimukti) (2b22, 4:10). [The word] "various" can refer to morality (śīla) or almsgiving (dāna). What it refers to is not limited to one kind. Listed next are various practices of the six perfections (pāramitās).<sup>64</sup> But there is no set order for them. [The sequential order] can be arranged high or low (or early or late) as [the Buddha] wishes. Why then are they put together here on this occasion and why are the good and the bad [practitioners] of them shown here? It is [the Buddha's] wish that [the beings] discard the evil and cultivate the good. Also illustrated thereby is that there is no place the light of knowledge does not mirror.

1.25.1 "MAÑJUŚRĪ SAID TO ... MAITREYA ... I SURMISE THAT". (3c11, 12:14) The profound li is darkly deep and abysmal. It is outside of the realm of calculation. Not having realized and investigated for himself the deep li, how can [Maitreya] dare to explicate it? He has to rely on Mañjuśrī [for the role which requires expertise and knowledge as shown in] the artisan [Shih] of Ying (the capital of Ch'iu).<sup>65</sup> The phrase "I surmise that" indicates that comprehension must lie in the Buddha [himself], for which all have their faithful feeling deepened.

1.25.2 The subsequent part consisting of four sections in all serves as an indication that the [the Buddha's] preaching of the Dharma Blossom is imminent. [In] "the first segment", Mañjuśrī, knowing that li is subtle and sublime, dare not pinpoint, substantiate, or explain it. Therefore, he says: "I surmise that [the Buddha] ... wishes to preach the great Dharma."

1.25.3 "YOU GOOD MAN, ONCE BEFORE, IN THE PRESENCE OF PAST BUDDHAS, I SAW THIS PORTENT:". The second segment. [What happened in] the past is cited to explain [what happens in] the present. [398d10] Even though the past and the present are distinguished, their Tao is not different. The past



portents as such pointed to the fact that [the Buddha] would preach the great Dharma; [likewise] "it should be understood" that the present portents of Śākyamuni clearly signal that he is certain to preach the Dharma Blossom.

1.26.1 What will be plainly spoken of from now on is simply what happened in the remote past. [Mañjuśrī] is going to describe what really happened. It is the story of [the Buddha] Sun-and-Moon-Glow.

1.26.2 The Thus Come One (Tathāgata) preached freely in accordance with his aims; thus it is referred to as "Immeasurable".<sup>66</sup> But here just "ten" attributes<sup>67</sup> are mentioned. Why ["ten"]? "Ten" represents the full and ultimate number (or infinity), with the implication that the li of the Thus Come One is perfect and faultless and that the Tao is omnipresent.<sup>68</sup> Hence, [the word] "ten" is employed.

1.26.3 What does [the title] "Thus Come One" (Tathāgata) (3c19) mean? Although myriad dharmas are different from each other, they are one and, in such a [mysterious] way,<sup>69</sup> the same. [Why did] the coming of the Sagely body [take place?]; he has come [in the incarnated form] to transform various creatures. Hence, the title "Thus Come One".<sup>70</sup>

1.26.4 "WORTHY OF OFFERINGS (ARHAT)".<sup>71</sup> The: fertile fields

of 'the utmost Tao<sup>72</sup> can produce wonderful fruits. With both external marks (lakṣaṇa) and ties (saṃyojana?) dispelled, he can be called "[worthy of] offerings".

1.26.5 "[THE ONE WHO HAS] RIGHT AND UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE (SAMYAKSAMBUDDHA)." There is no place that the knowledge does not permeate: it is "universal". This knowledge is not depraved;<sup>73</sup> it is "right" (or correct).

1.26.6 "[THE ONE WHO HAS] ENLIGHTENMENT AND CONDUCT PERFECT (VIDYACARANASAMPANNAḤ)".<sup>74</sup> When the actions (karman) by body, mouth, and mind are done in conformity with knowledge, it can be called "enlightenment and conduct". [The word] "perfect" means that as his wisdom is universal, his knowledge and conduct, too, must be complete and perfect.

1.26.7 "WELL-GONE (SUGATA)" [The Buddha's]<sup>75</sup> existence and disappearance provided the beings with the immeasurable benefits. [399a1] His trace was exhausted under 'the twin trees':<sup>76</sup> He was "gone" for [the good of] the beings. The beings benefited from this. How can it not be "well"?

1.26.8 What does [the title] "[the one who] understands the world (lokavid)" mean? The five aggregates (pañca-skandhaḥ)<sup>77</sup> are what make up the world. The Thus Come One reached the world and untied<sup>78</sup> the bonds and knots.

1.26.9 "THE UNEXCELLED WORTH (ANUTTARA)". The man is lofty; the path [to him] is cut off (or [his] Tao is absolute).<sup>79</sup> No one can stand equal with him.

1.26.10 "REGULATOR OF MEN (PURUSADAMYASARATHIH)". It is hard to regulate the evils, and the immature and woeful [deeds caused by] body and mouth. The Buddha can suppress them and regulate the beings. He can thus be called "regulator".

1.26.11 "TEACHER OF GODS AND MEN (SASTADEVANAM CAMANUSYANAM)". Having completely mastered the wondrous technique of regulation, he can be the teacher of gods (devas) and men.

1.26.12 "BUDDHA, WORLD-HONORED ONE (BHAGAVAN)". "Buddha" refers to awakening. He was awakened and enlightened to [the truth of] life and death. Being armed with the above ten virtues, his general title [that represents all of them] is "Buddha, World-Honored One".

1.27 "[The true Dharma] which is good at beginning" refers to the voice-hearers (sravakas); "good at middle" refers to the pratyeka-buddhas; and "good at end" refers to the bodhisattvas. Listed next are those who belong to the three vehicles, and that is followed by the description of the events involved. The three kinds of transformative teaching

(hua)<sup>81</sup> were also preached earlier; what was meant there remains the same in the present case.

1.28.1 "IN THIS WAY THERE WERE TWENTY THOUSAND BUDDHAS". (3c27, 13:13) The purpose underlying the further drawing of twenty thousand buddhas as the witnesses for the Śākyamuni Buddha is to implicitly describe the transformative teaching of the two vehicles in order to expound<sup>82</sup> the beauty of the One Vehicle. Thus he has to draw the Buddhas in a wide variety. Although they are so many, their [399a10] path (tao) is simply one in the final analysis.

1.28.2 "HE HAD EIGHT [PRINCELY] SONS". The reason why the eight sons appeared additionally is twofold. First, to prove what Mañjuśrī intends to sum up about what happened in the remote past, namely, that he was none other than the master of Torch-Burner (dīpaṃkara), [that is, Fine Luster (Varaprabha)], and that Torch-Burner was in turn the master of Śākyamuni. As such, there can not be anything false in what Mañjuśrī has said. Second, speaking in reverse, [it suggests that] one's longevity [makes one] gradually open up one's eyes.

1.29.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE BUDDHA SUN-AND-MOON-GLOW PREACHED A SCRIPTURE OF THE GREAT VEHICLE". (4a8, 13:35) The third<sup>83</sup>

segment [begins here]. This is cited now in order to corroborate that the present portents are identical with [those in the past].

1.29.2 "FINE LUSTER (VARAPRABHA) AND WHO HAD EIGHT HUNDRED DISCIPLES". The eight hundred disciples are featured to indicate that it is not only this time that Maitreya has sought advice from Mañjuśrī, but that in the past he also received instructions [from him] as his master. Now he has again become the one who inquires [about the portents]: he is bound to obtain enlightenment [this time].<sup>84</sup>

1.30.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE BUDDHA SUN-AND-MOON-GLOW, RISING FROM SAMĀDHI".<sup>78</sup> The fourth segment [begins here]. What he had preached at that particular time he was going to preach for the sixty kalpas. How can it be true? The time span as such is used [merely] to express the utmost respect for the Dharma.

1.30.2 "AT MIDNIGHT, ENTERED NIRVANA [WITHOUT RESIDUE]". [Consequently] they sought for the Dharma earnestly with the utmost effort. The motive underlying [the Buddha's] conferment on Womb of Excellence (Śrīgarbha) of the prophecy that he would later become a Buddha is to attract those with [excessive] self-esteem.<sup>86</sup> If they hear suddenly that the Buddha is about to [enter] nirvāṇa, which means that there

will be no sage [to guide them] from then on, they will then immediately stop their journey in the middle of the path they have trodden. Another reason for [399b1] [the Buddha's] conferring the prophecy on Womb of Excellence of his achieving Buddhahood in the future is that since people of the world seeking after fame and profit tend to be very fond of holding on to what is near while rejecting that which is far off, he wants to disparage them and admonish people to cut out such proclivity of mind.

1.31.1 "PROCLAIMED GATHAS, SAYING". (4b:19, 16:4) As for the way how the gāthās are composed, what was [mentioned] before [in prose] may sometimes be omitted and not chanted [in the gāthās]; what was not previously [in prose] may sometimes be included in the gāthās. It is also difficult to set a standard [on what to be chanted]. It is possible only to determine provisionally at a specific point of time what should be [chanted].

1.31.2 "THE DOCTRINE OF THE REALITY-MARKS OF THE DHARMAS" (5a10, 19:2) There is no more falsehood of the two vehicles. He preaches only the reality of the Greater Vehicle.

## CHAPTER 2: EXPEDIENT DEVICES

Rising from the samādhi or concentration, the Buddha, addressing Śāriputra, speaks to the profound nature of the Dharma the Buddha has attained, especially unfathomable to the voice-hearers and the pratyekabuddhas. He explains why, like the past and future Buddhas, he has to resort to various pedagogical devices and means to lead all the beings to salvation. All the ways and dharmas are directed toward the One Buddha Vehicle, replacing other two or three vehicles, which are also no more than expedient devices.

2.1 In the past [the Buddha] has hidden [his teaching proper] within the trace of the three vehicles, which the follower [mistakenly] regarded as the teaching proper. Now [the Buddha] wishes to reveal the One reality, showing what is true and right. Because he clarifies what is right by means of what is wrong, this chapter is titled "expedient devices". As the previous three vehicles are indicated as expedient devices, the One reality<sup>1</sup> [399b10] is clearly postulated here, and, though how it is so is not mentioned, it is self-evident. If it is titled "One Vehicle", li will look like one. Hence, [the chapter] is referred to as "expedient devices", and yet it is still [implicitly] expressive of 'the realm [of the One reality] which only the superlative description (or praise) may befit' (or 'the ineffable realm').<sup>2</sup>

2.2 "[THE WORLD-HONORED ONE] ROSE SERENELY FROM HIS SAMĀDHI". (5b25, 22:1) As [the Buddha] has been to the

profound realm [in his samādhi] his recondite words are also [necessarily] deep. Since Maitreya's doubts on the rain-flowers and the earth-trembling Mañjuśrī resolved, as mentioned above [in the first chapter], would that not shake off their confused thoughts and cleanse and empty their minds? Their minds being emptied, they would be ready to accept the One Vehicle. Thereupon 'the Sage set forth the track',<sup>3</sup> acquiesced and 'moved'.<sup>4</sup> And then [the Buddha], rising from his concentration, started speaking. What he said must be profound and proper. It being profound and proper, those who receive it must naturally become earnest.

2.3 "PROCLAIMED TO SARIPUTRA". The reason why [the Buddha] proclaimed to him [in particular] is because while his trace could be close in rank to the voice-hearers, his actual illumination surpassed the peers, thus qualifying himself to be 'respondent in the dialogue'<sup>5</sup> [with the Buddha].

2.4 "WISDOM IS PROFOUND". Although [the Buddha's] speeches are varied in myriad ways, yet the intent [of the words] lies in manifesting the One. When the beings deviate from the import of the words creating a "profound [chasm]" with respect to "wisdom", it is not because the "wisdom" [as such] is "profound", but merely because the beings are far



away (literally, "profound") from "wisdom".<sup>6</sup> [399c1] This is the expression which laments the failure [of the beings in reaching the Buddha's intent]. How can this be taken as a praise for "wisdom"?

2.5 "THE GATEWAYS OF THEIR WISDOM". [The Value of] wisdom consists in preaching. Preaching is what the "gateways" refer to. Not only is wisdom incomprehensible but the "gateways" are also hard to fathom. Fathoming the "gateways" means realizing that there are no three [vehicles]. Is not this something that is "hard to understand"?

2.6.1 "NO VOICE-HEARER OR PRATYEKABUDDHA CAN KNOW THEM". But then the three vehicles are all provisional exigencies (ch'üan)<sup>7</sup>. And the Greater Vehicle does not contradict that by which it is great. Therefore, [the Buddha] does not mention it, [namely, the Greater Vehicle]. The two vehicles are in diametrical opposition to the sphere of "great". That refers to [what they] "can not know".<sup>8</sup>

2.6.2 "WHY IS THIS? ... DHARMAS THAT HAD NEVER BEEN BEFORE". If the reason why it is so is not explained, how can one believe it? [The Buddha] had to make a repeated explanation. Accumulating [what he was supposed] to do in

such a way, ["in former times the Buddha"] attained to the ultimate [achievement]; that is what is meant by "that had never been before".<sup>9</sup> [The phrase stating that the Buddha's wisdom is] incalculable (5b26) conjoins with the [next] phrase with the word "wisdom" (5b26). This thus explains effect by means of cause.

2.6.3 "WHAT HE PREACHES ACCORDS WITH WHAT IS APPROPRIATE". The words and traces represent the external compliance [with li or reality]. By following the traces one would overlook the meaning. Being ignorant of the meaning, one encounters difficulty in understanding [what is real]. This [phrase] joins with the phrase "the gateways of their wisdom". Now that the reason has been explained, the subtle meaning will reveal its face (lit. "turn its head").

2.7 [399c10] "SINCE ACHIEVING BUDDHAHOOD ... ENABLING THEM TO ABANDON THEIR ENCUMBRANCES". (5c1, 22:11) What has been stated so far is all about praising the Buddha's wisdom. The present statement is the direct recounting of what Śākyamuni says he did himself. Entitling the [present] chapter ("Expedient Devices") has yielded this phrase. The preceding words, "accords with what is appropriate", may bring them "encumbrances" (5c3); it was necessary thus to explain it again. [The Buddha] said "[what he preaches]

accords with what is appropriate", in the sense that "in accordance with" what kind of disease it is there should be "what is appropriate". Diseases are myriad in kinds. [By the same token] the teaching cannot be in a set pattern;<sup>10</sup> but its fundamental purpose is to lead [beings] to cast aside their "encumbrances". Otherwise [even] for a day, their "encumbrances" would not get loosened from (or "abandon") li. Hence, he said, "since achieving Buddhahood".

2.8 "WHY IS THIS? ... HE HAS PERFECTED [ALL] THE DHARMAS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN BEFORE". Internally, [the Buddha] has consummated "expedient devices, knowledge and insight"; externally, he speaks with "skillful measures applicable to all human situations".<sup>11</sup> Explained again is the reason why he has consummated expedient devices; namely, [his consummation has been made possible] because his illumination is perfect, without obstruction, and has reached the ultimate end.<sup>12</sup> [The statement] that his "dhyāna-concentration" and his meritorious virtues "have deeply penetrated the limitless" explains the reason why his "knowledge and insight, and his pāramitās have [all] been acquired to the fullest measure".

2.9 "BY MAKING A VARIETY OF DISTINCTIONS, [HE] CAN SKILLFULLY PREACH THE DHARMAS". It has been stated already

that [the Buddha's teaching methods are] without set patterns, and the statement appears contradictory to [the nature of] li, [which has to do with the One]. It is necessary to explain again the difference of the three vehicles, of which he says here, "a variety of". By means of three, One is manifested and this is called [399d1] "skillful preaching". His myriad statements are equally proper; there is no differing taste (rasa); [all] are in accord with it, and there is nothing that goes against it, thus it is called "gladdening many hearts". So far [the Buddha] has explicated internal comprehension; now here he talks about external conversion.<sup>13</sup>

2.10.1 "CEASE, ŚĀRIPUTRA, WE NEED SPEAK NO MORE". Since it has already been declared that the three vehicles are not real, what should logically follow is the explication about the One Vehicle. Even though [the Buddha] has said that they are unreal, it is still short of what is proper, not yet sufficient to startle their minds off their attachment to them. If he says it again, they are certain to be bewildered and puzzled. Hence, he shouts, saying, "cease". How could one argue that their puzzlement can be dispelled without speaking. Although the One has not yet been pinpointed, the idea has been roughly suggested. Hence, he says, "we need speak no more".

2.10.2 "REALITY". There is no counterfeit of the two vehicles any more. Only the One Vehicle is real.

2.11.1 "SUCH MARKS, [SUCH] NATURE". These eleven factors [qualified by "such"]<sup>14</sup> represent myriad goodnesses. As smoke is the external mark (hsiang) of fire, burning is its nature. The external mark is based on the outside while nature is in charge of the inside.

2.11.2 "[SUCH] SUBSTANCE". This is an integrated designation encompassing nature and mark.

2.11.3 "[SUCH] POWERS, [SUCH] FUNCTIONS". When one has an ability not yet harnessed it is called "power". That which creates an actual use and makes application possible is referred to as "function".

2.11.4 "[SUCH] CAUSES, [SUCH] CONDITIONS". That which enables [something] to come into existence is "cause" (yin/ hetu); that which helps [something] grow exuberantly like the branches and leaves of a tree is "condition" (yüan/ pratyaya).

2.11.5 "[SUCH] EFFECTS, [SUCH] RETRIBUTIONS". [399d10] When what one has willed and expected to happen duly comes true, we call it "effect". What is yielded from what one has

seeded<sup>15</sup> is called "retribution".

2.11.6 "[SUCH] BEGINNING, [AND SUCH] END". The start of myriad goddesses is "end"; the final of the Buddha's wisdom is "beginning". Only the Buddhas comprehend those meanings,<sup>16</sup> and understand the source-ultimate. Hence, in general conclusion, it is said, "the ultimate identity".

2.12.1 "EXCEPT FOR THE MULTITUDE OF BODHISATTVAS, WHOSE POWER OF FAITH IS FIRM". (5c17, 23:32) The Buddha earlier preached the three, but now he says that there are no [three], not yet, however, entering the track of the One. This idea is hard to fathom. Those who fathom it are few. Hence, those [whose faith is firm] are widely listed. Those [whose faith] is firm refer to those who are in the eighth stage (bhūmi) or beyond. Only they can fathom that the Buddha is about to preach the One Vehicle. Hence, it is said, "except for". Those of the two vehicles hold on but can not fathom it.

2.12.2 BODHISATTVAS WHO HAVE RECENTLY LAUNCHED THEIR THOUGHTS". (6a11, 24:24) They are the ones who have understood their nature (hsing).

2.12.3 "BODHISATTVAS WHO DO NOT BACKSLIDE". They are in between the first and the seventh<sup>718</sup> stages. It can not be

said that they are not aware of it; [the Buddha] wants to exalt and beautify the One Vehicle, causing people to worship and believe it. Hence, it is said thus.

2.12.4 "[THE BUDDHA'S] WORDS ARE WITHOUT DISCREPANCY". Li is the sole ultimate. The [Buddha's] words tally with li. Hence, it is said, "words are without discrepancy."

2.13.1 "AT THAT TIME, IN THE MIDST OF THE GREAT MULTITUDE ... TWELVE HUNDRED PERSONS". (6a28, 25:29) The reason that [the Buddha] until now ceased to speak is to stop their [~~400~~al] doubts. Yet again more doubts arose in those ignorant [of the Buddha's true goal]. Those voice-hearers have heard the Buddha praising highly this Path as being so profound, but they are far from realizing where his purport lies.

2.13.2 "THE DOCTRINE OF UNIQUE DELIVERANCE, WHICH MEANS THAT, WE, TOO, GAINING THIS DHARMA". Even though there is the distinction between the superior and the inferior in the merits and virtues of the three vehicles, there is ultimately no difference in that they all reach the abode of the eternal cessation of nirvāṇa. Hence, it is said, "unique deliverance (ekaiva vimuktir)", "unique" (or "one") meaning "the same". But they do not "know where the doctrine tends" (6b5) which

the Buddha praised in utmost earnest.

2.14.1 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, KNOWING OF THE DOUBTS IN THE MINDS OF THE FOURFOLD ASSEMBLY". (6b7, 26:6) Sharing the [collective] sentiment [prevalent in the congregation] at the time, [Śāriputra] has availed himself of the opportunity to raise the question. As the doubts intensify in his mind, his will to resolve them is also very strong.<sup>18</sup>

2.14.2 "ON THE DHARMAS ATTAINED ON THE PLATFORM OF THE PATH". The path (tao) being lofty and the li being recondite, who would dare to ask about them? If the Buddha did not preach, the traces would look like the dharma they envisioned them to be. Therefore, the World-Honored One rose from samādhi and preached of his own accord, though unsolicited, praising the Buddhas' wisdom as "extremely profound" and immeasurable. The gāthās that follow are designed to praise [the Buddha's wisdom] in a chant.

2.15 "THE BUDDHA PROCLAIMED TO ŚĀRIPUTRA: "CEASE, CEASE! THERE IS NO NEED TO SPEAK FURTHER". (6c7, 27:28) By the earlier "cease" (5c9), the Buddha wanted them to cease harboring doubts. Body-son (Śāriputra) said [to the effect that the Buddha should] preach and then [they would] cease harboring [400a10] doubts. Hence, the repeated request. The two words show a vast difference [in what they refer to], and



yet they are the same in that they are intended for dispelling men's doubts.

2.16 "AT THAT TIME, THE WORLD HONORED ONE DECLARED TO ŚĀRIPUTRA: 'SINCE YOU HAVE NOT THRICE EARNESTLY BESOUGHT ME'". (7a5, 29:9) As the Sage sets forth the teaching, his speech must be unfolded gradually; awakening, likewise, is achieved step by step.<sup>19</sup> Insofar as the request was made thrice, the doubts of the congregation were so prevalent and lingering. The doubts of the congregation being widely prevalent and lingering, their desire to hear was very intense.<sup>20</sup> The triple request was made not because the Buddha wished it, but because the circumstances of the time [with respect to the beings] dictated it.<sup>21</sup>

2.17.1 In the next five segments [the Buddha] expounds the purport. The first segment is about distinguishing the difference between the true and the false. The second properly clarifies the process of becoming one at [the point of] the foundational-cum-ultimate.<sup>22</sup> The third illustrates that the tracks of the Buddhas in the three periods, past, present, and future, are profoundly identical. The fourth explains why preaching the three vehicles was not what the Sage [originally] wanted but that instead he could not help but appear [in the world to preach them]. The fifth is about

the men who obtained [the Buddha's original purport and those who did not.

2.17.2 The story of the five thousand men withdrawing [from the scene] (7a8). This belongs to the first segment, regarding the distinguishing of the difference between the true and the false. The speech proper is about to be disclosed. Then the true and the false will be determined by themselves, which is, figuratively speaking, like the case where the sun and the moon shine brightly the difference between what is black and what is white becomes distinct and clear. The purpose of showing this trace is to guide the collective sentiment of the time to a hushed readiness [for the doctrine]. [400b1] By showing it to ones like the group of people with "overweening pride", who are not prepared to attend the auspicious assembly, [the Buddha wishes] to elate the mood of the time and lead to the point where they drive (lit. "flagellating") themselves toward faith and enlightenment.

2.18.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE BUDDHA DECLARED TO ŚĀRIPUTRA ... NO MORE BRANCHES AND LEAVES". (7a12, 29:21) The second segment. In the following part the Buddha attempts to explain the path of unification. The bothersome branches are gone; the firm trunk remains. "What he preaches accords with

what is appropriate" (5b29); he preaches in the way that befits [the varying levels or existential conditions of] the beings. Even though [the Buddha] speaks of the three, his emotional posture remains committed to manifesting the One. Hence it is said, "their purport is hard to understand" (7a18, 29:31).

2.18.2 "[THE BUDDHAS, THE WORLD-HONORED ONES] FOR ONE GREAT CAUSE ALONE APPEAR IN THE WORLD". (7a21, 30:1) Already earlier<sup>23</sup> a somewhat similar [statement] suggested something like the leimotif<sup>24</sup> [of the preaching, namely, the One]. This [passage] represents [the Buddha's] further [attempt] to preach it. [The Buddha] has already stated that the three vehicles are expedient devices; now he explains that there is the One. The Buddha is for the One Ultimate. He has appeared [in the world] to manifest the One. If li consists in three, the Sage would appear for the sake of three. But there are no three in li but just the mysterious One alone.<sup>25</sup> Hence, it is said, "[the Buddhas] for one great cause alone appear in the world."

2.18.3 "THEY WISH TO CAUSE THE BEINGS TO OPEN [THEIR EYES]<sup>26</sup> TO THE BUDDHA'S KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT". The idea of the subtle speech and profound import becomes manifested herein. These four phrases [making up the paragraph] from beginning

to end are designed for expressing the doctrine of the One. Because all the sentient beings [400b10] are originally endowed with the Buddha's knowledge and insight, but they are not manifested on account of dirt obstacles, when the Buddha opens [the original nature] and removes [dirt obstacles], they will be capable of achieving [what they are endowed with].<sup>27</sup> One theory [by a commentator]<sup>28</sup> says that, from the first stage to the seventh, defilements (kleśa) are gradually removed, a process which is called "opening" (開); nothing gets out of the lustre of illumination, which is called "purity".

2.18.4 "THEY WISH TO DEMONSTRATE THE BUDDHA'S KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT TO THE BEINGS". It has been stated that [the beings] have an original endowment of it. Instigated by the present teaching they can realize it. If realization is achieved through the teaching, this is external "demonstration" (示). "Demonstration" is certain to bring about "understanding" (悟). By achieving "understanding" one is bound to "enter" (入) the path (tao). One theory holds that [a bodhisattva] in the eighth stage attains to the samādhi for contemplating on [the characteristic marks of] the Buddha. Eternity (nitya) and bliss <sup>29</sup> (ānanda) "demonstrate" the Buddha's wisdom.

2.18.5 "[CAUSE THE BEINGS] TO UNDERSTAND [THE BUDDHA'S]

KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT". One theory has it that a bodhisattva in the ninth stage gets good wisdom (sādhumati), and acquires a deep understanding of the Buddha's knowledge and insight.

2.18.6 "... ENTER INTO THE BUDDHA'S KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT". According to one theory, a bodhisattva in the tenth stage, having the traces of defilements and the perfuming impression (vāsanā) discharged and destroyed by means of the diamond (vajra)-samādhi, turns to enter into [the realm of] the Buddha's wisdom. When we discuss the background and compare the substances [of the above passage], such division and classification can be made. To sum it up, what a novice takes as a single enlightenment<sup>31</sup> consists practically of these four meanings.

2.18.7 "WHETHER TWO OR THREE". (7b3, 30:18) [The word] "two" means the second vehicle, and "three" the third vehicle. It is also natural that there is no first. The first [400c1] does not contradict what the "great" stands for. Therefore it is not nonexistent. Now that there is neither "two" nor "three", "one" is gone, too.

2.19 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, THE DHARMAS OF THE BUDDHAS [IN ALL TEN DIRECTIONS] ARE OF THIS SORT". The third segment. [The Buddha] draws out the Buddhas in the past, the present, and

the future in ten directions as witnesses. The Buddhas in the three periods all have preached and will preach the three vehicles first and manifest the One Ultimate later. In other words, although the periods are different and the men are varied, such path (tao) is profoundly identical.

2.20.1 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, THE BUDDHAS COME INTO AN EVIL WORLD<sup>31</sup> STAINED WITH FIVE DEFILEMENTS". (7b23, 31:16) The fourth segment. The gist of what this segment tells is as follows: The sage did not intend himself to set up the doctrine of the three, but only because the beings mired in dirt were found to have difficulty in acquiring the one single enlightenment,<sup>30</sup> [the Buddha] had no alternative but to come into the world to preach the three vehicles. How could he wish to do so [for his own sake]?

2.20.2 "THE DEFILEMENT OF THE KALPA (KALPAKAṢĀYA)". The beings in the earlier generations were of the natural disposition<sup>32</sup>, clean and void, and their bondages (lei) were minimal and thin. Compared with them, the contemporary generation can only be characterized as "defiled". "Kalpa" refers to time. Being in the evil state, the beings sometimes encounter armed soldiers and sometimes face the scarcity of grains, diseases or epidemics.

2.20.3 "THE DEFILEMENT OF THE AGONIES (KLEŚAKAṢĀYA). [The

beings] being entangled with various delusions, how can the Tao be incited to arise [in them]?

2.20.4 "THE DEFILEMENT OF THE BEINGS (SATTVAKAṢĀYA)."  
 [400c10] This refers to the evil (or sufferings?) arising from the full-orbed activities of the aggregates (skandhas), five in total.<sup>33</sup>

2.20.5 "THE DEFILEMENT OF VIEWS (DRṢṬIKAṢĀYA)". The five false views<sup>34</sup> basically are in opposition to the true and are in conflict with li. Hence, they are listed separately.

2.20.6 "THE DEFILEMENT OF THE LIFE (AYUSKAṢĀYA)". The false [views] and the life get intertwined, keeping [the beings] from encountering the Path (Tao). How could it not be defilement?

2.20.7 "[THE BUDDHAS ...] MAKE DISTINCTIONS IN THE ONE BUDDHA VEHICLE AND SPEAK OF THREE". As the Buddha thought that men in the defiled age had no lofty will, and because the li of the Buddhas was so profound and distant that they were unable to believe in it, the Buddha designed the doctrine of the three vehicles in order to make it accessible to men. Although it is said that he preached the three, what he preached always [in reality] was the One. Men are now personally in contact with the Buddha; isn't this the case of

adapting it to make it accessible to men? Traces are closer to men. External demonstration is easier to learn. Even if it is possible to make it easy to learn, there is the distance inherent in its self-soness (tzu-jan). Moreover, it has been said that [those of] the two vehicles had both exhausted the bonds of existence. [And yet] they did not have perfuming impressions (vāsanā) disposed of. By moving men in turn close to [the One], [the Buddha] makes [the beings find it] easier to write off [the three]. If it is possible for them to write off [the three] and seek the self-soness [of the One at the same time], they will head for the total obliteration [of the three]. This is what "make distinctions in the One Buddha Vehicle and speak of three" means.

2.21.1 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, IF A DISCIPLE OF MINE, THINKING HIMSELF AN ARHANT". The fifth segment on distinguishing men's attainment and loss [of arhatship]. Wishing [~~400d1~~] the Tao to prevail in the world, how can [the Buddha] afford not tell the distinction between attainment and loss, advising men to do away with [the cause of] loss and to follow [that of] attainment. If one calls oneself an arhant but does not know that the Buddha is [in the world] solely for converting [the potential] bodhisattvas (9c27, 44:11), one is not an arhant



[in the true sense of it]. That one is a man of error and loss. When a man is able to keep this sūtra, he can be said to have attained [the arhatship].

2.21.2 "EXCEPT WHEN, AFTER A BUDDHA'S PASSAGE INTO EXTINCTION, NO BUDDHA IS PRESENT". [For the interim period between the two Sages, when there is no Sage-Lord<sup>35</sup>, unbelief may prevail. If one lives when a Buddha is present, one is certain to have faith and no doubts. The contemporary men have been taken unwittingly to the place where the Buddha is present, there should be no [trace of] unbelief.

2.22.1 The gāthās that follow speak of [what is said in] the previous five divisions in the same order. The first four verses chant the first (theme) on "true and false". The next thirty-five verses chant "the one great cause" of the second [segment]. The following seventy-five verses chant the Buddhas of the [three]<sup>36</sup> periods as witnesses. The next two verses chant the previous fourth segment on the theme that [the Buddha] had no choice but to appear [in the world] to preach the three vehicles. The final five verses chant the fifth [theme] on the men of attainment and loss.

2.22.2 "THAT, RECEIVING THE FRAIL FORM OF A FOETUS" (8b14, 35:29) Being inside the delusion of the three realms<sup>37</sup>, they are referred to as "frail". Only the Dharma-body (-kāya)

[400d10] is great.

2.22.3 "BY THE RESORT TO YET OTHER DEVICES, HELP TO CLARIFY THE PRIME MEANING" (8c10, 37:34) Li is originally of the unspeakable [nature]<sup>38</sup>. He has borrowed the words to speak about it. They are called "[expedient] devices" (upāya). Again, the two vehicles are employed as the [teaching] aids for transforming them. They are called "other [expedient] devices". The One Vehicle is so deep that it has to rely on them to be manifested. According to one theory, what was preached [by the Buddha] for forty-nine years belongs to expedient devices. The subject of the present preaching, the Dharma Blossom (or Lotus), belongs to "other [expedient] devices".

2.23.1 "IF THERE ARE VARIETIES OF LIVING BEINGS ... THERE WILL BE SOME WHO PROSTRATE THEMSELVES CEREMONIOUSLY". (8c11, 37:36) What is shown in this and following paragraphs is that the beings in the time of the past Buddhas planted the good seeds; one tiny part of<sup>39</sup> one kind of the good deed after another, they were all accumulated to perfect the Tao.<sup>40</sup>

2.23.2 "KNOW THAT THE DHARMAS ARE EVER WITHOUT A NATURE OF THEIR OWN". (9b8, 41:16) [This refers to] the doctrine of

the (supreme or highest) emptiness (śūnyatā),<sup>41</sup> suggesting that li is the non-dual ultimate.

2.23.3 "BY VIRTUE OF CONDITIONS IS THE BUDDHA-SEED REALIZED". The Buddha provides the conditions (pratyaya) for li to arise. Now that li is not dual, how can it afford to be threefold? "For this reason they preach the One Vehicle". (9b9, 41:19)

2.24 "THE ENDURANCE OF THE DHARMAS, THE SECURE POSITION OF THE DHARMAS, IN THE WORLD EVER ABIDING". (9b10, 41:20) This articulates what was said above, [namely, the passage] "know that the dharmas are ever without a nature of their own (svabhāva).". In this sense, therefore, they came to "know that [the dharmas] are ever without a nature of their own."

2.25 "THROUGHOUT THREE WEEKS". (9c5, 43:1) [401a1] The fact that for the first seven days [the Buddha] "beheld the Tree", means that he intended to express his desire to requite the favours [he had received]. That he "walked about" for the intermediate seven days means that as [the future Buddha], while walking around [in meditation], [he] perfected the Tao under the shady trees; these favors thereby must have been requited. For the final seven days, he meditated on how to ferry the multitudinous beings across [to the other shore]. The Brahmā king begged [the Buddha] to

turn the Dharma [-wheel] (9c9 & 12). Perceiving (or stimulated by) (kan) [what he wanted or his request] [the Buddha] gave him instructions.

### CHAPTER 3

#### PARABLE

[Śāriputra expresses his joy for his understanding without any more doubt and uncertainty left about the Buddha's new doctrine of the One Vehicle. The Buddha confers upon him the prophecy of his complete enlightenment in the future, when he will become a Buddha named Flower Glow. Śāriputra, however, for the sake of other disciples with doubts and perplexities yet to be dissipated, beseeches the Buddha to give more explanations about the teaching. In response to the request, the Buddha takes up a parable of a burning house. The owner of the house, a rich elder, in an attempt to save his children from the burning house, who are immersed in playing not knowing the calamity entailed by the fire, devises an expeditent. He promises them three kinds of carts drawn by goats, deer, and oxen. The children escape the fire and at their demands for the promised carts, the elder gives each of them one great carriage made of precious substances. As much as the elder can not be guilty of falsehood, the Buddha, by the same token, is justified for having preached the three vehicles to entice the beings, who will end up being saved by the Great Vehicle only.]

3.1 In faculties there is [the distinction between] keenness and dullness:<sup>1</sup> it follows that in enlightenment<sup>2</sup> there is [the differences between those who can be awakened] early and [those who can be awakened] late. [The Buddha] hitherto has made a presentation of the Dharma Blossom in a

straightforward way, and the disciples with keen faculties have obtained understanding of it [as shown] in the above. Those who are dark have not been awakened yet. Thus [the Buddha] will explain it by resort to a parable. Li is so profound and unfathomable that it is difficult to grasp it in one encounter<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, [the Buddha] by an ever-varying adaptation<sup>4</sup> resorts to the worldly affairs (shih) and images in order thereby to depict the recondite purport. The worldly affairs that are borrowed to be analogized with the li are referred to as "parable".

3.2.1 "ŚĀRIPUTRA DANCED FOR JOY". (10b26, 49:1) From this phrase to the beginning of [the parable of] "the burning house" (12b3) there are altogether three segments explaining the purport. The first [segment] explains that Śāriputra has conceived understanding within and issues forth without what he has comprehended. Since the doubts arisen earlier were serious, his anxiety and worry were very deep. Now, [400a10] the first [among the congregation] being enlightened to the One Vehicle, he expressed his pleasure saying that he had in his heart the thought of dancing for joy. Unable to get over his pleasure, he could not help saying so. It is shown here that, by resort to the traces [the Buddha] exigently<sup>5</sup> draws [the attention of] the congregation of the moment, making the

collective sentiment at the time deeply earnest.

3.2.2 "WHAT IS THE REASON? ... TO MISS THE INCALCULABLE KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT OF THE THUS COME ONE". [Śāriputra] has expressed his joy [for attaining] what he had wanted to understand formerly. His [long-held] intention to understand it helped him to realize what he heard, namely, "such a Dharma as this". Hearing that all the beings are bound to become the Buddhas, and seeing the bodhisattvas receive the prophecy of their enlightenment, he was sore grieved himself that he alone was not included in it. What he has heard today tallies with [what he heard] in the past. Thus once the [doctrine] was passed to him, he was immediately awakened. He regretted in the past having missed the Greater [Vehicle]<sup>6</sup>; now his enlightenment obviously made him delighted.

3.2.3 "I HAVE DWELT ALONE IN MOUNTAIN FORESTS AND AT THE FOOT OF TREES ... [OUR FAULT], NOT THAT OF THE WORLD HONOURED ONE". Then the reason why he, upon hearing it, was enlightened is because since the earlier days he had this thought every moment: "We will equally enter into the Dharmahood; how would the Thus Come One limit it just to the Lesser [Vehicle] (Hīnayāna)? Yet it is our own [fault] that we have taken merely the Lesser. Why did the Buddha do [it]

that way?<sup>7</sup> It is because [the Buddha] preached by means of gradual process, namely, the Lesser first and then the Greater later, certainly in that order [but not vice versa]. If I had waited for him to preach the Greater, I would have certainly obtained the Greater. Straight upon hearing [the Buddha] preach the Lesser, [I] immediately thought this to be the real [401b1] Lesser. Befriending [self-] interest and 'basing conclusions on it',<sup>8</sup> [I] have always been vexed at my own fault. Now hearing that they are one, and that we can enter identically into the Dharmahood without differentiation, [I] became awakened right away." The intention of [the Buddha] himself was not in the Lesser; the disciples were vexed at their own fault. Now [Śāriputra] being awakened in such a way, his joy must be boundless. "To wait" also means "[we] should have waited".

3.3.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE BUDDHA DECLARED TO ŚĀRIPUTRA: "I [NOW SPEAK] IN [THE MIDST OF THE GREAT MULTITUDE OF] GODS, MEN, ŚRAMAṆAS". (11b9, 53:6) The second segment. The gist of this part is: Since there has never been [what they thought] the path of the Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna) [as such], it turns out that [the Lesser] has merely been tending toward the Buddha [path]. The enlightenment Body-son (Śāriputra) had built up was so profoundly manifest that [the Buddha] granted him a prophecy of his enlightenment. The story of

the prophecy should not be held to be true in the real sense of it. [It was designed] merely for leading those who aspired to the prophecy.

3.3.2 "FORMERLY I, IN THE PRESENCE OF TWO MYRIADS OF MILLIONS OF BUDDHAS ... ONE WHICH THE BUDDHA KEEPS IN MIND". Formerly [Śāriputra wrongly assumed] with delight that he was enlightened, but [the Buddha], contradicting him, admonished him to drive himself to achieve it. The fact that the Lesser Vehicle had no great hope in the earlier times, but now [the Buddha] grants the group the prophecy, implies that there is no "lesser" in li. The motive [of the Buddha] for conducting the practices [of Śāriputra] in the remote past is to show that it is [his own] merits that invited such prophecies, but he did not mention it because he had his mind set on secretly directing the collective sentiment and thought of the congregation of the moment [toward the goal he set].

3.3.3 "BY REASON OF HIS FORMER VOW HE SHALL PREACH THE DHARMA OF THE THREE VEHICLES". (11b25, 54:2) [401b10] The teaching of the three vehicles was designed originally for the impure ages. Now that the lands have been purified, there is no need for the three. But why does [the Buddha] speak of the three? He wanted to show that the three are identical with the One; there are no separate "three" any



more. What he formerly understood as three is the One. Hence, "former vow". He did not really mean to preach the three kinds of transformative teaching as such.

3.3.4 "PRESENT A PROPHECY ... TO [THE BODHISATTVA] HARD-FULL (DHṚTIPARIPŪRṆA)". (11c6, 54:25) The [Buddha's] intention in presenting further a prophecy to Hard-Full is to prove to Body-son that obtaining a prophecy is not an empty [word].

3.4.1 "AT THAT TIME THE FOURFOLD MULTITUDE ... ENDLESSLY FOR JOY OF HEART". (12a7, 56:18) The third segment. [Here, the Buddha] led those with [excessive] self-esteem to realize that they were [in fact] all endowed with [the capacity for enlightenment]. Hence, "joy of heart".

3.4.2 "ŚĀRIPUTRA ADDRESSED THE BUDDHA, SAYING: 'I NOW HAVE NO MORE DOUBTS OR SECOND THOUGHTS". Insofar as one's virtue is great, one's concern [for others] is deep; when the Tao [one has achieved] is great, it extends to kingliness as well.<sup>9</sup> Body-son, having already been inducted to the path of enlightenment, wants others with the same intention [to receive a prophecy] to share his profound understanding. Therefore, on behalf of twelve thousand people, he raises the question and addresses the Buddha. These voice-hearers had

no doubts before, but they harbour some now. They should be opened up and put forward first, and then explanations [responding to the doubts] can follow.

3.4.3 "HAVING HEARD WHAT THEY HAD NEVER HEARD BEFORE". Formerly they lived on [401c1] "three", now they have to take "One". Both are what the [same] Sage has said, and so both are contradictory to each other. Consequently they came to cast doubts on what they heard.

3.4.4 "FOR THEY WHO HAVE INTELLIGENCE GAIN UNDERSTANDING THROUGH PARABLES". (12b12, 58:15) What the Buddha has said up to now is aimed at cutting off the doubts they harboured. Now he mentions those who have intelligence in order to get them to the [main] idea. Intelligence has the nature of countering stupidity. It was said earlier that men of intelligence, when hearing parables, can have their minds awakened.<sup>10</sup> By this statement, what was meant before is further extended to serve to encourage them to move toward a speedy enlightenment.

3.5 "IMAGINE THAT A COUNTRY, OR A CITY-STATE". (12b13, 58:17) From this phrase on, [the Buddha's] doctrine is explained analogically. There are seven segments in total to illustrate the li. The first segment shows the frequent occurrence of calamities in the house and various misfortunes

taking turns. In the second is shown that only those who are awakened to these calamities and misfortunes are the Buddhas. The third tells that the Buddha, having been awakened himself, has great compassion (mahākaruṇā) arising in him [and that he means] to "rescue"<sup>11</sup> all the children. In the fourth, as he will later offer the pleasure of the three vehicles, he talks thus about the dreadful happening in the house first. Fifth, [the Buddha] offers them the pleasure of the three vehicles. Sixth, [the Buddha] provides them with the utmost pleasure of the One Vehicle which is true and real. Seventh, it turns out that the three carts [the Buddha] has promised earlier are not to be given at the end, [the promise] being empty and false.

3.6.1 [401c10] "A country" refers to a place where the cities are located. The multitudinous beings are situated in the cities of the three realms (triloka); we call them "country". The first segment [begins here]. "A city-state" refers to the supreme ultimate.<sup>12</sup> The ultimate is analogized as "city-state". [The Buddha's] limited approach to men is compared to "a municipality", which is synonymous with a city. The Buddha in accordance with the doctrine [exigently] follows [varying] existential situations (shih); thus all kinds of names have been created.

3.6.2 "HAS A GREAT ELDER".<sup>13</sup> The Buddha is certainly in charge of them, and rules over them, being the one whom they pay respect to: he is "the elder".

3.6.3 "ADVANCED IN YEARS". [The Buddha] reincarnated himself and advanced to the later stage of his life in order to set forth the doctrine of the three vehicles.

3.6.4 "OF INCALCULABLE WEALTH". In preaching the Dharma, [the Buddha] uses wisdom-life as its source: it is "wealth". Li is inexhaustible and limitless: it is "incalculable".

3.6.5 "OWNING MANY FIELDS AND HOUSES, AS WELL AS SERVANTS". Transformative teaching removes their defilements and produces shoots<sup>14</sup> of the Tao in them;<sup>15</sup> it is "fields". They come to reside in it [or Tao]: it is "house" [or residence]. They comply with the teaching in their conduct: they are "servants". There is no place where it does not exist: it is "many".

3.6.6 "HIS HOUSE IS BROAD AND GREAT". They take delusions as their original source and are settled in them: this is what "house" represents. Delusions everywhere: they are "broad and great".

3.6.7 "IT HAS ONE DOORWAY". The Buddha teaches the passage

to enlightenment: he is the "doorway". Only these people have passed through it, they are "one hundred or two hundred". [401d1] Gods (devas) account for "one hundred", men "two hundred". The three evil paths (gati) of transmigration account for "five hundred". They rely on the [three] realms: they are "dwelling in it".

3.6.8 "THE HELLS [AND CHAMBERS] ARE ROTTING".<sup>16</sup> The realm of sensuous desire (kāmadhātu) is "hall". The two upper realms are "chambers". Gradual decay is "rotting".

3.6.9 "THE WALLS CRUMBLING". Various delusions are prevalent in the four directions: they are referred to as "walls". To do what is not good and what is to be overcome is referred to as "crumbling".

3.6.10 "THE PILLARS DECAYED AT THEIR BASE". False views dwell in it: they are "pillars". Going astray from li, one is not stable: one has "decayed".

3.6.11 "THE BEAMS AND RIDGEPOLES PRECARIOUSLY TIPPED". [The beings] were brought to realize they were in the state of ignorance and [self-] love; they [i.e., the latter] are "beams and ridgepoles". Li can easily take them off: they are "precariously tipped".

3.6.12 "THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE AND ALL AT THE SAME TIME, QUITE

SUDDENLY A FIRE BREAKS OUT, BURNING DOWN ALL THE APARTMENTS". Various sufferings are compared to fire-burning. There is no place where there is no suffering: they are "throughout the house". They have come of [the path of] aberration<sup>17</sup>; thus "quite suddenly". The thing proper (or cause, shih) has arrived: it "breaks out". It burns "the apartments" of the five aggregates (skandhas)<sup>18</sup>

3.6.13 "[THE ELDER'S] SONS, TEN, OR TWENTY, OR THIRTY OF THEM". Those who have already been converted are "sons". There is the differentiation of the three vehicles: it is "three" [of thirty or three-tens]. There are so many [of those who have been transformed]: thus "ten" [of three-tens].

3.7.1 [401d10] "THE ELDER, SEEING THAT GREAT FIRE BREAKING OUT FROM FOUR DIRECTIONS, IS ALARMED AND TERRIFIED". (12b19, 58:27) The second segment. The Buddha was awakened to such sufferings [of the other beings]. [The premise] that [the living beings] are originally transformed does not correspond with the fact that sufferings exist: he is "alarmed". Perceiving suffering makes his mind confused and he fears that the wisdom-life may be burned out in the fire; hence, "terrified".

3.7.2 "HE THEN HAS THIS THOUGHT: 'THOUGH I WAS ABLE TO GET OUT SAFELY THROUGH THIS BURNING DOORWAY'". The Buddha has his manifested form present in the house, also showing that he is in the state of suffering. The moment one enters nirvāṇa, the wisdom life<sup>19</sup> is [mobilized] to the end for producing the power of [the nirvāṇa] with remnants (upadhiseṣa-nirvāṇa) which enables one to reach [the nirvāṇa] without remnants. That is what [the word] "able" implies. To follow before everything else the Buddha's teaching is also what [the phrase] "able to get out [safely] through this burning doorway" means.

3.7.3 "YET MY SONS [...] ATTACHED AS THEY ARE TO THEIR GAMES". [The beings'] minds roam in the five desires;<sup>20</sup> those are "games". Never discarding them at any moment, they are "attached" [to desires].

3.7.4 "UNAWARE, IGNORANT, UNPERTURBED, UNAFRAID". They don't think that [the desires] harm the [wisdom] life: they are "unaware and ignorant". Being "ignorant and unaware", how can they be caused to be perturbed and afraid?

3.7.5 "THE FIRE IS COMING TO PRESS IN UPON THEM ... NOR HAVE THEY ANY WISH TO LEAVE". Injury pressing in upon the wisdom-life is not taken as a calamity. Without being informed of what has happened, how can they find it necessary

to have any wish to leave?

3.8.1 [402a1] "THIS GREAT MAN HAS THE FOLLOWING THOUGHT: 'I AM A MAN OF GREAT PHYSICAL STRENGTH, WITH [POWERFUL] BODY AND ARMS'".<sup>24</sup> The third segment. The theme substantiated here is that the Buddha, in combination with [his own awakening, wishes to] save [other beings].<sup>22</sup> Having been awakened himself to [the truth of] suffering, he intends to cause other beings to become [awakened] like him.<sup>23</sup> Thus with great compassion (mahākaruṇā) arising in him, he has come to their aid. Originally two kinds of transformation did not exist. By going astray from the truth, they underwent suffering. [The Buddha] himself has to return to the use of the One Vehicle in order to teach them. Therefore he wants to set forth the doctrine of the One Vehicle. "Body" means the trace-body. The trace-body in essence (li) has the functional ability [of] holding and making contact [with the beings]: it is [like] "hands". Essential ability is "strength".

3.8.2 "IN THE FOLDS OF MY ROBE". A "robe" can be bent to wrap the sons. [The Buddha] appears [in the world] like supernatural power being able to help the beings out of the rugged mountains.



3.8.3 "ON TOP OF A TABLE". [A table with four legs symbolizes] the four virtues [which he manifests] equally to all.<sup>24</sup> [All the diverse] words and talks about li are universally similar and equal.<sup>25</sup>

3.9.1 "AGAIN HE THINKS: 'THIS HOUSE HAS ONLY ONE DOORWAY'". (12b25 58:36f) The fourth segment. He wants to offer the pleasure of the three carts later. He first<sup>26</sup> tells them about the frightening and dreadful happening in the house in order to terrify them. [The place] where various delusions are concealed<sup>27</sup> is "house".

3.9.2 "NARROW AND SMALL". The doorway to [the Buddha's] teaching is dark and deep. Those who have travelled to enlightenment are very few; few have advanced toward the doorway.

3.9.3 "[THEY] ARE IN LOVE WITH THEIR PLAYTHINGS". Though the Sage has induced them [402a10] to the teaching [of the One], yet the children are too stupid to realize it, and they fall back again "to love of the playthings" of the five desires, and "they may fall victim to the fire" of the three evil paths.<sup>28</sup> Even though [the Buddha] wants to teach the One, they are not capable of making use of it. Therefore, it has been abolished temporarily.

3.9.4 "ALL THEY DO IS TO RUN BACK AND FORTH TO PLAY, MERELY LOOKING AT THEIR FATHER." Travelling through the five ways of existence<sup>29</sup> is what is meant by [the word] "run". Revolving around and wandering in the six kinds of defilements<sup>30</sup> is referred to as "play". Looking merely at [the Buddha] in his [transformation body (nirmāṇa-kāya)] sixteen feet tall, not single foot advancing, that is what [the phrase] "merely looking at their father" means.

3.10.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE ELDER ... AFLAME WITH A GREAT FIRE". (12c4, 59:14) The fifth segment. The Buddha wants to provide them with the pleasure of the three vehicles. As he has told them about the frightening and dreadful happening in order to terrify them, they feel apprehensive, and when they hear the niceties of the three vehicles all of a sudden, their hearts must be filled with joy. This is not the real teaching; it is called "expedient device".

3.10.2 "THE FATHER KNOWS WHAT HIS SONS ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH, WHAT EACH OF THEM IS FOND OF".<sup>31</sup> What the living beings are fond of consists in replacing suffering with pleasure. Here he speaks of the pleasure of the three vehicles. These are what they are fond of; it looks as if they were [right ones], yet [in reality] they are not. What I mean by "replacing suffering with pleasure" is that in the absence of suffering

there is pleasure, and in the absence of [402b1] pleasure<sup>32</sup> there is suffering. [However], [the statement] that there is no suffering eternally in the three vehicles must not be spoken of in that sense.<sup>33</sup> The traces follow the state of their minds, enabling them to pull themselves out of the stations of suffering, which is a consummate case of expedient devices. Since there are no three vehicles, how can there be that pleasure? Yet it is suggested that there is the pleasure. [Why?] It is also an expedient device. It has been stated that the joy of the three vehicles consists in bringing suffering to the end (nirodha). Since sufferings have not been destroyed, and [the vehicles] have not been clearly shown, again [it proves that] they are expedient devices. The Buddha's teaching is [for the sake of] others; those in the Lesser Vehicle follow their masters. These two teachings are compared to ox and goat, which are the objects of men. Since the pratyekabuddhas can neither teach [others] nor can follow the masters, they are compared to the deer. The transmigration in the three worlds is implied in walking and trotting the long passage of suffering. The li is capable of the unconditioned<sup>34</sup>. One may have the joy by replacing walking [the long path of suffering] with it; it is symbolized by carts. No sooner they come out of the burning house following the doorway to the teaching, than they can

get it (li). Hence, it is stated "[they] are outside of the door".

3.10.3 "THEN THE SONS ... IN A MAD RACE, ... LEAVE THE BURNING HOUSE".<sup>35</sup> [The Buddha] tells them that because it is what they are fond of they will get it. Perceiving what they will get, they then practise the [required] deeds. That is what is meant by [the phrase] "in a mad race, ... leave". Following what [the Buddha] has said they run hard; they have to make every effort to obtain it first: they are "in a mad race to go ahead of others."<sup>36</sup> If [the Buddha] tells them about it while offering nothing [for reward] [402b10] and they do not comprehend it, then they would return to the "fire" [of passion]; how can they be expect to leave [saṃsāra]?

3.11.1 "AT THIS TIME, THE ELDER, SEEING THAT HIS CHILDREN CONTRIVED TO GET OUT SAFELY". (12c13, 59:30) The sixth segment. Until now [the Buddha] has led them, exigently offering them the joy of the three vehicles. Here he presents the joy of the great cart, the wondrous One. There are no more sufferings: they "have contrived to get out safely."

3.11.2 "AT A CROSSROAD". Being present in [the realm] of

the [ultimate] reality, there is no one that has not penetrated li: they are "[at] a crossroad". They have settled in it: they are "seated". There are no more 'bondage and instigators of the passions',<sup>37</sup> concealment (mrakṣa)<sup>38</sup> and obstructions (āvaraṇa)<sup>39</sup>: they are in open space.

3.11.3 "ALL ADDRESS THEIR FATHER, SAYING: 'FATHER, THINGS YOU PROMISED US A WHILE AGO". Even though they, having understood what they were told, know there are no three in reality, yet they have not come out of the doorway; this is tantamount to saying that they do not know yet. As they have come out, they begin to realize that there are no three, though they still do not know the One. Hence there is the demand for the doctrine the [Buddha] has promised [namely, three]. Yet as the Buddha himself has not previously promised them the One, they dare not demand the One. This is the reason why they demand the reward of the three. If li does not lie in three, it follows logically (tzu-jan) that [the Buddha] will give them the One. The meaning of their demand is as such, with the implication that their subtle, triggering-mechanism (chi) for grasping (k'ou)<sup>40</sup> the One has been so profoundly manifested<sup>41</sup> that [the Buddha], for the sake of them, devised such a way of speaking. "Carriage" [402c1] points to the consummate knowledge of the two

vehicles, that is, the knowledge of the non-origination.<sup>42</sup> How could there be no "carriage" in the three spheres? [The Buddha] merely gave no names to them, because he wants to lead the travellers<sup>43</sup> [to enlightenment] in their incognizance. [The means] that takes them to the ultimate destination is what "carriage" is about. What does the Greater Vehicle refer to? Because the domain the Buddha is in is so subtle, profound, remote, and hard to make connection with the coarse [world], [the Buddha] has brought himself close to men by means of the trace of [the Buddha] [in the form of transformation-body] sixteen feet tall. Hence, [the Greater Vehicle] points to the superficial level of knowledge of [the Buddha] sixteen feet tall; it is "carriage". The Bodhisattvas in the seventh stage are the ones who have suppressed the bondage of the three spheres. The doctrine is outside of "the house" [of the three realms], and that is what men are demanding.

3.11.4 "[THE ELDER] GIVES TO EACH CHILD ONE BIG CARRIAGE". On account of their demand, they have obtained the discourse of the li that the three are identical with the One. The li [in reality] does not consist in the three; now [the Buddha] gives them the One. The One has not been known as something to be given to them; it was not given in the beginning. What

they previously understood turns out to be nothing; there is no point again to resort to the metaphorical speeches. He has resorted to them in order to awaken those who have not reached it. The reason why he has resorted to them is because men tend to believe in self (ātman), not willing to receiving teaching. Because when they heard that [the One] appeared they did not comprehend it, [the Buddha] has to tell them about it. Now they have no alternative but to accept it, so that they may attain enlightenment.

3.11.5 The statement that the carriages are adorned with a "multitude of jewels" is designed to demonstrate the wondrous [402c10] li of the Greater Vehicle which encompasses every kind of goodness that exists. With regard to "high and wide", the li surpasses empirical calculation:<sup>44</sup> it is "high"; [the li] fills up and covers<sup>45</sup> the illimitable (wu-chi):<sup>46</sup> it is "wide". Concerning "a multitude of jewels", eighty-four thousand pāramitās in total are signified by "a multitude of jewels". "A multitude of jewels" [surrounded by] "posts and handrails" analogize dhāraṇis.<sup>47</sup> "Little bells suspended on four sides" symbolize four kinds of [unhindered] eloquent speech<sup>48</sup>. "Parasols and canopies" symbolize compassion (karuṇā). "Miscellaneous jewels" refer to the jewels of the seven riches.<sup>49</sup> "Jeweled cords" are comparable to the great vows (mahāpranidhāna); they are for

connecting [beings] with all the goodness and wondrous fruits. "Flowered tassels" refer to the flowers of the seven enlightenment [-factors].<sup>50</sup> "Heaps of carpets decorated with strips of cloth" refer to various kinds of meditation. "Vermillion-coloured cushions" symbolize various meritorious virtues, "cushions" [symbolizing] mutual support.

3.11.6 "A WHITE OX ... IT CAN GALLOP LIKE THE WIND". The dustless purity of the Buddha's six supernatural powers (abhijñā)<sup>51</sup> is what "a white ox" symbolizes. [The Buddha] is utterly pure inside and outside: that is the implication of "skin is pure white". Li is wondrous, with the result of being all-encompassing: it is what "his bodily form is lovely" implies. There is nothing that it can not break: [it has] "the great muscular strength". Moving forward toward the middle path is what "its tread is even" means. There is nothing that it can not destroy and reach: it "fleets like the wind." Applying and propagating teaching of the Greater [Vehicle] and entrance into [the cycle of] the five ways of existence (gatis) is the intended meaning of travelling of the "yoke". The phrase that [this ox] has many attendants illustrates that those who attend to [the Buddha] who teaches the practitioners are gathered [402d1] [so many in number] like the trees in the woods. [The paragraph



including] "What is the reason?" explains the reason why he intends to give [the doctrine] equally to them.

3.12.1 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, WHAT DO YOU THINK? ... IS HE GUILTY OF FALSEHOOD OR NOT?" (13a2, 60:22) The seventh segment. He promised earlier to give them three carriages; now he gives them one [big carriage]. What has turned out is contradictory to the earlier promise, looking like a false [promise]. Thus, conversely, [the Buddha] asks Body-son (Śāriputra) indicating that it is not false.

3.12.2 "BUT ENABLED HIS CHILDREN ... PRESERVING THEIR BODILY LIVES". The reason why it is not false is explained here. [Even] if [the Buddha] from the beginning really wanted to give them the three vehicles, but now he has not given them, he would not [be guilty of] falsehood, either. "For what reason is that so?" [The Buddha] "has enabled them to preserve wholly" the wisdom-"life". Such munificence [shown by the Buddha] is very great, sufficient to make up for and neutralize what would otherwise be false. So, how can there be any falsehood?

3.12.3 "HAD THIS GREAT MAN GIVEN THEM NOT ONE TINY CARRIAGE, HE WOULD STILL BE NO LIAR". And how much the more would it be true when [the elder] did not think of giving one big carriage in the beginning! The fact that now he has not

given it is not contradictory to the earlier promise; how can it be false! How much the more would it be true when he gives them [each] a great carriage! Thus what they have gained is great.

3.13.1 "THE THUS COME ONE IS ALSO LIKE THIS". (13all, 61:4)  
 [The rest of the chapter up to the gāthās] following this sentence can likewise be divided into seven segments and it is conjoined by the above parable. The first four paragraphs deal directly [402d10] with the internal meaning, so that they are conjoined by the above parable. The latter three paragraphs first speak of the parable externally, later to be conjoined by the internal sense. Why? The latter three first discuss the three carriages; next, of the giving of a great carriage; and finally, the fact that it is not false. [The Buddha] set up the discourse for the purpose of, of course, putting forth the One Vehicle. The intent for the One Vehicle is manifested in the latter three [paragraphs]. That is the reason why I have said that [the latter three] first speak of [the external], then to conjoin with [the internal sense]. The first four paragraphs are designed to complete the latter three, and, therefore, they are directly connected with the above parable.

3.13.2 "THE FATHER OF THE WORLDS". As he has become the Honored One of beings, his wondrous virtues are introduced first. [The paragraph] from this phrase to "anuttara-samyaksambodhi", joins with the first [paragraph] of the parable regarding the conditions of the house.

3.13.3 "HE SEES THAT THE BEINGS ... BY BIRTH, OLD AGE ... THOUGH THEY ENCOUNTER GREAT WOES, THEY ARE NOT CONCERNED". This paragraph is connected with the second parable above, [which intimates] the Thus Come One's enlightenment to suffering.

3.13.4 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, HAVING SEEN THIS, THE BUDDHA THEN THINKS: 'I AM THE FATHER OF THE BEINGS ... WISDOM, THUS CAUSING THEM TO FROLIC". This joins with the third [paragraph] of the above parable [with the implication] that the Tathāgata harbors the intention of saving the beings out of great compassion (mahākaruṇā).<sup>52</sup>

3.13.5 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, THE TATHĀGATA ALSO HAS THIS THOUGHT: [403a1] "IF I MERELY BY RESORT TO MY SPIRITUAL POWER ... THE BUDDHA'S WISDOM?" This joins with the fourth [paragraph] of the above parable that while he plans to offer the pleasure of the three carriages he describes the fearful happening first.

3.13.6 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, JUST AS THAT ELDER, [THOUGH] PHYSICALLY STRONG". This joins with the fifth [paragraph] above parabolizing [the] offering [of] the pleasure of the three carriages. Listed there under are the three carriages.

3.13.7 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, JUST AS THAT ELDER, SEEING HIS SONS COMING SAFELY OUT OF THE BURNING HOUSE". This joins with the sixth [paragraph] of the above parable regarding the giving of the great carriage.

3.13.8 "ŚĀRIPUTRA, JUST AS THAT ELDER, FIRST HAVING ENTICED HIS CHILDREN WITH THREE CARRIAGES". This joins with the seventh [paragraph] of the above parable regarding non-falsehood.

3.14.1 "... PROCLAIMED GĀTHĀS, SAYING". (13c18, 64:17) From this onward is the chant in a double set of the above seven similes. The first thirty-seven gāthās chant the first paragraph of the parable regarding the calamities in the house. Omitted and not chanted in the gāthās is the second [paragraph] regarding "the doorway", [symbolizing] the Buddha's enlightenment to various sufferings, because the meaning is easy to perceive.

3.14.2 "BELONGED TO ONE MAN". (14a19, 67:4) The subtle triggering-mechanism [of the beings] in the previous

transformative teaching has actively stimulated the Sage, who then condescends and responds to them.<sup>53</sup> [The process of] condescending and responding is represented in this [phrase], which means thus that [403a10] "the decayed house belonged to" the Buddha.

3.14.3 "THE MAN HAD GONE A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE HOUSE ... SUDDENLY A FIRE BROKE OUT". The purpose of the statement that "[the man] had gone a short distance" is to show, by pointing out that it was after he was gone that the fire broke out, that the breakout [of the calamity or suffering] comes from the multitudinous beings themselves and is not the Buddha's making. The fact that the Sage's state of being stimulated (kan) [in the previous encounter] was gone shortly is implied in the statement that "[the man] had gone a short distance". The effect of the transformative teaching in the past was that the superficial and nescient beings chose themselves to go astray from the transformative teaching.<sup>54</sup> By going astray from li, they were led into the making of aberrations and into having various sufferings; that is what "suddenly a fire broke out" means.

3.14.4 "AT THAT TIME THE HOUSEHOLDER, STANDING OUTSIDE DOOR". The next three verses are the chant of the third paragraph concerning the saving of the beings by the Buddha

out of great compassion. The Thus Come One has transcended the three spheres: he is "standing outside the door".

3.14.5 "HEARD SOMEONE SAY, 'YOUR SONS, A WHILE AGO IN PLAY, ENTERED THIS HOUSE". [They] were born out of the transformative teaching they had received previously: they are "sons". Li for transformative teaching is outside of the three spheres; later they themselves chose to deviate from the transformative teaching to get immersed again in the five desires: they were "in play". Because of them [namely, the desires], they were reincarnated: they "entered this house". "The householder" having come, the previous conditions also have been activated. The subtle triggering-mechanism has temporarily become "human speeches"; ("someone say") in order to actively stimulate the Sage. The Sage, in the position to respond [to the beings] and thoroughly propagate<sup>55</sup> [the transformative teaching], was obliged to listen to them.

3.14.6 "HE UTTERED A WARNING TO HIS CHILDREN". The next five verses chant what is in [403b1] the fourth paragraph above, speaking of the fearful happening in the house.

3.14.7 "AT THAT TIME, THE ELDER HAD THIS THOUGHT". The next seven and half verses chant the fifth paragraph above concerning the offering of the pleasure of the three carriages.

3.14.8 "THE ELDER, KNOWING HIS CHILDREN ABLE TO GET OUT OF THE BURNING HOUSE". The next seventeen verses chant the equal provision of the great carriages in the sixth paragraph above. The seventh paragraph concerning non-falsehood is not chanted.

3.14.9 "HAD SEVERAL CARRIAGES MADE". Li of the Greater Vehicle had not been "made". The sons did not know about it earlier; [the Buddha] made them begin knowing it: therefore it was "made".

3.15.1 "I TELL YOU, ŚĀRIPUTRA: I, TOO, AM LIKE THIS". "(14c19, 72:2) The next four verses join with the first [part of] the above simile regarding the conditions of the house.

3.15.2 "THE THUS COME ONE, HAVING ALREADY LEFT THE BURNING HOUSE OF THE THREE SPHERES". This one verse joins with the second [part of] the parable.

3.15.3 "NOW THESE THREE SPHERES ARE ALL MY POSSESSION". These two verses join with the third [part of] the parable.

3.15.4 "EVEN THOUGH I TEACH AND COMMAND". The next four verses join with the fifth [part of] the parable. The reason why they do not join with the fourth parable is because

telling them of the fearful [happening] is identical with offering the pleasure. Hence, there is no separate adjoining.

3.15.5 "YOU, ŚĀRIPUTRA: FOR THE BEINGS' SAKE, I". This one verse joins with [403b10] the sixth [part of] the parable. The seventh concerning non-falsehood proves and completes the sixth concerning the meaning of the One Vehicle. Hence, there is no separate adjoining.

3.16.1 "ALL OF YOU, IF YOU CAN BELIEVE AND ACCEPT THESE WORD". When a statement is lofty [in nature], as a rule, those who follow it are few.<sup>56</sup> Li is so deep that certainly very few believe in it. It has been said earlier of the path (tao) of the One Vehicle that its purport is very profound, far-reaching, dark and signless.<sup>57</sup> It will be pretty difficult for those with a shallow consciousness to have faith in it. The next [verses] illustrate that [the Buddha] cannot commit falsehood by telling, for the sake of men, encouraging words and offering rewards.<sup>58</sup> Thus how could those who are inclined to the [right] direction not drive themselves to believe and understand it?

3.16.2 "THE SEAL OF DHARMA". (15b7 The wondrous li of the One Vehicle should have no obstruction.<sup>59</sup> Like the seals of



the kings there is no place that it does not pass through.

3.16.3 "THE SIN AND REWARD OF THIS MAN". (15b25) [The Buddha] wishes to transmit [the Dharma] to the later generations, thereby making the Tao prevail in the world. Thus he has established the rule of gain and loss in order to admonish people. As for the Scripture of Dharma Blossom, there is no meaning (i) that it does not embrace; there is no goodness that it does not hold in complete possession. If one follows it, there will be no fortune that one shall not collect.<sup>60</sup> If one goes against it, there will be no evil that one shall not encounter. Hence, [punishment and] rewards of sin and blessing are listed in a wide range for the purpose of disclosing the idea.

#### [403c1] CHAPTER 4. BELIEF AND UNDERSTANDING

(Having witnessed the Buddha predicting the complete enlightenment of Śāriputra and voice-hearers, several other principal disciples including Mahākāśyapa tell a parable of a prodigal son to the Buddha as a means of giving voice to their amazement at their understanding of the Buddha's idea. The parable is as follows:

A father and son parted company while the son was still a very young man. In the course of time the father became very rich, while the son sank into the depths of poverty and beggary. Once, during the course of his wanderings, he happened to come to the palatial home of his father. The father, at once recognizing him, had him brought into his presence. This only frightened the poor man, and the father let him go. Then he sent two men to ask the beggar whether he wished to do menial labor on

the rich man's estate. The beggar consented, and worked in this way for many years. One day the rich man told the beggar that in view of his many years of honest and conscientious service he would reward him with the charge of all his possessions. After several years more had passed, the rich man gathered his entire household and clan and told them that the beggar was his son, from whom he had been parted many years before, and that he was now reclaiming him and declaring him heir to all his possessions. When the beggar heard this, he was amazed, thinking that he had received something quite unexpected.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar manner, the disciples and the voice-hearers like the son are being led secretly by the Buddha as the father to the Buddhahood of the Greater Vehicle through the Buddha's ingenious scheme.)

4.1.1 Although the four eminent voice-hearers<sup>2</sup> have attained to enlightenment through the parable, it seems that the traces have not yet been thoroughly examined because they have become enlightened just lately. Therefore they tell themselves [the parable of] "the poor son" in order to [examine and] display their understanding. Understanding must be a thoroughly examined one which is then called "faith and understanding". Again, thereby what is also illustrated is the process (tao) of the three-turned One.

4.1.2 "THE UNPRECEDENTED DHARMA THEY HAD HEARD FROM THE BUDDHA". (16b9, 84:2) As a departure from what was mentioned as three, now they have heard that they are [in reality none other than] the One, and then [have witnessed] [the Buddha's] granting Body-son the prophecy [of his future

enlightenment to] the unexcelled Tao. They heard these words directly being pronounced by the Buddha, which they never heard before. Thanks to this they realized it themselves. What they have attained is something beyond what they had expected; [naturally,] their pleasure is as much as double the usual one.

4.2.1 "THEN THEY ROSE FROM THEIR SEATS". The next three turns [of statements] describe why they are pleased. [In the paragraph] from [the clause] "[we], who were at head of the saṅgha . . ." to [the phrase] "made no effort to seek annuttarasamyaksambodhi (unsurpassed, complete enlightenment)", they told [themselves] that they "had already attained" realization, and felt that they did not hope for anything further. [That is] the first turn. .

4.2.2 "THE TIME IS NOW LONG SINCE [THE WORLD-HONORED ONE], OF OLD, BEGAN PREACING THE DHARMA". [This is] the second turn. In the past they heard the Buddha [403c10] preaching the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras. Hearing them preached, they became "tired and idle", thinking solely of "emptiness" (śūnyatā) and "signlessness" (animitta), and forgoing for good the will to transform the minds of the living beings by the purity of the Buddha-lands.

4.2.3 "FURTHERMORE, WE ARE NOW WELL ADVANCED IN YEARS". [This is] the third turn. They are already approaching the last stage of life, advanced in age. Being advanced in years, ["when the Buddha instructed bodhisattvas"] in the unexcelled path (anuttarasamyaksambodhi), [in their words], "this did not arouse in us the least thought of desire".

4.2.4 "NOW, HOWEVER, IN THE BUDDHA'S OWN PRESENCE WE HAVE HEARD A PROPHECY OF THE UNEXCELLED PATH CONFERRED ON VOICE-HEARERS, OUR HEARTS ARE VERY GLAD". The aforementioned three turns refer to the faults caused by self-esteem.<sup>5</sup> Now, as they suddenly hear the voice-hearers receive the prophecy, their hearts are filled with joy but with no self-esteem. Thus, "the immeasurable amount of precious treasures, unsought by us, of themselves" have reached [them]. The meaning of their joyfulness is shown here.

4.2.5 "WE NOW WISH TO SPEAK A PARABLE". The men of the Lesser Vehicle from the beginning had no great hope; they had hope only in the two vehicles.<sup>6</sup> Again for the sake of them a parable is devised. The part, divided into three paragraphs, illustrates what "the immeasurable amount of precious treasures, unsought by us, of themselves have come into our possession" means. The first [paragraph] shows that formerly when they were in the place where twenty thousand Buddhas

were, they were ignorant of the path of Śākyamuni. This formed the relationship of father and son. The second [paragraph] [403d1] explains that their spiritual triggering-force grows so profound and manifest that Śākyamuni deigns<sup>7</sup> and responds to them, preaching the doctrine of the three vehicles.<sup>8</sup> The third [paragraph] is intended to discourse the purport of the One ultimate of the Dharma Blossom. This allows, as a distant effect, the Buddha's idea to be manifested and helps them, as a close effect, to verify what they have heard.

4.3.1 "SUPPOSE THERE WAS A YOUNG MAN WHO WAS YOUNG IN YEARS". (16b25, 85:2) The first paragraph, which explains what father and son stand for. Formerly when they as bodhisattvas received the transformative teaching, the li of teaching was the One. The One came from the Buddha; it was the "son", and the Buddha is identical with "father". The process of teaching began like that: it was "young in years".

4.3.2 "FORSAKING HIS FATHER AND RUNNING OFF". The process of transformative teaching began so early, with the fruit yet to bear. He returned in depth to the worldly delusion,<sup>9</sup> and the delusion rode [over] the right path.<sup>10</sup> All [the achievement of] transformative teaching is also gone. That

is the implication of "forsaking his father and running off".

4.3.3 "DWELT LONG IN ANOTHER COUNTRY". Self-soness (tzu-jan) of the transformation of sphere is "native land". The aberrant perversion of the [cycle of] birth-and-death (samsāra) is "another country".<sup>11</sup> It was a long period of departure from the transformative teaching and he stayed there as a human [in samsāra]: he "dwelt" [there].

4.3.4 "WHETHER TEN, OR TWENTY, OR AS MUCH AS FIFTY YEARS". [The word] "five" [of fifty or five-tens] refers to the five forms of existence. [The word] "ten" means 'dwelling long'. It is not definite: hence, "or".

4.3.5 "NOT ONLY DID HE GROW OLD, BUT HE WAS ALSO REDUCED TO DESTITUTION". It is a long time since he abandoned the transformative teaching: he "grew old". He stumbled in [the cycle of] birth-and-death: [403d10], he was "reduced to destitution".

4.3.6 "RUNNING ABOUT IN ALL FOUR DIRECTIONS IN QUEST OF FOOD AND CLOTHING". He wandered through all the five forms of existence; no place was left unvisited: he "ran about in all four directions". Growing old, he sought after the joy of the Greater [Vehicle] and that of [the] parables; being in the state of destitution, he sought after the joy of the

Lesser [Vehicle].

4.3.7 "IN THE COURSE OF WANDERING, HE HAPPENED TO HEAD GRADUALLY TOWARD HIS NATIVE LAND". One may not suddenly receive the retribution of delusion: it is "gradual".<sup>12</sup> He was advancing gradually toward a non-original place: he was [in the state of] "wandering". Responding to the force of the transformative teaching, they were back toward enlightenment; he "[happened to] to head gradually toward their native land". He was led by unseen conditions to come [back], but it was not what he intended<sup>13</sup>; hence, "happened".

4.4.1 "HIS FATHER, WHO HAD PRECEDED HIM, AND WHO HAD SOUGHT HIS SON WITHOUT FINDING HIM, HAD STOPPED MIDWAY IN A CERTAIN CITY." (16b28, 85:8) The second paragraph demonstrates that he was incarnated as the Buddha in order to preach the doctrine of the three vehicles. The Buddha, having transformed himself and accumulated [meritorious] deeds, has always wanted to seek his sons who might have fallen into [the cycle of] birth-and-death. The matter became adverse: that is, [the Buddha was left] "without finding" them. Yielded to the past conditions (pratyaya) [which were] to reach them [soon], now the sons were attached to the pleasure of birth and death, with the emotional inclination developed in the direction different from his originality. The

"father", in responding to them, condescended himself as a human being and became a Buddha.<sup>14</sup> The trace stopped short of reaching the real:<sup>15</sup> it "stopped midway". The li of the One Vehicle can [404a] ward off what is wrong; it is "city". [All the beings from] the ten directions have converged to the transformative teaching: [in that sense] they are "one".

4.4.2 "THE FATHER'S HOUSE WAS GREAT AND RICH, WITH TREASURE AND JEWELS IMMEASURABLE". Even though he is the Buddha in human form, the li encompasses all dharmas. This means that it is rich with the treasure of dharmas, which is inexhaustible.

4.4.3 "GOLD AND SILVER, VAIDURYA . . . WERE ALL FILLED TO OVERFLOWING". The seven sacred treasures<sup>16</sup> cannot be spied on [for stealing]: they are "[in] treasure houses". The li surpasses the words:<sup>17</sup> it is "filled to overflowing".

4.4.4 "HE HAD MANY ATTENDANTS, SERVANTS, ASSISTANTS, OFFICERS, AND VASSALS . . . OXEN AND SHEEP WITHOUT NUMBER". The heretics (tīrthikas) are "attendants": the devils (māras) are "servants". They are destined to return and follow the transformative teaching: it is what "attendants and servants" imply. The bodhisattvas are "assistants", helping spread the right transformative teaching. The voice-hearers



are "officers", warding off and restricting the false and wrong. The multitudinous beings in the three spheres are "vassals"; the Buddha is the king who controls them. "Elephants and horses", "oxen and sheep" refer to the meritorious virtues of three vehicles and 'five supernatural powers'.<sup>18</sup> As for "carriage", it means that li penetrates everywhere.<sup>19</sup>

4.4.5 "THE PROFITS THAT FLOWED IN AND OUT FILLED OTHER COUNTRIES". The transformative teaching is what "out" refers to. Out of transformative teaching they went: hence, "the profits that flowed". "The profits" belonged to the transformed, throughout the five forms of existence, as it were, "filled other countries".

4.4.6 "MERCHANTS AND ITINERANT TRADERS WERE [404a10] VERY NUMEROUS". The bodhisattvas received the Dharma to transform [the beings in] the ten directions: they are "merchants and traders".

4.5.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE POOR SON, HAVING VISITED VARIOUS SETTLEMENTS . . . THE CITY WHERE [HIS FATHER] WAS STAYING". (16c4, 85:17) The past conditions led ["him"] toward the city where "his father" was staying: li is [what is to be] "reached".<sup>20</sup>

4.5.2 "THE FATHER AND MOTHER WERE THINKING OF THEIR SON . . . MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS". The compassionate thought [arose in the Buddha], thinking they might go astray from li. Yet the "sons", after receiving the teaching, were lost and immersed in the five forms of existence: it is "fifty years".

4.5.3 "YET, WITHOUT EVER MENTIONING SUCH MATTERS TO OTHERS". This means that [the Buddha] has never mentioned to others that the two vehicles would achieve the Buddhahood. The Buddha's Great Benevolence<sup>21</sup> was originally aimed at to uproot the sufferings [of others], but as they enjoyed birth-and-death, the true transformative teaching then was turned backward. Here arose the necessity for the exigency of the three. The three [were presented] in accord with the subtle state of their minds, and thereafter he would be able to produce the One for them.

4.5.4 "THEY MERELY THOUGHT TO THEMSELVES, THEIR HEARTS HARBOURING REGRET AND RESENTMENT". [The Buddha] regretted that the earlier transformative teaching was not intensive, with the result that they returned to delusion and transmigration (saṃsāra). Entirely out of compassion he devised all-round, [provisionary] expressions.

4.5.5 "THINKING THEMSELVES: 'OLD AND DECREPIT . . . CON-

STANTLY RECALLING OUR [404b1] SON'". [The words] "old and decrepit" refer to [the Buddha's] last stage of incarnation. [The statement] "we have no son" means that [the Buddha] has not yet said that the two vehicles will attain to the Buddhahood. [The Buddha] worries that there is nobody to whom to bequeath the treasure of the unexcelled Dharma.

4.6.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE POOR SON, HIRING HIMSELF OUT AS A LABORER IN HIS WANDERINGS, BY CHANCE REACHED HIS FATHER'S HOUSE WHERE, STOPPING BY THE SIDE OF THE GATE". (16c11, 85:30) He practised good [deeds] in the past stations of life in order to obtain the worldly pleasures, by he "hired himself out as a laborer". But in reality what he received was not something good. Therefore he followed the past conditions: he "reached the father's house". The discourse of the Greater Vehicle is "the father's house". The place where he was made to appear is "gate". The original conditions were to make him enter [the gate], but his emotional factor led him not to do it. Therefore he hesitated at the side of it.

4.6.2 "HE SAW IN THE DISTANCE HIS FATHER SEATED ON A LION THRONE, HIS FEET RESTING ON A JEWELLED FOOTSTOOL". The past conditions enabled them to see the intent of what was said of the Greater Vehicle: they "saw in the distance [his]

father". The li as the Dharma-body (-kāya) [can] place itself [anywhere] fearlessly (or securely) [abhaya]<sup>22</sup>: [it is] "seated on a lion throne". He had his feet resting always in the unconditioned (wu-wei);<sup>23</sup> he had his "feet resting on a jeweled footstool".

4.6.3 "BRAHMANS . . . DEFERENTIALLY SURROUNDING HIM". All these gods (devas) hold in themselves pride and arrogance, but they all serve [the Buddha] as the master, things, because [404b10] the [his] li has subjugated them in such a way.

4.6.4 "HIS BODY ADORNED WITH PEARL NECKLACES". There is not any form [of him] that is not dharma;<sup>24</sup> hence, his bodies adorned with the dharma-treasures.

4.6.5 "ATTENDED ON HIS LEFT AND RIGHT BY VASSALS AND SERVANTS HOLDING WHITE FEATHER DUSTERS IN THEIR HANDS". With the "hands" of faith holding the teaching, they held the dusters of wisdom free from the depravities,<sup>25</sup> which are meant to "attend on their left and right" and brush off dust and stupidity.

4.6.6 "WITH ROWS OF PRECIOUS OBJECTS THAT WERE GIVEN AND RECEIVED UPON ENTERING AND LEAVING". [The Buddha] had the external mark of the Dharma laid bare, making sure that they

obtain it. They obtained it and so the doctrine became their property: it was "given and received".

4.6.7 "AS SOON AS THE POOR SON HAD SEEN HIS FATHER WITH GREAT POWER, STRAIGHTWAY, HARBORING GREAT FEAR, HE REGRETTED HAVING COME TO THAT PLACE". The li of the "father" is able to suppress the son's emotion: it is "with great Power". What he was afraid of, namely, the suppression of emotion is what "fear" symbolizes. The subtle triggering-mechanism for embracing the Greater [Vehicle] actively contacted ("struck") the Sage: he "had seen his father". But his feeling deluded<sup>26</sup> and blinded<sup>26</sup> his mind, being still unable to receive "the Greater":<sup>27</sup> he "regretted having come to that place".

4.6.8 "AND PRIVATELY THOUGHT: . . . NOT . . . THE PLACE FOR EARNING ANYTHING". The subtle triggering-mechanism for the "Greater" [Vehicle] was not yet manifest. [The Buddha] set forth the wide variety of [provisionary] expressions as such.

4.6.9 "THE BEST THING FOR ME TO DO IS TO GO TO A POOR VILLAGE". The three spheres are "poor villages". Practising the five precepts<sup>28</sup> and the ten good virtues,<sup>29</sup> and seeking [404c1] the pleasure of men and gods (devas) are "easy to obtain" (16c20).<sup>30</sup>

4.6.10 "IF I STAY LONG [IN THIS PLACE], I MAY BE COERCED [TO WORK]". By "staying long", he was certainly made to practise the path of the Greater. By being caused to practise the path of the Greater, he would certainly work for the sake of [other] beings. One who works for the sake of [other] beings does not [ascribe] the merit to one self ("me"). One who does not [ascribe] the merit to oneself ("me") is made to see ["the Greater"] and is "coerced": [that is] what "others [are coerced to] work", [the antithesis] of "I [may be coerced to] work", would mean. He quickly "ran off" to the point of the antithesis of the worldly pleasure, where the calamities quickly made their exit.

4.6.11 "SEEING HIS SON, HE AT HEART INSTANTLY RECOGNIZED HIM AND, GREATLY PLEASED AT HEART". The past conditions became re-activated in a subtle way: it is like [the father] "seeing his son". Although he again felt like turning to the opposite direction, he was bound to realize afterwards the Greater [Vehicle];<sup>31</sup> for this reason, [he was] "greatly pleased". The profoundly subtle triggering mechanism arrived in a subtle way, but he merely did not realize; thus, "quite suddenly, he came of his own accord".

4.6.12 "IMMEDIATELY HE DISPATCHED AN ATTENDANT". The

sixteen feet tall was not 'that by which the Buddha was':<sup>32</sup> he was, as it were, "an attendant". The "attendant" wanted to set forth the teaching of the Greater [Vehicle]: he, as it were, "dispatched" a messenger. "Going" to the Greater [Vehicle] was the first thing to do promptly: it was [something] "to follow".

4.6.13 "[THE MESSENGER] RUNNING QUICKLY, WENT AND OVERTOOK HIM". The wondrous Dharma of the Greater Vehicle is li which grasps them firmly. Li does not allow any hiatus: it is something which requires, as it were, "running".

4.6.14 "THE POOR SON WAS ALARMED, . . . WHY HAVE I BEEN SEIZED?". [The Buddha's] appearance was not what the son had originally anticipated: he was "alarmed". It greatly offended his feeling; he "cried out resentfully", [because] it was like "committing no offense" and yet [404c10] ending up being seized.

4.7.1 "THE MESSENGER, GRASPING HIM ALL THE MORE FIRMLY". (16c27, 86:26) The Greater Vehicle "grasped" him, turning his feeling meritorious; li was never to be discarded: it, as it were, "forced".

4.7.2 "AT THAT TIME, THE POOR SON THOUGHT TO HIMSELF; 'I AM GUILTLESS . . . AND HELPLESS WITH AGONY, HE FELL TO

EARTH". He felt extremely displeased. He had faults but was innocent, and he came to grasp the transformative teaching of the Greater [Vehicle]: His mind was very much disturbed: he was "helpless with agony, and fell to earth".

4.7.3 "SEEING THIS FROM AFAR, THE FATHER . . . DO NOT FORCE HIM TO COME WITH YOU!". [Now, the Buddha provisionally] suspended and did not entertain the idea of [presenting] the transformative teaching of the Greater [Vehicle]. They are the words [with] provisionary [value] (or metaphorical words), which he merely said for the messenger.

4.7.4 "THEN, SPRINKLING HIM WITH COOL WATER". If [the Buddha] praises the transformative teaching of the Greater [Vehicle], the son would be "helpless with agony, falling [to earth]". So he just suspended the transformative teaching of the Greater [Vehicle]. The son was then "brought to". [The phrase] "sprinkling him [with cool] water" is for expressing this meaning. The statement that "the messenger said to the son, 'I am now letting you go'", is also a provisionary (or metaphorical) statement.

4.8.1 "HE SECRETLY DISPATCHED TWO MEN, WHOSE APPEARANCE WAS MISERABLE AND WHO HAD NO DIGNITY OF BEARING". (17a8, 87:6) "Two men" symbolizes the Dharma of the two vehicles. [The



Buddha] made up [404d1] his mind to bestow [it upon] them: he "dispatched". He hid the real: thus the word "secretly". The li did not illuminate itself completely: its "appearance was miserable". Then their inner understanding was not manifest: he had "no dignity of bearing". Such men were not "the [Dharma-] king's messengers".

4.8.2 "'YOU MAY GO TO THAT PLACE . . .' WHERE YOU WILL BE JUST GIVEN DOUBLE WAGES".<sup>33</sup> To follow his sentiment, but not the original [plan], is what is implied by "say gently". He was made to work and practise, and be provided with pleasure: they were in a "work place". What he was given surpasses [what he could enjoy] in the world: he was "given just double wages".

4.8.3 "WE TWO SHALL ALSO WORK WITH YOU". Dharma consists in men's practice: it is [what they] "shall work with".

4.8.4 "THE POOR SON FIRST TOOK HIS PAY". He received what the messengers promised them: he "first took his pay". His sentiment did not presume on any doubt: he "swept the dung with them".

4.9.1 "THEN, ON ANOTHER DAY . . . SOILED WITH DIRT AND DUST". (17a14, 87:17) Spiritual penetration is deposited in the six feelings; thus, "through a window he [they] saw".

The body is not the outcome of meritorious virtues: it is "weak and emaciated". The bonds and the instigators of depravities (kleśa or anuśaya) [caused them to] receive it [i.e., the body]: it is "unclean with dirt and dust".

4.9.2 "STRAIGHTWAY HE REMOVED HIS NECKLACES . . . SMEARING DUST OVER HIS BODY". [The Buddha] hid [in himself] the Dharma-body in a mysterious guise: he "removed ornaments". It shows that [404d10] a bodhisattva becoming a Buddha is not merely interested in external pomps: it "puts on a dirty, tar-stained garment". Also he was reborn from the bonds and passion-instigators: he was "smearing dust over his body".

4.9.3 "TOOK IN HIS RIGHT HAND A DUNG-SHOVEL. NOW FRIGHTFUL IN APPEARANCE". He did not practise [the path] free from the depravities (anāsrava); That is what "took a dung-shovel" means. It is convenient and easy: it is "the right hand". It looked as if he had warded off the depravities: he was "frightful in appearance".

4.9.4 "HE ADDRESSED HIS WORKMEN: 'YOU MEN, WORK! YOU MAY NOT SLACKEN!'"'. When [the Buddha] turned the dharma-wheel (cakra) at the Deer Park, he preached to that effect.<sup>34</sup>

4.9.5 "THUS BY THIS EXPEDIENT MEANS HE CONTRIVED TO APPROACH HIS SON". The li of the Buddha was cut off from men,

[so that] [the Buddha], by condescending himself and demonstrating, "contrived" to establish the contact [with men].

4.9.6 "THEN HE ADDRESSED HIM, SAYING, . . . I WILL INCREASE YOUR WAGES". After entering into the path free from the depravities, he was destined not to return to birth-and-death: he "worked here always, and did not go anywhere else". The pleasure he achieved surpasses that of the seven expedient positions [of the Lesser Vehicle]:<sup>35</sup> hence, "increase your wages".

4.9.7 "WHATEVER YOU NEED . . . WHOSE NEEDS I SUPPLY". Nowhere are the meritorious virtues free from the depravities lacking or few: they are [like] "salt, vinegar, or that sort of thing". The spiritual penetration of the two vehicles is originally limited and weak: they are "other servants, aged and decrepit".

4.9.8 "YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN DECEITFUL, LAZY . . . AS LIKE [405a1] OTHER LABOURERS".<sup>36</sup> He felt at home in the Dharma of the Lesser Vehicle, which is meant in the statement "I have never seen you guilty of these evils, as are the other workmen". "The other workmen" refer to the seven expedient positions [of the Lesser Vehicle]. It follows that the seven expedient positions are with "these evils".

4.9.9 ". . . CALLED HIM HIS SON". Those who have obtained [the path] free from the depravities have been "called" as if they were Buddha's sons, but have not yet been spoken of as the real sons.

4.9.10 "THE POOR SON, THOUGH DELIGHTED BY THIS TREATMENT . . . [FOR TWENTY YEARS] HE WAS KEPT CONSTANTLY AT WORK CLEARING AWAY DUNG". Seeing the truth and meditating on it have taken him ten [years] each: so it is said, "twenty years".

4.9.11 ". . . CAME AND WENT AT HIS EASE". [The Buddha] had him hear about the Greater Vehicle, and so he came and went to this li at his ease without harboring any doubt.

4.9.12 "YET HE WAS LODGED IN THE SAME PLACE AS BEFORE". He heard the teaching of the Greater Vehicle preached and was led to know that it was what he had already had and yet he did not comprehend it: he was "lodged in the same place as before".

4.10.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE ELDER WAS TAKEN ILL, . . . TO LET NOTHING GET LOST". (17a29, 88:6) They already knew that [the Buddha] had various sūtras of the Greater Vehicle preached, such as when, [for instance], he ordered Subhūti to

preach the prajñā (-pāramitā-sūtras) so that all might be taught that it was their own property.

4.10.2 "AT THAT TIME, THE POOR SON, UPON [405a10] RECEIVING HIS INSTRUCTIONS . . . STILL UNABLE TO DISCARD [HIS LOWLY AND INFERIOR THOUGHTS]". Although he received what he was entrusted with, he did not yet realize that it was his own property. He felt, therefore, likewise, [lowly and inferior].

4.11.1 "THEN, WHEN SOME TIME HAD PASSED, THE FATHER KNEW THAT HIS SON HAD GRADUALLY BECOME MORE AT EASE". The third paragraph. His mind became open, and the incipient, subtle triggering-mechanism for embracing the Greater [Vehicle] was manifested. Following this [the father] gathered his kinsmen, announcing to them that he was his son: this was for preaching the Dharma Blossom Sūtra.

4.11.2 "IN SUCH-AND-SUCH A CITY". This refers to the place where formerly two trillion [future-] Buddhas received transformative teaching. The merits for the transformative teaching had not yet matured. And then he forsook "me" and ran off to hide themselves in the three spheres.

4.11.3 "SUFFERED". He drifted through the five forms of existence, being ready to taste "loneliness" and "hardship".

4.11.4 "[THESE TREASURE HOUSES] HAVE COME TO ME OF THEMSELVES". The above three paragraphs explain how the unsurpassed treasures reached him of themselves. Here this meaning is clearly shown.

4.12.1 "THE GREAT RICH ELDER IS THE THUS COME ONE". (17b18, 89:2) The next three turns are connected with the above three sections of the parables. This [sentence] conjoins the first section of the parable concerning the meaning of father and son.

4.12.2 "BY REASON OF THE THREE KINDS OF SUFFERING (DUḤKHA)". The Buddha spoke of the three states of sensation (vedanā)<sup>37</sup> as being the causes for the three kinds of suffering. When suffering becomes intensified, it is referred to as [405b1] "suffering as [ordinary] suffering (duḥkha-duḥkha)"; when [suffering] comes as the result of change, it is spoken of as "suffering produced by change (vipariṇāma-duḥkha)"; and when it is neither an unpleasant nor pleasant [sensation], and changing every moment as its life passes beyond [the present life], it is referred to as "suffering as conditioned states (saṃskāra-duḥkha)".<sup>38</sup> "By reason of the three kinds of suffering" is "by reason of the three kinds of sensation". Why? The sensation of suffering is bitter and cutting.

Going against one's sentiment gives rise to anger (dveṣa). Following the way one is used to gives rise to desire (rāga). [In a state] neither unpleasant nor pleasant, and in an utterly disturbed state arises stupidity [moha]. Because of these three states of sensation, there arise the three evil faculties. As the three evil faculties are affected, the passion-instigators become active. As the passion-instigators spread out and thrive, karma is being committed by body and mouth. When karma and the passion-instigators join forces, the future retributions are induced.<sup>39</sup> Hence, it is said: "by reason of the three kinds of suffering, [in the midst of birth-and-death] we suffer various annoyances". Since birth-and-death are the outcome of "annoyances", it means that the habits formed have not been overcome: hence, "erring and ignorant, we cling in desire to the lesser dharmas". [The rest of the paragraph] from this point on conjoins with the affair of their wandering from the transformative teaching.

4.12.3 "THIS DAY THE WORLD-HONORED ONE COMMANDS US TO TAKE THOUGHT AND TO CLEAR AWAY . . .". This is connected with the second [part of the] parable, intended for preaching the doctrine of the three vehicles. [The words] "one day's wages" disparage the self-satisfied mind of the Lesser Vehicle. The merits they had accumulated when they were blind

are equal to no more than those the bodhisattvas would accumulate in one day. [405b10] They are so little and are short of [reaching] the ultimate.

4.12.4 "NOW, AT LAST, WE KNOW. WITH REGARD TO BUDDHA-KNOWLEDGE THE WORLD-HONORED ONE IS UNSTINTING". This conjoins with the third [paragraph] on the Dharma Blossom.

4.13.1 Of the gāthās proclaimed, the first two verses chant the three turns in the beginning of the chapter. The next two verses chant the first [part of the] parable. The following thirty-two verses [starting] from [the verse] "Then, when weary with the search", chant the second [part of the] parable.

4.13.2 "Bookkeeping in ledgers", keeping count of the treasures, refers to the preaching of the Dharma of the three vehicles. Conferring the prophecy upon the bodhisattvas is referred to as "ledgers".

4.13.3 "AND YOUR BEDDING IS THICK AND WARM". (18a25, 93:27) This symbolizes the joy in nirvāṇa, which does not lack any degree of sufficiency.

4.13.4 "DWELLING IN A GRASS HUT". Making his way toward the outside of the gate of the Greater Vehicle, he was "dwelling



in the hut" of the Lesser Vehicle.

4.13.5 "THE FATHER, KNOWING THAT HIS SON'S THOUGHTS WERE AT LAST BROAD AND GREAT". (18b1, 94:8) The seven verses following this chant the third [part of the] parable.

4.13.6 "THE BUDDHA ALSO IN THIS WAY". The verses following this summarily chant the internal meaning. They are not distinctly complete in doing justice to the real [meaning], but temporarily, in this stage of [the] process, they are proper for it.

4.13.7 "[ALL DHARMAS] WITHOUT EXCEPTION ARE EMPTY AND QUI-ESCENT". (18b27, 96:15) This explains why "[they should have taken absolutely] no pleasure therein". (18b26) Roughly speaking, it means that the nature of all dharmas is empty, making it difficult to investigate thoroughly, which leads one to [405c1] attain the Buddhahood. Thus it is something they "should have taken absolutely no pleasure therein".

Miao-fa Lien-hua Ching Shu, Roll the First.

Miao-fa Lien-hua Ching Shu, Roll the SecondComposed by the Dharma-Master Chu<sup>1</sup> Tao-sheng

## CHAPTER 5. MEDICINAL HERBS

(The Buddha sanctions Kāśyapa's understanding of his doctrine, explained through the parable of the poor son, and extolls the Thus Come One's All-Knowledge which encompasses all dharmas and applies to all beings. Taking up the examples of cloud and rain which reach equally everywhere without distinction of grasses, trees, medicinal herbs, and so on, the Buddha stresses the nature of the Dharma preached by him as characterized by being of a single mark and a single flavor.)

5.1.1 As four great voice-hearers had achieved enlightenment by the first parable, subsequently they spoke of their faith and understanding, in order to express their enlightenment. Understanding had to be verified, [and it turned out that] they had comprehended in depth the Sage's idea of first three and later One. Since they comprehended 'the purport of what the Sage was driving at',<sup>2</sup> in this chapter the Buddha confirms the propriety of what they have said in order to perfect the meaning [of the doctrine]. Hence, he praised [them] saying, "well-done!", commending their rare achievement. [The Buddha] secretly guided them undetected, making them equal with Kāśyapa [in understanding].

5.1.2 The title "medicinal herbs" conveys the fact that in the past they had received and maintained the Sage's teaching, and as the Sage's [405c10] teaching soaked their spirit,

the disease of depravities (kleśa) was cured. Thus [the transmitter of the sūtra] resorted to [the word] "medicinal herbs" in titling the chapter.

5.2.1 [The part from the parable of] the burning house (Chapter 3) up to this [chapter] speaks of the Dharma Blossom through parables.

5.2.2 "TRULY IT IS AS HE HAS SAID". (19a18, 101:3) The Thus Come One's wisdom and meritorious virtues enabled him to preach the path of the three-first-and-the-One-later, and Kāśyapa himself has spoken of it by taking up a parable. What he has said shows that he has attained to the Sage's purport. Hence, in sanctioning it, [the Buddha says], "Truly it is as he has said."

5.2.3 "THE THUS COME ONE ALSO HAS INCALCULABLE . . . MERITORIOUS VIRTUES". What has been said [by Mahākāśyapa and other] is "true" and real because it has something to do with the region of the One. Now this passage deals with the boundlessness of the region of the One. The meaning of the boundlessness of the region of the One, unexhausted for many kalpas, broadly verifies [the theme] that the transformative teaching of the three is [identical with] that of the One; How, then, can there be any mistake?

5.2.4 "THE THUS COME ONE SEES AND KNOWS [THAT TO WHICH] ALL

DHARMAS [TEND] . . . ALL MANNER OF WISDOM [TO THE BEINGS]".<sup>3</sup>  
 What is explicated here is how [the Buddha] has reached the state of All-Knowledge: first, by investigating thoroughly [405d1] the profound intent of the dharmas, and second, by knowing where the living beings' thoughts tend to go. Since he knew that medicines help them regulate diseases, he took them, which led him to bring depravities and calamities (kleśa) to end without fail, finally attaining to the All-Knowledge (sarvajñā).

5.3.1 "SUPPOSE, IN THE THREE-THOUSAND-GREAT-THOUSANDFOLD WORLD".<sup>4</sup> (19a25, 101:15) Delusion arises when one deviates from li; delusion is varied in a myriad of ways. By turning One's back [to delusion] one becomes enlightened to li. Li must be non-dual; the Tao of the Thus Come One is one.<sup>5</sup> Beings go against [the One], calling it three. The three have originated in the beings' disposition; li has remained one always. It is like the case that, though the clouds and rains fall equally [on all the medicinal trees], the medicinal trees are varied in a myriad of ways [in receiving the rains]. It is the medicinal trees that are varied in a myriad of ways but by no means clouds and rains.<sup>6</sup> What he said of the difference and similarity parabolically was meant for manifesting how [the three] turn out to be unified. Yet Kāśyapa has comprehended the purport, achieving its ultimate "rarely" (19c7) experienced by any. [The word] "three

thousand" refers to the single domain of the Buddha's transformative teaching in its entirety.

5.3.2 "THE MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS, THE DALES AND VALES". This phrase illustrates that the benefit of the Dharma is extended everywhere, leaving no nook that it does not reach.

5.3.3 "THEIR DIFFERENT NAMES AND COLORS". The conditions (pratyaya) and physical forms are not identical.

5.3.4 "A THICK CLOUD SPREADS OUT, COVERING THE WHOLE THREE THOUSAND". "Cloud" symbolizes the Dharma-body; "rain" represents the preaching of the Dharma. The Dharma-body pervades everywhere fully and thickly and the Dharma-sound permeates all over impartially.

5.3.5 [405d10] "RAINING DOWN ON EVERY PART OF IT EQUALLY AT THE SAME TIME". [The word] "at the same time" means that there is no [sequence of time], first or later. "Raining down . . . equally" means that [rain] falls without any distinction between much and little. The Dharma-rains of the four virtues<sup>7</sup> with respect to li are also like that.

5.3.6 "EVERYTHING RAINED ON BY THE SAME CLOUD". The rain "by the same cloud" implies that there is no water of different taste. Although their genetic natures<sup>8</sup> are varied, all [beings of different] appellations are made to sustain

the life. The same "rain" of the previous conversion [causes] the shoots<sup>9</sup> of the Tao to issue forth: it is "the earth". The present preaching helps and supports them to attain understanding: it is "rain".

5.4.1 "THE THUS COME ONE IS ALSO LIKE THIS . . . AS THE GREAT CLOUD RISES". (19b7, 102:1) The Dharma-body fills up [the ultimate of the non-being];<sup>10</sup> the shade of compassion is like a cloud.

5.4.2 "WITH THE SOUND OF HIS GREAT VOICE". Li is broad and immeasurable: it is "great". There is no being that does not hear and know about it: it "pervades". It "pervades" and covers men and gods, so that they may have no heat of depravities (kleśa).

5.4.3 "IN THE MIDST OF A GREAT MULTITUDE HE PROCLAIMS THESE WORDS: . . . IN ORDER TO LISTEN TO THE DHARMA!". The li becomes luminous: he "proclaims". They should pay attention to it: thus he talks about it. The Tao spreads [all over] in the world. When the conditions are met, they are certain to hear it. That is, "all should come here in order to listen to the Dharma!"

5.4.4 "AT THAT TIME, NUMBERLESS . . . HEAR THE DHARMA". [406a1] Since the preaching of the li has invited all kinds of [exigent] teachings, all join together in coming [to the

preaching] "like that cloud". When its internal meaning is drawn, a connection can be made with the parable above.

5.4.5 "[THE MERIT THEY GAIN] SHALL BE UNKNOWN AND UNNOTICED EVEN BY THEMSELVES". (19b26, 103:3) The Dharma being of "a single mark", li has no different "flavor" (rasa). Even though the living beings are identically soaked in the marsh of the Tao, they do not realize how it is so.<sup>11</sup>

5.4.6 "WHAT THINGS [THEY] THINK BACK ON". What the living beings "think back on" is not the same: it may be morality (śīla), or it may be alms-giving (dāna). Hence, it is said, "what things they think back on". "[What things] they think ahead to" and "[what things] they cultivate" are also like this.

5.4.7 "HOW THEY THINK BACK". For the sake of attaining the minds of the three vehicles, one is mindful of alms-giving. For the sake of attaining the minds of men and gods, one is mindful of alms-giving. "[How they] think ahead" and "[how they] practise" are also like this.

5.4.8 "BY RESORT TO WHAT DHARMAS THEY THINK BACK". In hopes of<sup>12</sup> getting the fruits of the three vehicles, one is mindful of alms-giving. Expecting the retribution of men and gods, one is mindful of alms-giving.

5.4.9 "WHAT DHARMA THEY GAIN AND BY RESORT TO WHAT DHARMA THEY GAIN IT". This sums up the three turns of speech covered so far. "By resort to what" means 'by means of what good deed as cause'. "What dharma they gain" means 'what retribution as effect they receive'. Such cause and effect all tend to the Buddha, but the living beings do not realize it. Every one holds on to what they think is different [from one another]; only the Buddha is aware that they belong to the same [One].<sup>13</sup>

5.4.10 "THE CLOUD IS SPREAD OUT, AND HANGS DOWN". (19c18, 104:23) This analogizes that through the transformation-body (nirmāna-kāya) [the Buddha] gets in touch with beings, so that he may appear approachable step by step.

5.4.11 [406a10] "THESE ARE CALLED 'SMALL TREES'". (920b14, 109:6) By this [the Buddha] intends to explain that the bodhisattva path is the superior one, comparing it again to trees. "Trees" are meant for shade and covering. The Greater Vehicle has the connotation of "covering":<sup>14</sup> [in that sense] it is similar to trees. [Those who are in] the seventh stage (bhūmi) and [those who are] below are referred to as the "small trees" while [those who are in] the eighth or above are spoken of as the great trees.<sup>15</sup>



## CHAPTER 6. BESTOWAL OF PROPHECY

(The Buddha confers the prophecy of future Buddhahood upon the four great disciples, Mahākāśyapa, Subhūti, Mahākātyayāna, and Maudgalyāyana.)

6.1 As regards the topic, as the task is achieved, then the effect is completed; that is the calendrical order (li-shu)<sup>1</sup> of self-soness (tzu-jan)<sup>2</sup>.<sup>3</sup> That the four great voice-hearers already had the roots planted in the distant past is manifested in the present prophecy. What the Buddha has stated so far completes his preaching. What he has preached must be in compliance with li.<sup>4</sup> When li is complied with, the [natural] factors, as they get together, come to bear fruits. Therefore, the Buddha arranges them to receive the prophecy. This bestowal of prophecy [is like] the blossom of the Dharma. However, the coming into existence of the things and images [or phenomena] is what the bondages or fetters yield. The Sage being united with li, the fetters have been completely done away with.<sup>5</sup> The fetters having been destroyed, it must be illogical to admit the existence of "land". Whereas it can be said that there is no "land", it does not [necessarily] imply nonexistence of "land". [On the one hand,] there is neither body nor name, but [on the other hand] body and name exist more really than ever. Therefore it should be understood that [406b1] what the "lands", the titles, and the bestowal of prophecy mean is that [the Buddha] merely devised such things as a way of

responding to beings, in order to guide them to [feel] unsatisfied [with themselves].<sup>6</sup>

6.2.1 "AT THAT TIME, THE GREAT MAUDGALYĀYANA, . . . ALL GREATLY AGITATED". (20c28, 122:16) The way these men sought the prophecy [as it is described here] suggests that they entertained inwardly a wondrous understanding of li,<sup>7</sup> making them deserve to receive the prophecy, with the result that they came to the point of seeking it themselves. [The Buddha] secretly guided those unawakened, urging them [to drive themselves] towards awakening and understanding. Because their will for acquiring understanding was so intense, [their will] to obtain the prophecy was also the same.<sup>8</sup>

6.2.2 "TWENTY MINOR KALPAS". (21a27, 124:2) It is shown that there is [a distinction between] superior and inferior realms, and that there is [a difference] between long life and short life. Why is that? The Sage has certainly not arranged them to be so. [The difference in individuals of] the subtle triggering-mechanism should account for it. Hence, [the Buddha] shows the difference.

## CHAPTER 7. PARABLE OF THE CONJURED CITY

(The Buddha tells about a Buddha in a remote past named Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge. After enduring for many kalpas that Buddha attained anuttarasamyaksambodhi. Then his sixteen sons and their mothers that he had left, and later the Brahma god kings from all directions and lands, paid homage to him and

made offerings, begging to turn the Dharma-wheel. At their entreaties, that Thus Come One thrice turned the Dharma-wheel of twelve spokes, which encompasses the four noble truths and the twelve chains of causation. The Lotus Scripture was also preached by that Buddha later. The sixteen śrāmaneras-turned-sons, having become Buddhas, are preaching the Dharma in the lands of all directions. The sixteenth of them is identified by the Buddha as himself. The Buddha then explains why there is the One Vehicle only, not two, namely, the vehicles of the śrāvakas and the pratyeka-buddhas, which are expedient devices, by taking up an example of the conjured city:

A guide was leading a group of travelers to a spot where a treasure lay buried. On the way the travelers wearied, and some spoke of turning back. The guide accordingly conjured up an apparent city on the way, and successfully urged his companions to rest and refresh themselves there. When they had done so, they went on and reached the spot where the treasure was concealed. Then the guide told them that the city they had seen a while back had been an illusory city, and not a real one, which he had conjured up for the purpose of conquering their discouragement.1)

7.1.1 Underlying the drawing out of [a Buddha named] Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge (Mahābhijñā-jñānābhibhū) is the threefold meaning. First, it means that the fact that [the Buddha named] Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge also preached the three and the One in that order, lends a testimonial support to, and completes, the present preaching. Second, the five hundred disciples and the great multitude were previously in the place of [the Buddha named] Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge, and were converted by Śākyamuni. The story of what happened to Śākyamuni [in the past] is certain to lead beings to believe that the [achievement made] in the earlier times help one to accomplish [406b10] awakening now. Third, it means

that the boundary and limit of [the realm of] life-and-death [they are to transcend] is so remote while the Great Path (Tao) is so dark and distant, that [the Buddha] exigently devised the two vehicles, which are symbolized in the parable of the conjured city.

7.1.2 "SINCE THAT BUDDHA PASSED INTO EXTINCTION IN A REMOTE AGE, THE TIME HAS BEEN GREAT AND LONG INDEED". (22a23, 130:9) [What the Buddha] said here, that [that] Buddha passed into extinction a long time ago, is intended for expressing<sup>2</sup> that Śākyamuni reflects the remote past as if he thought of today, in order to prove that li which he is now preaching is deep and proper.<sup>3</sup>

7.1.3 "JUST AS HE WAS ABOUT TO GAIN [ANUTTARASAMYAKSAM] BODHI, STILL THE BUDDHA-DHARMAS DID NOT APPEAR BEFORE HIM". (22b20, 132:3) By stating that the Buddha-dharma did not yet appear before him for ten minor kalpas, [the Buddha] means to show that the ultimate li<sup>4</sup> is dark and remote, and difficult to size up at once. Also expressed herein is that the will of [the Buddha] Great Penetration was very strong, and that his decisive mind could not be blocked, thus encouraging beings to cherish a longing for [the complete enlightenment].

7.1.4 "THE BRAHMĀ [GOD] KINGS RAINED DOWN [A MULTITUDE OF DIVINE] FLOWERS". The fact that men and gods congregate there, making offerings, [in multitudes] like woods, shows

that the utmost virtue is so dignified and weighty that li has moved [even] the gods. The Brahmā kings are the lords of the living beings, and yet they are among those who have come to pay reverence [to that Buddha]. Would it not be more so for the rest [of the beings]?

7.1.5 "HE HAD HAD SIXTEEN SONS". The things caused in the past are drawn here.

7.2 [406c1] "AT THAT TIME . . . TO THAT EAST . . . AGLOW". (23a17, 135:5) The fact that there was nothing left uncovered by the first illumination implies that there is nothing that the Tao does not mirror. That the Brahmā god [kings] from [all] the ten directions went far in search of the portent shows that, with [the Sage] being stimulated, (kan) [beings] are certain to reach [the goal], regardless of the distance.<sup>5</sup> That they did not recognize the portent of the glow tells that li is outside the reach of senses. Their presenting the palaces [to the Buddha] expresses again their infinitely [sincere, grateful] minds. They abandoned the joy of the abstruse meditation and visited the Buddha after coming a long way, indicating that, because their sentiment had remained on the wondrous Dharma, they begged the Buddha to turn the Dharma-wheel (23b2, 135:29).

7.3.1 "THRICE TURNED THE DHARMA-WHEEL OF TWELVE SPOKES". (25a2, 144:1) [The Buddha] drew [what happened in] the past to compare with the present; the idea becomes evident here.

[The Thus Come One] Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge preached the teaching of the three vehicles in the past for the Brahmā kings, and preached the scripture of Dharma Blossom for the sixteen princes. That the youngest of the princes was Śākyamuni<sup>6</sup> means that for the contemporary people he had preached this Dharma already. Now as he ascends a [Dharma-] throne, he revives the past transformative teaching, preaching again the path of the One preceded by the three. "The three turns of the Dharma-wheel" are as follows:

The first [turn] is made for when the Buddha proclaimed to Kauṇḍinya [and four other mendicants to the effect that] "[what constitutes the self or] body is suffering. You should know it, then you will attain the four 'spokes' of seeing, knowing, understanding, and awakening. This forms the root of what you have not yet known."

The second is made for when the Buddha proclaimed [406c10] to the five men [to the effect that] "you have known about suffering, and also obtained the four 'spokes' of seeing, knowing, understanding, and awakening. This forms the root of what you have already known."

The third is made for when the Buddha proclaimed to the five men, [to the effect that] "you have known about suffering. You don't have to know again. You have also attained the four 'spokes' of seeing, knowing, understanding, and awakening. This forms the root of what you had no knowledge of."<sup>7</sup>

There are four courses and three turnings in one proclamation. Hence, there are twelve.<sup>8</sup> In this way, one who does not yet know should know it; one who does not yet know the cause<sup>9</sup> [of suffering] should know it; one who does not yet know the extinction [of suffering] should know it; and one

who does not yet know the path [to extinction] should know it. In this way in each truth [of the four noble truths] there are four courses of seeing, knowing, understanding, and awakening. One proclamation encompasses the four truths. Three proclamations have the Dharma-wheel of forty-eight "spokes". "Twelve" is the outcome of [the four truths applied to] the three proclamations. What I said "forty-eight" are, when we speak of them in terms of the [four] truths, "the twelve causes and conditions" (pratītyasamutpāda) and the four truths.<sup>10</sup> "The four truths" spell out the facts involved (shih) [or the truths] in detail while the terms [of the process] are made brief. "The twelve causes and conditions" spell out the terms in detail whereas the facts involved are made brief. As their faculties were sharp, when [the Buddha] preached merely the arising and destruction of the twelve [causes and conditions], they immediately comprehended for themselves, coming up with the Dharma-medicine without fail that would free them from suffering, which means that they had exhausted the path (tao).

7.3.2 "IGNORANCE (AVIDYĀ)". There are one hundred and eight kinds of depravities (kleśa),<sup>12</sup> [406d1] becoming numerous, [so to speak,] when they are applied to the various affairs. In reality, however, it can be said that there is no more than one kind of delusion. "Ignorance" represents all delusions. It is shown in desire (or "greed") and

attachment (or "seizure"). Desire for and attachment to that which is useless and what has been appreciated already in the past, all this we call "ignorance".

7.3.3 "KARMIC LEGACY (SAMSKĀRAS)".<sup>13</sup> When the karma committed through body, mouth, and mind appears at present, it means that [karmic legacy] exists, thereby enabling the future effect to exist. When retribution is drawn to the background,<sup>14</sup> the work then is completed and the phenomenon comes into existence.<sup>15</sup> When the coming into existence of the phenomena is passed into the past, [what is left] we call "karmic legacy". "Karmic legacy" has to do with transmigration in the realm of life and death.

7.3.4 "COGNITION (VIJÑĀNA)". Cognition is the beginning of the present body, which means that the phenomenon of life comes into being.

7.3.5 "NAME AND VISIBLE FORM (NĀMARŪPA)". As "cognition" becomes a seed, it can give rise to "name and visible form". The four aggregates (skandhas) are referred to as "name"; the fifth [aggregate, which is] consciousness (vijñāna) accounts for "visible form". They are also said to be in the womb in an obscure and dark state. There is little consciousness of suffering and pleasure; there is no more than just "name".

7.3.6 "THE SIX SENSE ORGANS (SADĀYATANA)". The six sensations start arising to match appropriately the six qualities



(guṇas).<sup>16</sup>

7.3.7 "CONTACT (SPARŚA)". Once sensations and qualities appear, the consciousness of body comes into existence. The body-consciousness is delicate and subtle. The three things join together. "To join together" is what is meant by "contact".

7.3.8 "PERCEPTION (VEDANĀ)". Once sensations and qualities join together, there is [the process of deciding] whether it is agreeable or not. Next the three states of perception<sup>17</sup> arise.

7.3.9 "CRAVING (TRṢNĀ)". Pleasure conditions perception. To follow one's will is called craving. With craving one is attached to something. He who is attached to something [406d10] is the one whose root of birth-and-death (saṃsāra) is deep. Hence, standing all over are the branches of [birth-and-death].

7.3.10 "GRASPING (UPĀDĀNA)". Because of the obstruction caused by craving, the four categories of grasping<sup>18</sup> arise extensively. By "grasping" one is able to grasp birth-and-death (saṃsāra).

7.3.11 "BECOMING (BHAVA)". Because of the four kinds of grasping, the three kinds of karma<sup>19</sup> are produced. They are referred to as "becoming", in the sense that they can bring about "becoming".

7.3.12 "BIRTH (JĀTI)". Because of the three kinds of karma, the shoots and sprouts [of life] crave and grasp water and moisture, duly developing into birth.

7.3.13 "AGING AND DYING (JARĀMARAṆA)". As birth secures one to be in the state of undyingness, this is the residence of craving and compassion.

7.3.14 The twelve causes and conditions involve all the three periods of past, present, and future [lives]. However, the names [of the three] are invisibly revealed in accordance with the trace of transformation. How? Two are present in the past, eight in the present, and two in the future. Because of ignorance and karmic legacy the receptacle of suffering in this life is induced; thus if one intends to cut it off right now, then consequently [upon cutting off] there will not be any more life-and-death. Life-and-death is the residence of various calamities. How can one not fear it? Thus these two beginnings are shown. Many made inquiries into the meaning of the words, but men drift in the three worlds because of the twelve [causes and] conditions; so if [causes and] conditions are destroyed, it means that stupidity and ignorance are cut dead by the knife of wisdom, and that the water of craving is scorched and dried off by the fire of knowledge. The lofty net [of knowledge] opens up in four corners<sup>20</sup> [407a1] over the six forms of existence.

Non-rebirth (anupatti or ajāti) surpasses the eight apexes [of suffering?].<sup>21</sup>

7.4.1 "[AT THAT TIME], THE SIXTEEN PRINCES, [ALL AS] BOYS, LEFT THEIR HOUSEHOLD". (25a18, 144:34) Until now he has preached the doctrine of the two vehicles. Now for the princes he preaches the Dharma Blossom.

7.4.2 "[AT THAT TIME], THAT BUDDHA, ENTERTAINING THE ŚRĀ-MANERAS' ENTREATY, WHEN TWENTY THOUSAND KALPAS HAD PASSED". This illustrates that li is so deep and the Tao is so recondite that they should require a meticulous scrutiny. This also makes beings admire and respect it.

7.4.3 "STRAIGHTWAY HE ENTERED A QUIET ROOM". [By this the Buddha] wishes to manifest the virtues of the śrāmaneras.

7.5.1 "[ALL THIS] MAY BE LIKENED TO . . . FIVE HUNDRED YOJANAS". (25c26, 148:16) After [imparting to them] the feeling of approximation and a low level of knowledge [about his purport], [the Buddha now] intends to prove that when he previously preached the doctrine of the three vehicles [it] was designed to manifest the One. [However], beings seek to hold on to the three. Because of this he further draws them to their past conditions, improvising the parable of the conjured city. The parable suggests that the two vehicles are not real, eventually returning to the Path of the One. The Path of the One, one can say, is very difficult to get to

because of the workings of illusion. However, the three spheres are muddy and hilly, and the road of the two vehicles is dangerous. This [road], five hundred [yojanas long], is the path which the bodhisattvas are required to take, and [is] very hard to traverse.

7.5.2 "EMPTY AND DEVOID OF HUMAN BEINGS--A FRIGHTFUL PLACE". Five hundred [yojanas] represent a very great distance: thus, "empty". They are determined to work out their solitary enlightenment<sup>22</sup> [just for their own sake]: [thus], "devoid of human beings". [407a10] They have long endured hardships and suffering, being subject to the dangers which may come from anywhere anytime: it is "a frightful place".

7.5.3 "THERE IS A GREAT MULTITUDE WISHING TO TRAVERSE THIS ROAD TO ARRIVE AT A CACHE OF PRECIOUS JEWELS". The endowment of great enlightenment [innate in every being] issues forth: they "wish to traverse" the steep "road". [Those who] wish to traverse are not few; thus, "a great multitude". Traversing it, they will obtain all kinds of pleasure: thus, "a cache of precious jewels".

7.5.4 "THERE IS A GUIDE, . . . WISHING TO GET THROUGH THESE HARDSHIPS". Meeting with li is what is meant by "passable"; going astray from it is what is meant by "impassable". When it comes to the "knowing well" of the "features", there is just one person [who is equipped with it]. By teaching the multitude to follow the "passable" [the Buddha] makes

[himself] the master "who leads" them.

7.5.5 "THE MULTITUDE BEING LED GET DISGUSTED MIDWAY . . . WE NOW WISH TO TURN BACK". They are confused about where they are tending to, obviously far away from the Path of the Buddha. They have long endured hardships and suffering, pressingly suffering [in the cycle of] birth-and-death. Those of the Lesser Vehicle tend to be content with the substitute [for suffering] and easily fall prey to being pleased with it: they "get disgusted". Even though there is such delusion, the original understanding is never lost: they "wish to turn back". They turn back to the Dharma of the "guide", which means that they proceed to the "guide", yet they obtain no "composure" from him. They mean to make an "entreaty" to convey that.

7.6.1 "THE GUIDE, BEING A MAN OF MANY SKILLFUL DEVICES . . . CONJURES UP . . . A CITY". (26a12, 148:25) Proceeding to him but finding no composure as they follow the "guide", they make the entreaty. The "guide", [407b1] listening to their entreaty, sympathetically realizes that they are in the pitiful state. Thus as a device, he invents the transformative teaching of the two vehicles, telling them that they will attain nirvāna. A city is originally designed to protect [the people] from the evils; [likewise] only in nirvāna, there is no calamity. This [nature of nirvāna] is analogized in the designation [i.e., "city"]. What [the

Buddha] exigently shows is unreal: he "conjures up."

7.6.2 "HE DECLARES TO THE MULTITUDE, . . . YOU CAN QUICKLY REGAIN YOUR COMPOSURE". The teaching of the two vehicles is the intent implied here. [The Buddha] talks of it through a devised story.

7.6.3 "IF YOU THEN FEEL ABLE TO PROCEED TO THE JEWEL CACHE, YOU WILL ALSO BE FREE TO 'DO AS YOU PLEASE'".<sup>23</sup> The intent here is the teaching of the two vehicles, designed to enable them to obtain Buddhahood, but [the Buddha] does not expose it, showing it also by way of a devised story.<sup>24</sup>

7.6.4 "THEREUPON THE MULTITUDE . . . EVINCING A FEELING OF COMPOSURE". They have advanced to attain the result, that is, what they say to themselves [they have obtained]<sup>25</sup> nirvāṇa.

7.7 "AT THAT TIME, THE GUIDE, KNOWING THAT THE MULTITUDE . . . FOR THE PURPOSE OF GIVING YOU A STOPPING AND REST, NOTHING MORE". This again refers to nirvāṇa, which they say they have obtained: they "stop". They prepare themselves to advance further: they "rest". Since they have realized it, [the Buddha] preaches that the three are [in reality] the One: thus, "dissolves the conjured city".<sup>26</sup> And he says that [the two vehicles] are devised statements.

## FIVE HUNDRED DISCIPLES

(After Pūrṇa exhorts the Buddha's merits the Buddha prophesies that he too will attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi. Also knowing the wishful thought of the twelve hundred arhants, the Buddha first confers the same prophecy on Kauṇḍinyabhikṣu and his five hundred arhants. The latter express their joy and repent for thinking themselves to have obtained what turned out to be pseudo-enlightenments, likening themselves to a man who is stricken by poverty not knowing that he has a jewel sewed into his clothes by his close friend while he, having gotten drunk, visited the latter. Just like the friend who reminds the man of it, the Buddha points out to them again that they are open to the ultimate form of enlightenment.)

8.1 As regards the topic, [the disciples] can respond<sup>1</sup> to the teaching of the Sage, reflecting his trace like the shadow and the echo [which follow the real form and sound].<sup>2</sup> This is certainly a case of exigency. Those superior men,<sup>3</sup> thrice hearing it, were enlightened. The trace did not reach them earlier, and so they receive the prophecy later. Those who receive the prophecy later appear to be the truly dull receptables. Now since [the Buddha] has disclosed that they are exigencies, the Path (Tao) is not subject to dull enlightenment any more.

8.2.1 ". . . HAD HEARD ABOUT THIS WISDOM". (27b14, 157:1)  
This refers to [the part], from Chapter [2]: "Expedient Devices" to [Chapter 4:] "Belief and Understanding".

8.2.2 ". . . HAVE POWERS OF SUPERNATURAL PENETRATION".  
They witnessed the story of what had occurred to [the Buddha] Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge as if it had

happened today.

8.2.3 "[WE] HAVE NOT THE WORDS WITH WHICH TO EXPRESS OURSELVES". (27b22, 157:17) They have expressed themselves that they have entertained inside their minds, [namely,] wondrous understanding. Their understanding has come from the Buddha; they have achieved<sup>5</sup> the task thanks to the Buddha.<sup>6</sup> Hence, [Purna said:] "In the face of the Buddha's merits, we have not the words with which to express ourselves." They wished in the depth of their hearts to have the Buddha manifest the trace of his path, proclaiming [the doctrine] which is not of the Lesser Vehicle. Therefore, it is said: "Only the Buddha, [the World-Honored One], is able to know [the vows we once took] with deep thought."

8.3.1 "WE ARE TO BE LIKENED TO THE FOLLOWING CASE: THERE IS A MAN". (29a6, 164:29) The five hundred arhants, after their subtle, triggering-mechanism was awakened, were delighted and reproached themselves. Insofar as they reproached themselves their pleasure was [407c1] also not a shallow one. Although the speeches The Thus Come One has made are so multifarious with no set pattern, the li underlying them is by no means different in the final analysis. However, those five hundred people went astray from the [Buddha's] words, failing to grasp the import through their own extreme fault. Thus they themselves draw an analogy in order to express such a thought.



8.3.2 " . . . WHO ARRIVES AT THE HOUSE OF A CLOSE FRIEND". "Friend" refers to the sixteen princes. "House" means the residence accommodating the teaching of the Greater [Vehicle]. Although the five hundred people earlier in the beginning equally heard [the doctrine], their innate disposition (chih)<sup>7</sup> is varying [in absorbing the Buddha's speeches like] white silk, which is dyed differently from one part to another. That is what "arrives at the house of a [close] friend" means.

8.3.3 "WHERE HE GETS DRUNK ON WINE, THEN LIES DOWN". What the friend's words of advice mean, namely, beings' innate [nature] sufficiently [existent in them] is now completely lacking [in outlook]. While still unable to forget the words they became deluded in thought. The deluded thought turned passionate. They were intoxicated with the five desires and birth-and-death (samsāra), like the man "getting drunk and lying down".

8.3.4 "AT THAT TIME, HIS FRIEND, HAVING OFFICIAL BUSINESS, IS ON THE POINT OF GOING AWAY . . . DEPARTS, LEAVING IT WITH HIM". Although it was said that they were in confusion and delusion, wouldn't they rather begin to have subtle understanding? Their understanding being truly subtle, the great enlightenment will arise from it and so in speaking of cause in terms of effect, one can say it is "priceless". It is

covered with delusion like [the jewel] present in the interior of [the man's] garment. Because of "the friends", [the Buddha] has come; he "leaves" [it with them]. Li is never to be lost; it is also what that "friend" "sews". It was sewed secretly [into all] without discrimination; it cannot be overlooked. The import of the statement about the Greater [407c10] Vehicle is concealed, leaving them ignorant of the import of the statement; thus, they are "unaware of anything". After ["unawareness"] ends they can be transformed. The [Sage's] stimulus (kan) to act for the teaching is stopped temporarily, which is implicit in "having official business, [he] is on the point of going away".

8.4.1 "WHEN HE HAS RECOVERED, HE SETS OUT ON HIS TRAVELS . . . HE IS CONTENT WITH [HOWEVER LITTLE HE MAY GET]". (29a8, 164:34) The condition of previous understanding was activated, enabling them to be opposed to illusion: they "recovered" from the state of lying down. "Recovering", then they listened to the teaching. But what they were following was not the original [path]; it is said: they "set out on their travels." Nirvāna of the two vehicles did not 'belong to the original':<sup>8</sup> thus they "reached another country" to lead the pleasure-seeking life. Going astray from the path of the Greater [Vehicle], they suffered hardship in [reaching] li. The joy they found<sup>9</sup> therein was less than that found in the Greater Vehicle, but it was something "to be content with" in comparison with that in the world.<sup>10</sup>

8.4.2 "THEN HIS FRIEND, ENCOUNTERING HIM BY CHANCE". Following the teaching amounts to what they had grasped, still short of being allowed to meet the old friend. Now [the Buddha] preached that the three were the One: just now they "encountered" it. It was not what they themselves had sought: they "encountered it by chance".

8.4.3 "SPEAKS THESE WORDS TO HIM 'ALAS, SIR! . . . SUFFERING NEITHER WANT NOR SHORTAGE'". "Once when I" was in the place of [the Buddha] Victorious through Great Penetrating Knowledge, "I sewed a priceless jewel" of Dharma "into the inside of your" hearts. [407d1] In order to express that they obtained the One, [they] made up a story like that. As cause changes into effect, there is no pleasure that could not be obtained; there can not be any "want" in anything whatsoever.

8.4.4 "BUT LATER WE FORGOT". When formerly they received the transformative teaching, they had the subtle understanding "sewn" in. "Later" they were attached to the trappings (or disguised aspect) of the transformative teaching or to the idea [itself] (or deluded thought): They "forgot".

#### CHAPTER 9. PROPHECIES CONFERRED ON LEARNERS AND ADEPTS

(Prophecies of future enlightenment are bestowed this time upon Ānanda, Rāhula, and two thousand voice-hearing learners and adepts.)

The five hundred arhants are those who had 'the virtues filled inside and their names flowing outside'.<sup>1</sup> Thus they received the prophecies earlier. These learners and adepts are advanced very little in 'name and substance' (ming-shih);<sup>2</sup> hence, they receive the prophecies later. All that is dealt with throughout this one segment is [the Buddha's] bestowal of the prophecies upon them.

#### CHAPTER 10. DHARMA MASTERS

(Through the Bodhisattva Medicine King, the Buddha tells the great worthies what merits and rewards, including complete enlightenment, will be accorded to those who pay the slightest respect to the Lotus Sūtra.)

10.1.1 What has been discussed so far, up to the above chapter, a total of three preachings and three prophecy-bestowals suggests the proposition that the cause of three turns out to be the cause of One, which can be arrived at either way [namely, by way of preachings or bestowal]. The three preachings are the chapter (2) on "expedient devices", second, the chapter (3) on "parable", and third, the chapter (7) on "[the parable of] the conjured city". The chapter (4) on "belief and understanding" deals with their self-examination [407d10] of their understanding. In the chapter (5) on medicinal herbs the Buddha tells that what he has preached is of no separate category. The three kinds of

conferment of the prophecies are: first, the conferring on Śāriputra; second, the conferring on the four great voice-hearers; third, the conferring on the five hundred disciples along with the learners and the adepts.

10.1.2 This chapter generally deals with [the Buddha's instruction] for propagating this sūtra. "Dharma Master" refers to one for whom there is no li that he cannot propagate. The one who is able to publicize and exhalt this path is referred to as "Dharma Master". By exhorting it to [the beings of] various sentiments, would they not be benefited?

10.2.1 "THROUGH [THE BODHISATTVA] MEDICINE KING (BHAIṢAJYA-RĀJA)". (30b29, 174:1) The reason why [the Buddha] addressed them through Medicine King is because he could burn his own body [as he did in his former incarnation in order to propagate the Dharma.]<sup>1</sup> [The Buddha says that if] one rejoices over one single gāthā [of the sūtra, then one will be granted a prophecy]. If it is so with a few [gāthās], how much the more would it be so if one rejoices over many! So deep is the import there. If one harbors anger in the heart, one then separates oneself from other beings. When one [as a propagator] is separated from others the path is not caused to be trodden [by others].<sup>2</sup> Therefore, [the Buddha] praises one who "rejoices"; rejoicing means that the Dharma Blossom is propagated.

10.2.2 "SECRETLY FOR A SINGLE PERSON PREACH". (30c27,

175:19) What has been mentioned is the abundance of merits one obtains when one receives [the sūtra] for oneself. Now [the Buddha] talks about preaching it for another person, which represents an altruistically-oriented act of benefiting others. When one's Path (Tao) values embracing [others] as well,<sup>3</sup> one's merits and rewards will be endless.

10.2.3 "AN EMISSARY OF THE THUS COME ONE". The mind of Great Benevolence always [408a1] cherishes the idea of propagating the Dharma. If a man is a practitioner of the Dharma, he is then "an emissary of the Thus Come One".

10.2.4 "SENT BY THE THUS COME ONE". This explains that what they understand comes from the Buddha's understanding. I say "[their understanding] comes from the Buddha's", because certainly the Thus Come One is the source of supply for understanding and they act in compliance with him. The Thus Come One from the beginning takes propagating the Dharma to be his business. And he who can do so is said to be "doing the Thus Come One's business."

10.3.1 "IF THERE IS AN EVIL MAN WHO WITH UNWHOLESOME THOUGHT . . . HIS GUILT SHALL BE VERY GRAVE". (30c29, 175:25) The Buddha is the supreme among men and gods. To hate and "curse" him is tantamount to cursing the man, but not to cursing the Dharma. If a man who receives the Dharma Blossom "curses" it, it is tantamount to "cursing" the man

and disgracing the Dharma as well. To "curse" men and disgrace the Dharma is identical with "slandering" the Dharma-body. The "guilt" of those who "slander" the Dharma-body is extremely "grave". [This kind of presentation by the Buddha] is designed to strengthen the learner's drive, certainly with great effect.

10.3.2 "BORNE ABOUT ON THE THUS COME ONE'S SHOULDERS". The Dharma is [the same as] the Buddha-master. One should respect the Dharma in order to receive the Dharma, and what [the expression] "bearing about" means really is that one "bears about" the Dharma but not men. However, the descriptive trace of speech [408a10] as found here is focused also on the man [as the agent of Dharma] in order to help strengthen learning.

10.4.1 "WHETHER ALREADY PREACHED, NOW BEING PREACHED". (31b7, 178:6) While the above sections explicate the Dharma by way of man, the sections from here on explicate man by way of the Dharma. Because it is difficult to obtain the Dharma, it is difficult to find the man who receives and keeps it. It is difficult to find the men who receive and keep it also because it is difficult to believe and understand the Dharma.

10.4.2 "[THE THUS COME ONE] SHALL COVER THEM WITH GARMENTS". (31b23, 178:17) Li is deep and covered completely. Through "garments", [the Buddha] manifests it.

10.4.3 "[THESE PERSONS] SHALL HAVE DWELT TOGETHER WITH THE THUS COME ONE". When men intensely feel that they are entertaining doubtful thoughts, they are then on the way to wakening.<sup>4</sup> Wakened, one becomes identified with the man of the Lotus Blossom. As they comprehend and partake of the profound ultimate, their experience of understanding become an integral part of their thought; thus a place is provided. Providing a place is the meaning intended by "dwelling together".

10.4.4 "AND SHALL HAVE HAD THEIR HEADS CARESSED BY THE HAND OF THE THUS COME ONE". One who will keep the Dharma Blossom will be initiated as a son of the Buddha. A deep love is expressed by means of "caressing the heads".

10.5.1 "SUPPOSE, FOR EXAMPLE, THERE WERE A MAN HARD PRESSED BY THIRST AND IN NEED OF WATER". (31c9, 179:13) Receiving and keeping the Dharma Blossom, while seeking enlightenment to the Path of the Buddha, at the apex of one's desire, is likened to [the state of a man] "[hard pressed by] thirst and in need of water." This analogy figuratively speaks of [the difference between] shallowness and depth, and gain and loss, in men keeping the Dharma Blossom. It was said above (31c4, 179:4) that there are those who "cannot [408b1] contrive to see and hear" the Dharma Blossom. It refers not so much to those who have not obtained the rolls [of the sūtra] as to those who have not comprehended the idea of the One Vehicle.



10.5.2 "[THOUGH] ON YOUR HIGH PLAIN HE DIGS IN HIS SEARCH". In contrast to the three vehicles, the One Vehicle is "the hardest to believe" (31b18, 178:8). Seeking understanding about the Dharma Blossom is like searching water "on a high plain". Receiving, keeping, reading, and reciting it are symbolized in "to dig".

10.5.3 "STILL HE SEES ONLY DRY EARTH . . . HE KNOWS THAT WATER MUST BE NEAR". Not seeing the gate to the profound [realm] is like "seeing dry earth". Turning around enabling them to bring themselves to the deep [realm] is like seeing "mud". They already know that great awakening is not remote: they "know that water must be near".

10.6.1 "THE ROOM OF THE THUS COME ONE IS THE THOUGHT OF GREAT COMPASSION [TOWARD ALL LIVING BEINGS]". (31c25, 180:4) Compassion can fully cover [the whole realm] like a room providing a shelter. "Room" should read in the sense of "to enter".<sup>5</sup>

10.6.2 "THE CLOAK OF THE THUS COME ONE IS THE THOUGHT OF [TENDER FORBEARANCE AND] THE BEARING OF INSULT WITH EQUANIMITY". "The bearing of insult" and the "forbearing" of pleasure are like the cloak protecting the body. "Cloak" should read in the sense of "to put on".<sup>6</sup>

10.6.3 "THE THRONE OF THE THUS COME ONE IS THE EMPTINESS OF ALL DHARMAS". Being "empty", one is given "security". At-

tainment is likened to "throne". "Throne" should read in the sense of "to sit".<sup>7</sup> Isn't [the Buddha] thereby benefiting being greatly?

**[408b10]** CHAPTER 11. APPARITION OF THE JEWELLED STŪPA

(An immense stūpa arises out of the earth, and the Buddha tells his listeners that it contains the body of a Buddha named Prabhūtaratna, who in a previous age preached the Lotus, vowing to produce his reliquary, after his nirvāṇa, wherever and whenever the Lotus should happen to be preached. Then the stūpa opens up, and Prabhutaratna, seated within it, properly offers half his seat to the Buddha. A number of beings salute both Buddhas.)<sup>1</sup>

11.1 The purpose of manifesting the stūpa is to verify and argue that the li underlying the Dharma Blossom is certainly clear and proper, first, through the evidence of stūpa, and second, through the evidence of the voice that issues forth therefrom.<sup>2</sup> Through the two events, beings come to bear faith to a full and deep extent. By extension it also shows that the ultimate fruit is subtly manifested, as it is ever-existent.

11.2.1 "AT THAT TIME, THERE APPEARED BEFORE THE BUDDHA A SEVEN-JEWELLED STŪPA, . . . WELLING UP OUT OF THE EARTH AND RESTING IN MID-AIR". (32b17, 183:1) Men's emotional factor [tends to make men] dark about li. [The Buddha] cannot help but cause them to nurture faith by resorting to supernatural wonders. In an attempt to manifest and prove [his preaching]

through this method, [the Buddha] shows the jeweled stūpa. Through the event [he conjured up] he reveals the meaning, making it manifest and visible.<sup>3</sup> It was already said that the three vehicles are the One. All the living beings [potentially] are the Buddhas and also are all in nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa<sup>4</sup> and Buddhas are set apart by as little as [the difference] between beginning and end. Also why should there be any difference [between beings and the Buddhas]? Only because of the instigators of depravities [Buddha-nature] is concealed, like a stūpa lying hidden, sometimes underground, covered by earth. The endowment of great enlightenment cannot be left [408cl] covered up. It is bound to be drawn out in due course like the stūpa issuing forth. It cannot be stopped from coming out. It was originally existent in the empty li,<sup>5</sup> like the stūpa resting in mid-air.<sup>6</sup> The sound of the voice issuing [from inside the stūpa], praising with the words, "How excellent! How excellent!" (32b38), gives vent to the completed verification. The words "set about with sundry precious objects" implicitly show that the ultimate fruit encompasses all kinds of good. Thus its li becomes manifest by way of the event [conjured up by the Buddha]. Though it is difficult and unbelievable, it can be obtained.<sup>7</sup>

11.2.2 "AND ALSO HEARING THE SOUND OF THE VOICE ISSUING FORTH FROM INSIDE THE STŪPA, . . . AMAZED AT WHAT HAD NEVER BEEN BEFORE". (32c3, 183:26) The fourfold assembly, seeing the stūpa issuing forth, did not know the reason. Then they

"rose [from their seats]", and stood off ["to one side"]. They turned looking earnest, wishing to hear about its intent. The incident was beyond their feeling, making them dare not to speak. [A bodhisattva-mahasattva] named Great Joy in Preaching (Mahāpratibhāna), sharing the doubts with the multitude, addressed the Buddha asking him to reveal the motive behind the event he conjured up.

11.3.1 "[HE] TOOK A GREAT VOW". (32c11, 184:13) The fact that [a Buddha called] Many Jewels had formerly taken a vow and could fulfill it secretly drew the attention of the congregation at the time, and as a consequence all invariably wished to see this Buddha's body. By making them see [the Buddha] appear [the Buddha] unequivocally showed them the evidence.

11.3.2 "THEN MAY THE BUDDHAS WHO ARE EMANATIONS OF THAT BUDDHA'S BODY . . . AGAIN GATHER IN ONE PLACE, FOR THEN AND ONLY THEN SHALL MY BODY [408c10] APPEAR". No doubt [the Buddha] does not do this as an act of self-glorification. Soon he wants to distinguish between the true and the false: therefore, he finds it necessary to summon the Buddhas to gather. It was said earlier (32c12 & 16) that in the ten directions there would be this teaching [about the sūtra]. It means that the present Buddha Śākyamuni is real. What the real Buddha has preached must be clear and proper.<sup>8</sup> Through this many feel faithful and enlightened, fully and deeply.

Therefore, [the Buddha] uses the vow of Many Jewels as a pretext for gathering them in one place.

11.4.1 "THEN THE SAHĀ WORLD-SPHERE WAS STRAIGHTWAY TRANSFORMED INTO SOMETHING PURE". (33a9, 186:5) The purpose of stating that all the dirt and evils are removed, that gods and men are cast away (33a13, 186:12), leading to the point that flowers and incense are offered (33b1, 187:2), is to suggest indirectly that evil<sup>9</sup> can certainly be destroyed whereas good can certainly be cultivated.

11.4.2 "[THE BUDDHA FURTHER] CONJURED UP TWO HUNDRED MYRIADS OF MILLIONS OF NAYUTAS OF REALMS". (33a21 & 33b3, 186:24) If he wanted to accommodate all the Buddhas, who were emanations of [that Buddha's] body, he would appropriately prepare and purify the realms [immediately], making it suffice for beings in accepting [the Buddha's original thesis]. [But] why did he conjure<sup>10</sup> them up gradually? The reason for doing this is as follows: [the Buddha] wants to give expression to the thesis that li can not be reached at once; the coarse should be ground until it is fine; it must be decreased further and further, until it comes to the point of no decrease.<sup>11</sup>

11.4.3 "THROUGHOUT, THESE REALMS WERE A SINGLE BUDDHA-LAND". This is designed to express [the idea] that although there are causes, different in a myriad ways, they result in

bearing one effect.

11.4.4 "[THE BUDDHA MANY JEWELS . . . ] THEN HALF HIS SEAT [TO ŚĀKYAMUNI BUDDHA]". (33c5, 188:7) The purpose of presenting the case of dividing [408d1] the seat in order to share [it with the Buddha], is to suggest that extinction [from the world] does not necessarily mean extinction and existence does not necessarily mean existence. The difference between existence and extinction originates in the various grades [of the capacities of beings]. How can the Sage be subject to them?<sup>12</sup> Also by showing that [the Buddha will enter] nirvāṇa not long hence, [the Buddha] makes them feel anxious to prepare for [receiving] the Dharma.

11.4.5 "WITH HIS POWER OF SUPERNATURAL PENETRATION, TOUCHED THE GREAT MULTITUDES, SO THAT THEY WERE ALL IN OPEN SPACE". (33c11, 188:17) Why did he touch them? Wanting to express [the idea] that the living beings are endowed with the capacities for Great Enlightenment and that all [are geared to] achieve the Buddhahood, [the Buddha] showed this scene.

## CHAPTER 12. FORTITUDE<sup>1</sup>

(The vow to keep and propagate the Lotus is taken by the bodhisattva-mahāsattva Medicine King and other bodhisattvas and arhats. More prophecies are conferred on the bhikṣunīs including the Buddha's aunt and Rāhula's mother.)

12.1 So far [the Buddha] has broadly drawn parables and explanations, speaking of those who kept this sūtra. What is said here is about the great beings (mahāsattvas) including Medicine King et al who take vows to keep this sūtra and propagate it in the evil age.

12.2 "IN OTHER LANDS". (36a7, 202:16) The people of this land are so evil-minded that arhants will not be able to transform them. Hence, they are "in other lands" (cf. 36a7, 36b8). [What appears to be a tacit] affirmation [by the Buddha as he keeps silent about their vow to propagate the sūtra in "other lands"] of the impossibility of their mission should not be taken as real. [The Buddha's silence should be interpreted] merely as the words of stern [warning] for the serious application of their mission.

### [408d10] CHAPTER 13. COMFORTABLE CONDUCT

(At Mañjuśrī's request the Buddha teaches the congregation the four virtues with which a bodhisattva-mahāsattva is equipped to carry out the mission of propagating this scripture in the latter evil age, which is the supreme, final and most profound preaching he has ever undertaken.)

13.1.1 The explication of the idea that the cause of three turns out to be the cause of One is to be completed here. In the chapter preceding the present one it has been explained that the great beings (mahāsattvas) will propagate this sūtra and that those in the ranks of voice-hearer will also spread and propagate this Dharma "in other lands". Of them are

those who wish to transmit this sūtra, but do not know how to do it. [The Buddha] therefore sets up this chapter to teach them the practical modus operandi.

13.1.2 If one is able to "dwell securely in four dharmas" (37a12, 208:10), then the body becomes tranquil and the spirit is settled. When the spirit is settled and the body becomes tranquil, then external suffering does not interfere with them (the four dharmas). When external suffering does not interfere with them, one can be said to be "comfortable" (cf. 38b16). Because they are then able to preach the Dharma tirelessly, beings receive its benefits. "The four dharmas" are as follows: The first dharma consists of the acts of dwelling and the acts of the two kinds of places "that [the bodhisattva-mahāsattva] approaches with familiarity".<sup>1</sup> "The place that he approaches with familiarity" enables them to keep a distance from evils and remain close to li. As the mind rests on li, body and mouth do not commit any faults. Body and mouth not committing any faults constitute the second dharma. The third one is the state of feeling no jealousy. The fourth one is the state of feeling Great Compassion. As the three kinds of act are purified, compassionate thought also pervades their minds. Is not the propagation of the Dharma in this way also great?

13.2.1 "HOW CAN [A BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA] PREACH THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE LATTER EVIL AGE?" (37a10, 208:6) In the



earlier ages it is not yet hard to keep the sūtra. [But] if it is very hard to keep it [in the latter age], the low level of knowledge<sup>2</sup> and self-confidence<sup>3</sup> [are the probable causes]. Hence, [Mañjuśrī] asked [the Buddha] about the way to guide the learners in the evil age.

13.2.2 "IF IN THE LATTER EVIL AGE [A BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA] WISHES TO PREACH THIS SCRIPTURE, HE MUST DWELL SECURELY IN FOUR DHARMAS". (37all, 208:9) Although keeping the sūtra in the latter age involves a lot of evils, if they dwell in four dharmas, the latter age does not mean suffering. Dwelling in them certainly leads to security; hence, it is said, "dwelling securely". As regards the dharmas for teaching the Path, the practical modus operandi are as follows.

13.2.3 "FIRST, BY DWELLING SECURELY IN THE PLACE WHERE THE BODHISATTVA ACTS, IN THE PLACE THAT HE APPROACHES WITH FAMILIARITY". When, having entered li, [the bodhisattva] fulfills it, he is in "the place [where the bodhisattva] acts". Although he has not yet entered li, if he is familiar with it and close to it, he is in "the place he approaches with familiarity". Also they are, as beginning and end, conjoined as one thing [or dharma].

13.2.4 "DWELLS ON THE GROUND OF FORBEARANCE: . . . NOR AT HEART BECOMING ALARMED". He who is in "the place [where the bodhisattva-mahāsattva] acts" regards from beginning to end

forbearance as the primary [virtue]. These five virtues (37a15f.) belong to the beginning.

13.2.5 "IF, FURTHER, HE PERFORMS NO ACT WITH RESPECT TO THE DHARMAS". So far the virtues for having li in mind have been explicated; now the abilities of "viewing" and "performing" are introduced. The four things (37a18) constitute the end of "the place [where the bodhisattva-mahāsattva] acts".

13.2.6 "[THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA] DOES NOT [409a10] APPROACH WITH FAMILIARITY KINGS OR PRINCES OF REALMS". Approaching with familiarity also has a beginning and an end. Not approaching the place where confusion arises means approaching li with familiarity. What follows next is concerned with the beginning of approaching the place.

13.2.7 "LOKĀYATAS (MATERIALISTS)". They refer to those who counter what people in the world argue for.<sup>4</sup>

13.2.8 "THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE LOKĀYATAS". They refer to those who try hard to cling to what [people in the world] argue for.

13.2.9 "NATAS (DANCERS, ACTORS)". They refer to those who make up their bodies in order to perform "various magical plays."<sup>5</sup>

13.2.10 "THE FIVE KINDS OF UNMANLY MEN". (37b5, 209:6) The first kind are the men who are born impotent (jātipaṇḍaka),

namely, those whose original constitution and fertility do not allow them to get an erection. The second are eunuchs whose organs are small and weak (āpatpaṇḍaka). The third refers to the men who are impotent for a half part of [every] month (pakṣapaṇḍaka), which means that for half a month they change, [feeling] for women. The fourth are the men who are impotent because of jealousy (īrṣyāpaṇḍaka). They cannot become potent initially for themselves. But seeing others perform sex, they immediately become jealous. And by way of jealousy do they become potent. Fifth, the men who cannot ejaculate (āsaktaprādurbhāvī paṇḍakaḥ). They can become potent only after the others touch their bodies first.

13.2.11 " . . . VIEWS ALL DHARMAS AS EMPTY, IN ACCORD WITH THEIR TRUE MARKS". (37b12, 210:3) The following ten-odd items, although the names are many, point in reality to no more than one [409b1] emptiness. This is the beginning of seeing, yet short of being able to enter, li: it is the end of "approaching the place with familiarity".

13.2.12 "GĀTHĀS". In the gāthās that follow, some [parts mentioned in the prose] are extended and some are summarized while some are also not chanted. They can be regulated in accordance with the meaning.

13.3.1 "WHETHER SETTING FORTH EXPLICATION BY WORD OF MOUTH OR READING THE SCRIPTURE ITSELF, ONE IS TO HAVE NO WISH TO MENTION THE FAULTS OF MEN OR THE SCRIPTURAL CANON". (38a1,

213:26) As for the second dharma, it is the committing of no fault through body and mouth. Although this does not refer to the karma committed through body, it is chanted in the gāthās. (38a10) [While] this section may touch on the karma through mind it is strictly meant to complete the theme that they [the beings] should commit no fault through body and mouth; this does not deal with mind as such.

13.3.2 "ALSO, O MAÑJUŚRĪ, . . . SHALL HARBOR NO THOUGHT OF ENVY, FLATTERY, OR DECEIT". (38b2, 216:1) The third dharma is the [harboring] of no envy or jealousy. Although this refers to the karma committed through mouth, this is designed to drive home the theme of [allowing] no fault of committing karma through mind; it does not speak of mouth as such.

13.3.3 "[AGAIN], O MAÑJUŚRĪ, . . . THINKING WITH GREAT GOOD WILL OF PERSONS IN THE HOUSEHOLD AND THOSE GONE FORTH FROM THE HOUSEHOLD". (38c4, 217:25) The fourth dharma is the state of feeling "great compassion" (mahākaruṇā). Because of its being "great" in altruistically embracing beings,<sup>6</sup> it is described later. If they can rest in these four dharmas, they will then not have fear or weakness. [If] they propagate the teaching by availing themselves of such [dharmas], the fruit will be a rich one.

13.3.4 "SUPPOSE, FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS [409b10] A WHEEL-TURNING SAGE-KING OF GREAT STRENGTH". (38c22, 218:16) This

example symbolizes the Scripture of Dharma Blossom, which was not given earlier to men, but is given now.

#### CHAPTER 14. WELLING UP OUT OF THE EARTH

(Witnessing many bodhisattva-mahāsattvas follow the Buddha's suit, the mahāsattvas from other lands also volunteer to hold the sūtra, only to be denied that role by the Buddha, which was already sufficiently assigned to the mahāsattvas of his Sahā World-sphere. As witnesses, millions of bodhisattva spring up out of the earth with innumerable retinues. Maitreya and others then wonder about the Buddha's great achievement in converting so many beings in such a short space of time.)

14.1 This chapter serves as the introduction to an integral part<sup>1</sup> of the next [chapter] concerning the life-span [of the Thus Come One] and is designed to demonstrate that the effect of the three becomes that of the One. Earlier there was an introduction set up for the sake of the cause; in accord with the speech, flowers [rained down] and the earth trembled (Chapter 1). This chapter is an introduction which is set up for the sake of the effect; in accord with the speech, a great number of bodhisattvas well up out of the earth. Here Maitreya harbors doubts as he did before. It [the chapter] also manifests the ever-abiding purport.

14.2.1 "STOP! [GOOD MEN], THERE IS NO NEED FOR YOU . . ." (39c24, 225:10) The reason for saying "stop" is to initiate the entrance of the bodhisattvas [equal in number to the sands of] sixty thousand [Ganges rivers]. Because the

bodhisattvas appear, [the Buddha] is able to manifest how the long life-span is brought about.

14.2.2 "MY SAHĀ WORLD-SPHERE ITSELF HAS BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVAS EQUAL IN NUMBER TO THE SANDS OF SIXTY THOUSAND GANGES RIVERS". As regards the topic, the teaching of the Sage has its rise and fall; its deep purport is not fathomable. However, as it has widely prevailed throughout the times earlier and later, [409c1] the meaning can be grasped. In the above [the Buddha] urged them to protect the Dharma, but now he says "[there is] no need". (32c24) [Why the discrepancy?] They are all [valid statements] with a raison d'être. The Dharma by which living beings emerge from delusion and are led to the Buddhahood and nirvāṇa is designed to extinguish itself completely; they are supposed to volunteer to protect it. Hence the words of exhortation, so that they may strengthen their will [to protect it]. However, living beings are all endowed with [the faculty of] Great Enlightenment; all are without exception potential bodhisattvas. [In this respect] there is no time when it is not protected. Then why does he have to rely on the bodhisattvas from other regions [for protection]? Reliance on [the bodhisattvas from] other regions makes it appear that the li of transformative teaching is insufficient. Thus [the Buddha] shows the welling-up [of the bodhisattva-mahāsattvas] in order to express that intent. "Six" [of "sixty thousand"

or six wan] refers to the six states of existence (gati). "The sands of the Ganges Rivers" mean "a lot". "The earth" refers to the bonds and the instigator of depravities.<sup>2</sup> And the living beings' endowment of enlightenment lies under the instigators of depravities. What "[they all had been] under [this Sahā world-sphere], in an open space"<sup>3</sup> indicates is that [beings] are in void li [or li of emptiness (śūnyatā), that is, in the state of li devoid of the instigators].

14.2.3 The fact that the earth split and [the bodhisattvas] welled up suggests that living beings inherently possess<sup>4</sup> endowment of enlightenment<sup>5</sup> and it cannot remain concealed and are bound to break the earth of defilements and emerge to safeguard the Dharma.<sup>6</sup>

14.2.4 It is said that [even] Maitreya did not recognize a single person (40c27, 230:26) because the [endowment] is of such a nature that [as an object of] enlightenment it can not be empirically experienced [by one who is even] in the tenth stage.<sup>7</sup> That what welled up was not Buddhas but bodhisattvas means that this endowment of enlightenment is [the subject] that has necessarily to be studied [409c10] until there is nothing left to learn.<sup>8</sup>

14.2.5 "[AT THAT TIME], [THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA] MAITREYA . . . AT HEART DOUBTFUL". (41b29, 233:29) Riding on the thought of the multitude, [Maitreya] harbors doubts, and the doubts are regarding [how] the Buddha since his attain-

ment of Buddhahood could accomplish so many things [in such a short time]. [Maitreya] begs [the Buddha] to resolve the doubts for the multitude, showing them the ultimate as their substratum. The ever-abiding, subtle purport is gradually revealing itself in this way.

#### CHAPTER 15. THE LIFE-SPAN [OF THE THUS COME ONE]

(The Buddha replies that the commonly accepted notions about the Buddha's life-span and teaching career have no ultimate truth, that the Buddha is in fact limitless in both time and space, assuming various forms in different ages and under different circumstances but all for one and the same purpose, namely, the salvation of the beings. He illustrates this with the following parable:

A physician who had been away from home a long time returned to find his sons suffering from an ailment. He prescribed for them an appropriate medicine, which certain of them took but which others, mad from the poison, refused. Those who took it were immediately cured, while the others continued to languish in their malady. The physician accordingly went away and circulated the rumor that he had died. This shocked the ailing sons back to their senses, after which they too took their father's medicine and were cured. When he heard of this, the father made his appearance again.

Just so, says the Buddha, are the beings. When offered salvation some of them refuse it; so the Buddha stages a docetic nirvāṇa. This instills in them a sense of urgency, born of the fear that the Buddha will not always be among them. But for this, certain of the beings would continue forever to forego their own salvation.)<sup>1</sup>

15.1 As regards the topic, the profound mirror is void and clear,<sup>2</sup> it is outside the representation of the realm of



phenomena. How can any being with a distinct form do away with life-span, long or short? However, the proposition that there is nothing that is with form and enjoys [a long] life-span stems from various delusions. There is no way that the Sage can be in that category. Only the deluded would count the actual life-span of the Buddha as a hundred years. Now such a [mental] impediment is driven out. [The Buddha] relies on [the theory of] longevity to dispel it. Thus this chapter is titled "life-span". "Life-span" [of the Buddha] is none other than that which aroused and prompted the Buddhas [to achieve] spiritual penetration in the earlier chapters, and is none other than the ultimate effect. Since the ultimate fruit has been shown, is it not true that he abides eternally? Furthermore, they tend to have affinity for life and distaste for death. What is now [409d1] said about longevity must invigorate them greatly.

15.2.1 "THE TRUE SPEECH [OF THE THUS COME ONE!]" (42b2, 237:2) Maitreya has doubts and asks the Buddha to resolve them. The Buddha is about to answer them. Thus he addresses them three times, because li is so deep and the Tao is so wondrous that they cannot be spoken of in simple terms.

15.2.2 "WE BEG YOU TO SPEAK IT!". They beg for it three times, also expressing how intense their aspiration of it is.

15.2.3 "ALL SAY THAT THE PRESENT ŚĀKYAMUNIBUDDHA LEFT THE PALACE OF THE ŚĀKYA CLAN". Herein is the point which many

are doubtful of. Thus he points it out to dispel the doubts. This day<sup>3</sup> [the Buddha] proves that his long life-span is real, thereby showing that [his enlightenment at] Gaya is unreal. If one perceives that Gayā is untrue, one also knows that [a] long or short [life-span] applies to the beings whereas the Sage is ever in the unconditioned state (wu-wei,<sup>4</sup> asamskrta).<sup>5</sup>

15.3 "THE TIME SINCE MY ACHIEVEMENT OF BUDDHAHOOD WOULD EXCEED EVEN THIS". (42b6, 238:16) As regards the topic, the form-body (rūpa-kāya) of the Buddha invariably ought to be something visible and existent but without real form. If he is not real, how can he be spoken of in terms of life-span? However, the [different] modes and forms<sup>6</sup> [of manifestation] are directed to arrive at the same [goal]. He is one throughout the past and the present; [409d10] the past is also the present, and vice versa. There is no time when he is not existent. There is no place where he is not present. If there are times when something is not existent and there are places when something is not present,<sup>7</sup> it applies only to beings, but not to the Sage. For that reason, ultimately [the Sage] establishes the eternity [of the Buddha] suggesting that Gayā is [a part of] it. If Gayā is [a part of] it, there is no more Gayā. Since there is no more Gayā, how can that eternity alone exist? [Therefore,] eternity and shortness as such are not [separately] existent; that

constitutes the reason why eternity and shortness remain existent.<sup>8</sup>

15.4.1 "[THE THUS COME ONE] IN FULL ACCORD WITH REALITY KNOWS AND SEES THE MARKS OF THE TRIPLE SPHERE". (42c13, 239:9) As regards the topic, he who has seen Reality never again sees what is not real. [The Buddha's] original intention was to ferry them over to Reality and awaken them to it. Thus in accordance with the way they responded he devised expedients. Even though they are not identical their imports are not different. However, it is said here that [the Thus Come One] sees just "[the marks of] the triple sphere". He has already seen something more than that. Since [everything] he says contains the original [intention] he seeks to find the words and expressions in various forms [that would suit the existential situations of beings].

15.4.2 "THE LIFE-SPAN I ACHIEVED IN MY FORMER TREADING OF THE BODHISATTVA PATH EVEN NOW IS NOT EXHAUSTED". (42c22, 239:23) When he was treading the bodhisattva path in the past, his life-span "was twice the above [number]". It should be known, therefore, that though [his life-span] was compared to the number of grains of sand, the tiniest part of it has not yet been exhausted. Now the Buddha is described by way of a bodhisattva; [410a1] the Buddha's life-span is long [in comparison with the bodhisattva's].

15.5.1 "FOR EXAMPLE, SUPPOSE THERE IS A GOOD PHYSI-

CIAN . . . HUNDRED OR MORE". (43a8, 240:14) This example symbolizes the Buddha who exists [for ever] in reality but who says he will soon be extinguished. Living beings formerly received transformative teaching; they are "sons" born of the bodhisattva. "Twenty" refers to the two vehicles. "Hundred or more" indicates 'many'. He who cures diseases on the basis of the present [condition] is "physician".

15.5.2 "ON AN AFFAIR OF BUSINESS, HE GOES FAR OFF TO ANOTHER REALM". Having transformed this [realm], he again ought to transform that [realm] without taking any rest.

15.5.3 "HIS SONS, LEFT BEHIND, DRINK SOME OTHER, POISONOUS MEDICINES AND AS THE MEDICINES START BECOMING EFFECTIVE, THEY SHOW AGONIZED PAIN AND CONFUSION, ROLLING ABOUT ON THE EARTH". Their understanding is very little and they suffer from delusion; they are likened to those who "drink poisonous medicines". "Going astray from li", they belong to "other". The condition (pratyaya) of delusion arrives; as it were, "the medicines start becoming effective". Receiving the consciousness of death and birth,<sup>9</sup> they are likened to being in "agonized pain and confusion". [Being in the cycle of birth-and-death, they are likened to being in the state of "rolling about on earth".

15.5.4 "AT THIS TIME THEIR FATHER RETURNS HOME". The li underlying the former transformative teaching is true; it is

"home". The condition for receiving teaching reaches them and they return to the city of Gayā and witness it; they "return".

15.5.5 "THE SONS, HAVING DRUNK POISON, AND SOME OF THEM HAVING LOST THEIR SANITY, THOUGH OTHERS HAVE NOT". Ever since they received teaching, [410a10] [some of] them have practised the right path all the time: they "have not lost their sanity". Going astray from it, [some of] them "have lost [their sanity]".

15.6.1 " . . . ALL OVERJOYED AT SEEING THEIR FATHER FROM AFAR . . . WELCOME BACK TO PEACE AND SECURITY!". (43a11, 240:22) Conditions develop in such a way that they neutralize ignorance on a shallow level and they approach li, gradually, little by little: They "see from afar". But as they see identically that form [incarnated] in response<sup>10</sup> [to the different needs of the beings] they are all "[over]-joyed", there being no one who does not know how to offer the alms to him and praise him.

15.6.2 "WE IN OUR FOLLY HAVE MADE THE MISTAKE OF TAKING POISONOUS MEDICINE". Conditions neutralizing [ignorance] having been started, what is true duly tells what is erroneous. What is said here is an unreal, tentative statement.

15.6.3 "WE BEG YOU TO HEAL US AND RESTORE OUR LIVES TO US!" They have appealed to him to heal them; he "heals" them, that

is, he revives their wisdom-life. That is also an unreal, tentative statement.

15.6.4 "THE FATHER, SEEING HOW ACUTE WERE THE AGONIES . . . ORDERING THEM TO TAKE THEM". All that the Buddha has preached about Dharma in accordance with the way [beings] respond has the same purport and goal: it is "tasty". The words describe their external joy: they are "colorful". They have had their thought rectified inside and outside: it is "fragrant". The [Buddha's] words and teaching manifest the ultimate consequence, namely, the composite unity in [the domain of] the markless (wu-hsiang/animitta): he "pounded, sifted, and blended them".

15.6.5 "SPEAKING THESE WORDS: . . . SHALL NEVER AGAIN BE SUBJECT TO A HOST OF TORMENTS". He meant "to order them to take". This is also an unreal, tentative statement.

15.6.6 "AMONG THE SONS, THOSE WHO HAD NOT LOST THEIR SANITY [410b1] . . . THEIR SICKNESS WAS COMPLETELY REMOVED AND HEALED". They apprehended [the Buddha's] purport: they "took it". They had delusions removed: they were "healed".

15.7.1 "THE OTHERS, WHO HAD LOST THEIR SANITY . . . SAID . . . WAS NO GOOD". (43a20, 241:1) Although they knew that it was a medicine, they remained dark about the purport: thus it was "no good".

15.7.2 "STRAIGHTWAY HE SPOKE THESE WORDS: ' . . . I AM NOW

AGED AND INFIRM, AND THAT MY TIME OF DEATH IS ALREADY AT HAND". Likewise, the Buddha's age was eighty; his form was like a worn-out vehicle. He was just about to enter pari-nirvāṇa.

15.7.3 "THIS FINE AND GOOD MEDICINE I NOW LEAVE HERE FOR YOU TO TAKE". If the Great Dharma of the six pāramitās is not kept, it will be gone. Li is not subject to destruction; when practised, it will remain existent.

15.7.4 "WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THESE INSTRUCTIONS, HE WENT AGAIN TO ANOTHER REALM AND THEN SENT A MESSENGER BACK TO DECLARE, 'YOUR FATHER IS DEAD!'" [The Buddha] carried out again [his mission] to convert the rest; he "went again to another realm". He entered nirvāṇa under the twin trees; the words and the traces were completely extinguished: he "sent a messenger back to declare, 'Your father is dead.'"

15.7.5 "AT THIS TIME, THE SONS, HEARING THAT THEIR FATHER HAD FORSAKEN THEM . . . THE POISONS AND THE SICKNESS WERE ALL HEALED". Seeing the Buddha entering nirvāṇa, they were deeply awakened to the fact that [the Buddha] did not exist eternally. They began to realize what the Buddha had said: it turned out to be "tasty". They apprehended the purport: they "took it".

15.7.6 "THE FATHER, HEARING THAT HIS SONS HAD ALL ACHIEVED A CURE, THEN CAME BACK, ENABLING ALL TO SEE [410b10] HIM".

They comprehended the profound import. They were beginning to see the Buddha, [yet] there were those who had not seen the Buddha in corporeal form. To them he also "came back".

15.7.7 " . . . IS GUILTY OF THE SIN OF WILLFULLY FALSE SPEECH, OR IS THERE NOT?" (43b7, 241:27) The [Buddha's] intention he originally set was to make beings gain consciousness [of the reality], and it bore the fruit of saved beings. Even though the [Buddha's] words are lacking in ["contrary to"] consistency [the underlying] li does not contradict the truth. Although [the Buddha] preached all day long, by preaching he did not commit "the sin of willfully false speech".<sup>11</sup>

15.8.1 "EMERGE ON THE MOUNT OF THE NUMINOUS EAGLE (GRDHRA-KUTA)". (43b24, 242:28) The Buddha is at the stage of beginning to feel (kan) [the need of beings]: he "emerges".

15.8.2 "EVER AM I ON THE MOUNT OF THE NUMINOUS EAGLE . . . YET THE LIVING BEINGS,<sup>12</sup> SEEING IT CONSUMED WITH FLAME". (43c5, 243:12) The Buddha who was seen earlier is absent because of the multitudinous beings' impurity and evil. The Buddha is absent because of [the beings'] impurity, which means that in the state of no impurity, [the Buddha] must be present. [Only] when there is no impurity is [the Buddha] positively present.<sup>13</sup> Hence, he clearly shows it by resort to the seven treasures,<sup>14</sup> which implies that there is no impurity of [the land of] stones and sands.<sup>15</sup> [The Buddha]



himself did not [specifically] mention that its substance (t'i) is not impure. When it comes to talking about the formless (wu-hsing, arūpa), how can it also be different from the basic substance (chih) of impurity? Hence, the undefiled purity has the [real] meaning of 'no-land'. By resort to 'land', he speaks of 'no'; hence, he speaks of the pure land.<sup>16</sup> In that case, the purity of 'no land' must be none other than that in which the Dharma-body finds representation. When it comes to impurity and [410c1] evil being burned, it is the retribution for the sin of living beings. Also, how can [burning] harm the omnipresent and absolutely pure? [It should be innocuous.] Therefore, living beings see it being burned and yet the "Pure Land" is not ruined, and it makes<sup>17</sup> them feel delighted in what is beautiful and esteem what they like. If they hear that the Pure Land is not ruined, they will then nurture expectation and longing in the depth of their thought. What they are benefited from [the Buddha's attempt to make them] penetrate the darkly profound [realm] by way of exemplification of wordly affairs is plentiful.

15.8.3 "I, EVER KNOWING THE LIVING BEINGS". (44a1, 244:28)  
 What is chanted here is concordant with [what is said in the prose section] that he preached the subtle, [wondrous Dharma].  
 (42c4)

15.8.4 "EACH TIME HAVING THIS THOUGHT".<sup>18</sup> This is largely concordant with [what is said] likewise (43a23) [in the prose

section].

## CHAPTER 16. DISCRIMINATION OF MERITS

(The Buddha narrates the merit which shall accrue to those who venerate the foregoing chapter of the Lotus telling of the unlimited nature of the Buddha's life-span)<sup>1</sup>

16.1 Cause and effect entail each other. Faith is [influential on or related to the process] like shadow [is to the object] and echo [is to the sound]. In the above they heard [the Buddha] preaching [his limited] life-span and so they have been doing their utmost in seeking advantages; by availing themselves of this [opportunity] to obtain the effect, they will get the reward bountifully. Now [the Buddha] is going to distinguish its difference. Accordingly the chapter is entitled "discrimination of merits".

16.2.1 "AJITA". In the Chinese language,<sup>2</sup> it means "[the one] not conquered". Maitreya is his style.

16.2.2 "GAINED ACCEPTANCE OF [THE DOCTRINE OF] THE UNBORN DHARMAS (ANUTPATTIKA-DHARMA-KṢĀNTI)". Why is there any need for talking about those who have been really enlightened? [410c10] The purpose of citing broadly those who obtained enlightenment is to glorify this sūtra, [helping] to generate and accumulate various [stages of] understanding, so that by catering to the [need and situations of] beings in endlessly varied ways <sup>3</sup> [the Buddha] may secretly exhort those seekers

[of enlightenment] to keep this Dharma Blossom. When one has not yet seen li, there is a need for the ferry of the words; for one who has witnessed li, what is the use of words? They are like the fish-trap and snare for catching fish and rabbits: when fish and rabbits have been already caught, what functional application do they have?<sup>4</sup> [It is said here that] once hearing the sūtra [preached], they immediately reach the one-birth-bound [stage]<sup>5</sup> or [the state of] the forbearance of dharmas.<sup>6</sup> Yet, li should certainly not be so.<sup>7</sup> If originally there is no understanding, what can words add? The view that there are advancing and retrograding [in men's realization of li] is groundless. Yet it is said in the writing to be the case. [Why?] Because li, as enunciated by the sūtra, espouses the ten stages. Even though it is not something to resort to it is yet put in the position of something to resort to; the knowledge of the sūtra has no functional application and yet it is said to possess the capacity of functional application. Through this demonstration [the Buddha] is able to make the [past] facts of [attainment] manifest the meaning of the sūtra. If one follows and knows it, how can one be finished [as a practitioner]!<sup>8</sup>

16.3 In [the phrase] ". . . were destined after eight rebirths to gain the unexcelled bodhi (anuttarasamyaksambodhi)" (44a17, 245:20), this ["eight rebirths"] refers to the eighth stage. Since for one who is beyond the eighth

stage there is no more reincarnation, how can it be known whether his wisdom [410d1] is bright or dark? Therefore, by resorting to eight rebirths [instead of "stages"], [the Buddha makes the beings] realize that the Buddha shall have been gone a long time before. "One rebirth" is the number through which Maitreya, for example, is destined to go. Likewise there may be two [rebirths] or three or up to eight. "Eight" refers to many births. Many births, hence, they know or they may also be dark about it. [The Buddha] does not speak of ten rebirths, because "ten" is one ultimate of numbers, with the meaning of "a great many", and he intends to show that the bodhisattvas still have some delusions and instigators of depravities left, a little short [of annihilation]. Hence, "eight" is resorted to. [The Buddha] goes directly to "four births" without mentioning six [rebirths], wishing to demonstrate that the sūtra is so profound and deep, darkly drawing one to enlightenment and entrance into reality. [The bodhisattvas who are in the stages] from transcendence<sup>9</sup> to four rebirths reveal that intent. The fact that from four rebirths to one rebirth they proceed by degrees without skipping steps has the implication that li becomes [increasingly] wondrous [as they proceed]. That those who are enlightened also [gradually] become less [in number], and that it is hard to quickly attain [enlightenment], attests to this idea.

#### 16.4.1 "HEARING OF [THE GREAT LENGTH OF] THE BUDDHA'S LIFE-

SPAN". (44c20, 251:33) [This refers to] the Buddha's wisdom-life. Now since hearing about [the Buddha's long] life-span is equivalent to practising [the pāramitā of] prajñā or wisdom intensively, here it is thus said that the merit one can achieve by practising the five pāramitās<sup>10</sup> for [many] nayutas of kalpas may not equal [even the tiniest] part [of the merit one can achieve by hearing about the Buddha's long life-span].

16.4.2 "WHO CAN KEEP THIS SCRIPTURE AND AT THE SAME TIME PRACTISE THE SPREADING OF GIFTS". (45c14, 253:27) The meaning of what has been said in the above [410d10] is found here. When one holds the wondrous understanding ensconced inwardly, and outwardly further practises the six pāramitās, [it means that] one has advanced [toward enlightenment] in terms of both [inner] thought and [its outer] practical ramifications (shih), and so one's right enlightenment (samyaksambodhi) is [so imminent that it can come any moment like] in the morning or evening.<sup>11</sup>

#### CHAPTER 17. THE MERITS OF APPROPRIATE JOY

(Again at Maitreya's question, the Buddha declares that the joy and merit of those who hear the sūtra surpasses that which can be had by practising other virtues whatsoever.)

17.1 In the beginning when the Sage arranged the teaching, he did not expect that those who would be benefited by it

would be limited to the contemporary beings; he desired strongly that the teaching be directed to the coming generations, admonishing and transforming numerous living beings. The thesis that the effect of the three makes that of the One, as has been explicated above, is roughly completed. This chapter is intended to deal with the topic of those who spread [the sūtra]. When a man wants to propagate Dharma, it is essential that he hold joy and pleasure in his mind. If his mind is full of hatred and anger, he distances himself from [other] beings. How can the Tao spread by the one who distances oneself from [other] beings?<sup>1</sup> Hence, the chapter is entitled "appropriate joy".

17.2.1 "MAITREYA ADDRESSED THE BUDDHA". (46b19, 259:1) Maitreya who was formerly inclined to practise [the Dharma] with appropriate joy now again asks the Buddha about its meaning.

17.2.2 "HOW MUCH HAPPINESS SHALL HE OR SHE OBTAIN?" He demonstrates how much or little [happiness they shall obtain], in order to make stronger the beings' will to seek it.<sup>2</sup>

17.2.3 "UNTIL IT REACHES THE FIFTIETH PERSON". The purpose of taking up [411a1] the last person is [to say] that most of the people in the beginning, hearing in person the wisdom-preaching, tend to accept it with deep pleasure, but if it is transmitted to other people, especially when it comes to the

last person, pleasure in their hearts will attenuate and those with the attenuated pleasure will likewise have the merits lessened. [Yet,] this time, it turns out that it is not the case; it is suggested that his happiness and recompense are limitless. How much the more would be [the happiness and recompense of] those who were present in the very first audience sitting and hearing first-hand [the Buddha preaching the sūtra]! It must also be deep!

17.2.4 "THE LIVING BEINGS OF THE FOUR KINDS OF BIRTH".<sup>3</sup> What they desire and seek for are a lot [of merits], [but their pleasure is] "not like the appropriate joy the fiftieth person would get in hearing the Dharma Blossom" (46c25). The merits of the four fruitions<sup>4</sup> as mentioned above (46c17) are of limited measure [in comparison with the joy]. [In contrast,] the Dharma Blossom for the sake of li represents a complete penetration of the ultimate of nothingness.<sup>5</sup> Men are able to have appropriate joys, which means that they have accomplished the path of the Thus Come One. The path has been accomplished because of these men, so that their merits can not be easily pressed down [from arising]. Hence, it is said, "[the merit] does not equal one-hundredth part, not one-thousandth . . . part." How can it be an empty [statement]?<sup>6</sup>

17.3.1 "[HE SHALL BE] . . . NEVER DUMB". (47a12, 260:23)  
How can the recompense ["for having rejoiced at hearing"] the

Dharma Blossom be administered this way? [The Buddha] merely takes up what men feel like [having]. Hence, [the Buddha] says: "[the body into which he is reborn] shall acquire . . . carriages, as well as palanquins fitted with precious gems." (47a4, 260:10)

17.3.2 "HIS BREATH NEVER FETID". There is nothing that can be disliked.

17.3.3 "AND IN THE GREAT MULTITUDE [EXPLAINS] THEM TO OTHERS". (47a22, 261:4) [411a10] This refers to the forthcoming chapter. What has not been substantiated in the above and what has so far been omitted is how much there will be of the merit of those who rejoice appropriately, "explaining" by turns<sup>7</sup> and propagating [the sūtra to others].

#### CHAPTER 18. THE MERITS OF THE DHARMA-PREACHER

(The merits to be accorded to those who take care of the sūtra are here enumerated in terms of the tangible rewards to be reached by the six senses.)

18.1.1 The earlier chapter (10) concerning "preachers of Dharma" was aimed at propagating that the cause of the three is that of the One. This chapter is aimed at making it widely known that the effect of the three turns out to be that of the one and at distinguishing the merit and retribution of the Dharma as well.



18.1.2 "WHETHER READING IT, RECITING IT, INTERPRETING IT, OR COPYING IT". (47c4, 264:3) This refers to the Dharma preacher. It is said in the ( ) (previous?) chapter (17),<sup>1</sup> "and in the great multitude [he] explains them to others." (47a21) Here this statement is now substantiated.

18.2.1 "EIGHT HUNDRED VIRTUES OF THE NOSE . . . VIRTUES OF THE MIND". As for the retribution for those who practise the Dharma Blossom as they preach it, it is the great enlightenment-wisdom. This wisdom is capable of clairvoyance and omniscience. If the beings are to be given ultimate wisdom, it will be imparted to them imperceptibly. That is why it is made to be present in men with restraint, as if the joy could [only] be attained step by step. The retributions are explained in terms of the six senses, in order to draw the learners to it. (Hearing)<sup>2</sup> it, the learners [411b1] will be willing to practise the sūtra and accumulate the acts [as exhorted by the sūtra], working to achieve that by which they abide. As regards the statement that [the Buddha] resorts to the six senses [as teaching aids], [the faculty of] seeing the forms (rūpa) naturally is present in the eyes and [the faculty of] perceiving the Dharma naturally is present in the mind. As already suggested the attainment through learning cannot make [one to acquire the capacities of] all-seeing and omniscience. Hence, the ever-penetrating eyes stop at seeing "the three thousand" [chilocosms or great worlds]. On (this?)<sup>3</sup> ground it is possible to speak of the physical body.

The physical body exists close to [the reality] in a coarse form and so we can say it is still short of getting hold of the Dharma-body. In the final analysis, [on the other hand], the three thousand [chilocosms] being such, how can they be different from the ten quarters<sup>4</sup> [in their largeness]? They represent [the range of] the ultimate illumination by the substance (t'i) of the Dharma-body. The three faculties<sup>5</sup> are illustrated [with respect to] the [eight hundred] virtues in reading and preaching [the sūtra]. Thus the numbers shown are not identical [with that of the other three]. What they represent in totality can be the One; separately, they show the immeasurable [representations]. They are all merely approximate numbers.<sup>6</sup> He who searches independently the meaning of the chapter<sup>7</sup> may grasp it beyond outside the words.

18.3 "One thousand two hundred" meritorious virtues are based on the ten kinds of goodness. What they mean are as follows. Self-practise, converting [others] through teaching, praise, and appropriate joy each have ten kinds of goodness, making a total of forty. One goodness in turn can be combined with the ten goodnesses. Forty goodnesses, all combined with the same, make the total of four hundred goodnesses. Four hundred goodnesses [411b10] have [three grades] each: superior, mediocre, and inferior, making one thousand two hundred. The three faculties, unlike [the other

three], consist of two grades, mediocre and inferior, to produce eight hundred goodnesses. The rest of the faculties have a superior [grade], and so they consist of one thousand two hundred [virtues].

18.4 "[ALL] CHANGE FOR HIS LINGUAL FACULTY INTO THINGS OF SUPERIOR FLAVOR". (49b18, 273:8) Innate endowment<sup>8</sup> benefits and enriches ourselves, enabling us to obtain the taste of the "sweet dew"<sup>9</sup> present in us. Yet the rewards we receive are originally not "bitter and astringent". How then can there be changes? But [the Buddha] says that there are, in order to attract and draw them to entertain the feeling of intimacy. The same is true when it comes to the retributions in connection with the "sounds" and the "scents". How can they be spoken of as "ugly"? Yet, the worldly sounds and scents have [the distinction of] being good or bad. When the bodhisattvas hear it, what harm is there then?<sup>10</sup>

#### CHAPTER 19. [THE BODHISATTVA] NEVER DISPARAGING

(More on the same, followed by the Buddha's narration of his own behavior in a previous era, in which, as the bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta, he was the object of much contempt and violence, but requited all actions with love and patience.)<sup>1</sup>

19 As regards the respectful scripture of the Dharma Blossom,<sup>2</sup> it is the source of many goodnesses and the luminous part of the ultimate wisdom. By going against it, one will see one's sins piled up like a mountain; by following

it, one will reach the state of happiness [as great] as the ocean.<sup>2</sup> Although he has talked about it, [the Buddha] has not yet illustrated with concrete examples of men. Thus he draws from the past and proves the present, [411c1] so that [the number of] believers may increase. If one slanders and goes against it, the guilt will be like that of Bhadrāpāla et al. (If?)<sup>3</sup> one complies with it, one's fortune will be like that of the bodhisattva Never Disparaging (Sadāparibhuta). Having wanted to give testimonial to the sūtra, he thus set up this part,<sup>4</sup> pointing out those who committed guilt and those who received happiness, in order to help dispose of their doubts and slanders about it. [The Buddha] demonstrates that the fruit of the bodhisattva's attainment was the purification of his six faculties (51a6ff.) with a view to explaining that he had pure faith. Also expressed is the idea that guilt and fortune [entail each other like] shadow and echo; there cannot be any discrepancy as far as the underlying li is concerned.<sup>5</sup> This is what a disciple [of the antinomian school which] adheres [just] to the learning of how to cleanse [oneself] should be careful about.<sup>6</sup> The retributions for their guilt are like those mentioned in [the parable of] the burning house (Chapter 3).

CHAPTER 20. THE SUPERNATURAL POWERS OF THE THUS COME ONE

(The bodhisattvas who have assembled from all over the universe promise to propagate the Lotus,

whereupon both Buddhas stretch out their tongues, which extend very far, and emit a ray of light that illuminates the entire universe.)

20.1 It is described here that [both] cause and effect have come to an end, which means that li is perfected while the related worldly facts (shih) [used as the explanatory tools such as analogies and parables] have fulfilled [their assigned roles].<sup>2</sup> The words of the Tao and the virtuous acts are completely propagated all over (the world?)<sup>3</sup> However, lights illuminating the dark world [encounter] many opposing elements while profound voices [meet] adversities. [Likewise], when it comes to inspiring faith in the corrupt and final [age], [the Buddha] finds it hard to temporarily entrust them from then on with the Dharma Blossom. Thus he displays first supernatural powers that surpass any of the kind, making the multitude overjoyed and be in the psychological state of wonder. The envoys from afar in ten quarters, saying namah, vow to devote their lives to the Buddha. Thereupon [beings] become faithful with great intensity.<sup>4</sup>

20.2.1 [411c10] "PUTTING FORTH HIS LONG, BROAD TONGUE". (51c18, 286:17) This implies that [the Buddha's speeches are not empty.

20.2.1 "WHILE HIS PORES EMITTED RAYS". This indicates that the (light?)<sup>5</sup> of the One ultimate (leaves?)<sup>6</sup> nothing that is not illuminated by it.

20.2.3 "COUGHED AND SNAPPED THEIR FINGERS". Above it is shown that tongues emitted rays of light, with the implication that speeches were not false; wisdom illuminates [all] without leaving anything [in the dark]. [The Buddha's] Path (Tao) being such, it is clear therefrom that li spreads down to the golden mean.<sup>7</sup> That li spread down to the golden mean finds expression in "cough". Yet the voice reaching down to the golden mean must have a purport when it is mentioned, again finding expression in "snapping fingers". Li has been propagated all over the (world);<sup>8</sup> hence, the statement, "These two sounds reached throughout [the world-spheres of the Buddhas] in all ten quarters " (51c23). The living beings in ten quarters begin to sense their [innate] endowment of enlightenment:<sup>9</sup> thus "[the earth] trembles in six different ways."

20.2.4 "ALL TOGETHER THEY SCATTERED THEM FROM AFAR ON THE SAHĀ WORLD-SPHERE". (52a10, 287:26) Although those living beings are ignorant of (One?)<sup>10</sup> yet they, thanks to favorable conditions, can have a glimpse of it "from afar". That they made offerings from afar with various kinds of treasures stands for giving ( ) the ultimate ( ). The purpose of showing this unreal appearance is to convey that the path [of the One] is not separate from [the path of the three].

20.2.5 "AS IF THEY HAD BEEN ONE BUDDHA-LAND". As their feeling becomes congealed within and reaches its epitome,

their sensing [of the endowment for enlightenment] appears without.<sup>11</sup>

20.2.6 "TURNING INTO JEWELLED CANOPIES, COMPLETELY COVERED THE BUDDHAS IN THIS [REGION]". What this and the subsequent segment stating that [the world-spheres] in all ten quarters become [411d1] one [Buddha-land] indicates is this: unless they have not sincerely exerted themselves and sensed the ultimate no one can do in such a way.<sup>12</sup> What that implicitly signifies is that even though the causes are diverse in a myriad of ways, they finally return to the effect of the One.

#### CHAPTER 21. ENTRUSTMENT

(The Buddha now entrusts the sūtra to all bodhisattvas present, striking them on the crown of the head and asking them to go back to where they came from.)

21 Earlier when [the Buddha] preached about the cause, the entrustment [of the sūtra] was made as well.<sup>1</sup> Since the theme has not yet been wound up, there has been no separate chapter [for entrustment]. Here [the Buddha] now enunciates that both cause (chs. 1-13) and effect (chs. 14-21) have come to an end and that the preaching of li has been completed. As such, the great wisdom of the Thus Come One ( ) ( ). Here he entrusts them to keep this sūtra while striking [incalculable bodhisattva-mahāsattvas] on the crown of the head, to show that li is so deep and the worldly facts (shih) [involved as descriptive tools] are so sublime,

( ) ( ). This chapter is established for this purpose.

CHAPTER 22. THE FORMER AFFAIRS OF THE BODHISATTVA  
MEDICINE KING

(The Buddha narrates an extraordinary act of devotion shown by the bodhisattva Medicine King in his past reincarnation, that of burning himself to death.)

22.1 In the above it has been explicated that li of cause and that of effect are one; that is, there is no different purport. As the substructural ultimate became manifest, their understanding and discernment came to have [a distinct] presence. [The theme of] the section following this chapter concerning [411d10] the men of three [vehicles] equally becoming the men of One [Vehicle] clarifies that the children of two vehicles cannot help but become identical with ( ) (those of?)<sup>1</sup> the Greater [Vehicle]. Having finished preaching the sūtra, [the Buddha] now takes the examples of those who propagated the sūtra. Earlier there were some examples of those who testimonially practised [the teaching of] the sūtra. In the present chapter he marks out several people showing their traces of conduct in order to help verify [the effect of] the Dharma Blossom. Those people were formerly in other realms, propagating this canon. Now further again in this realm they transmit and keep this sūtra, enabling the teaching of the Path (Tao) to benefit [beings] in the present time, and the fragrance of the



virtues (te)<sup>2</sup> to flow to be heard for a thousand years to come, so that those who advance to the destination proper, when they are in compliance with it, may reach it.

22.2 Now, as it here appears, the past case of burning [one's own] body is referred to as "the former affairs". What does burning [one's own] body signify? When it comes to what a man treasures and values, nothing exceeds the bodily life, and when one burns it oneself, it is because there is something treasured as much as is the body. If one is capable of grasping such meaning, even though one exists with the physical form, one is burning, as it were, all the time. [If] li is perverted from one in catching the intent, even though one burns oneself all day long, [in reality] one is never burning. [The Buddha] hopes that they attain [li] outside of its traces and be not stagnated in the worldly facts involved (shih). The meaning of the reason why the Sage thought of demanding ( ) ( ) is articulated here.

22.3 "[HE WAS] BORN AGAIN [412a1] IN THE REALM OF THE BUDDHA PURE AND BRIGHT EXCELLENCE OF SUN AND MOON". (53b19, 295:24) This man had the cause planted not in vain; consequently the effect is likewise not empty. Those [antinomians] diligently who seek [just] to cleanse themselves may not be practising virtuous acts deeply enough to induce the wondrous ultimate.<sup>3</sup> Such an example is cited, therefore, for

the purpose of illustrating and proving [the need for practising virtuous acts].

### CHAPTER 23. [THE BODHISATTVA] FINE SOUND

(From another world-realm comes the bodhisattva Fine Sound who attained various samādhis to pay homages to the Buddha, who tells the congregation about his achievement in a previous reincarnation.)

23.1 When the multitude heard of the former affairs of [the bodhisattva] Medicine King, they again praised the meritorious virtues of the Dharma Blossom with all the more added faith and respect, all wanting to protect and keep [the sūtra]. The methods of propagating and spreading it must have that by which they are caused. [Of the possible] practices connected with that by which they are caused, in general there is nothing more penetrating than "the samādhi of the manifestation of the body of all forms". (56b18 & 28, 309:10 & 35) What is "the samādhi[of the manifestation ] the body of all forms"? It is none other than the wisdom of the Dharma Blossom. When men can glorify and spread the Dharma Blossom, then they manifest this samādhi, easily changing appearances and preaching [it] in boundlessly varied ways. The [bodhisattva-]mahāsattva Fine Sound (Gadgadasvara) is himself the one [who has attained samādhi]. He by resort to traces goes back and forth [from one realm to another] in order to propagate this sūtra. The benefit he is giving must be very great. [The Buddha] emits a ray of light [from]

between his brows to illuminate that realm because he wishes to let [the bodhisattva] Fine Sound come.

23.2 "HE MAGICALLY CREATED [EIGHTY-FOUR THOUSAND] JEWEL-CLUSTERED LOTUS BLOSSOMS". (55b19, 305:3) [The bodhisattva Fine Sound] wishes to come soon [to the Sahā world-sphere]. Hence, he first displays the wondrous omen of numerous flowers, so that living beings in this realm may launch the thought of fascination and longing for it.

23.3 "[THIS] THUS COME ONE MANY JEWELS, [LONG EXTINCT], FOR YOUR SAKES WILL DISPLAY MARKS". (55c5, 305:32) The purpose of making Many Jewels now [appear and] display marks is twofold: first, to show that Many Jewels will come for the sake of the Dharma Blossom; second, to show that the paths of various Buddhas are identical.<sup>1</sup>

CHAPTER 24. THE GATEWAY TO EVERYWHERE OF THE BODHISATTVA  
HE WHO OBSERVES THE SOUNDS OF THE WORLD

(The Buddha tells the congregation about the efficacy of invoking Avalokiteśvara.)

24.1 As regards the topic, the Sage hangs the candle [of the Dharma], expediently leading [beings] in ever-varying ways,<sup>1</sup> sometimes through supernatural wonders, sometimes by resort to the method of [invoking] a name. Since the subtle triggering-mechanism is uneven [from one individual to another], the way they take and refuse [what is given to them

by the Buddha] is not identical. The name of Avalokiteśvara is singled out and glorified for the purpose of causing living beings to find refuge in, rely on, and feel for, one [person],<sup>2</sup> driving their feeling of respect to great intensities. If a man is capable of holding one [person] in high esteem, there is no one single [person] for whom he cannot do the same. [The Buddha's] exhorting beings for it in such a way should not be interpreted as his favour of one prevailing over another.<sup>3</sup>

24.2 [The Buddha embarked on] saving [the beings] by resort to varied means without leaving any missed out:<sup>4</sup> it is referred to as "everywhere" ["universal"]. Following enlightenment he has penetrated [412b1] the supernatural: it is referred to as "gateway".

24.3 Those who, "suffering pain and torment, hear of the name of this bodhisattva He who Observes the Sounds of the World (Avalokiteśvara)" "all shall gain deliverance." (56c6, 311:8) [One may argue in the following way.] The sage wheels<sup>5</sup> [the beings] in the beginning<sup>6</sup> [of the process].<sup>7</sup> The underlying li is that he cannot lift up those without faculty;<sup>8</sup> [in other words], if there is no religious nexus (tao-chi)<sup>9</sup> within [a man], the Sage will not respond.<sup>10</sup> How [then] can one merely by invoking a name immediately gain deliverance (hsieh-t'o/mokṣa)? Yet here [the Buddha] says so. Why? [I would answer in this way.] "Avalokiteśvara"

is, in speaking of its li, the one who is capable of propagating [the sūtra or its doctrine] to all, and, in speaking of its implicit [meaning], is the one who [sets out] to save all. Beings, possessing the subtle, triggering nexus (chi) of enlightenment, actively stimulate the Sage. The Sage is equipped with the Tao of all-embracing propagation.<sup>11</sup> Now that the Tao of all-embracing propagation has been expounded, how can their deliverance (mokṣa) be an empty [word]?<sup>12</sup> Isn't [the result of] exhorting beings by glorifying a name also magnanimous?

24.4 "WHO CAN BE CONVEYED TO DELIVERANCE BY THE BODY OF A BUDDHA". (57a23, 314:7) The bodhisattva Fine Sound appeared in various bodies, in order to attain the samādhi of the body of all forms. Here also Avalokiteśvara preaches the Dharma, appearing in various forms, all for the sake of propagating the Dharma Blossom. Men are different, [but] the path (Tao) remains the same, which shows that [various] cultivations are certain to lead to attainment [of One].

## CHAPTER 25. DHĀRAṆĪ

(Some dhāraṇīs or charms are pronounced by some listeners, which are designed to protect those who keep the sūtra.)

25.1 [412b10] As regards the topic, the cause and conditions and calendrical numbers match with each other in the way shadow [matches with real object] and echo [matches with

real voice or source]; [being the case], how can one escape luck or misfortune and calamities or happiness?<sup>1</sup> Yet profound speeches and preaching on li are cut off [by the dimension that can be expressed only as] wondrous or mysterious from the general mass, with the result of causing those with shallow knowledge to become [too] weak-willed for receiving and keeping [the sūtra]. [The Buddha] wants to make them rely on incantation in order to turn the collective sentiment of beings earnest at the time. The people of the other realms believe in and respect incantation. The method (fa) of incantation is capable of letting one ward off misfortune and invite luck, being successfully applicable to every situation. The latter age will see lots of fearful things happening; nobody will be able to cultivate the good without taking the risk of being harmed. Thus the Sage, having sympathy for their stupidity and darkness, preaches the methods for them, [so that] those who are ignorant of li but hope to unite therewith may quickly come to have faith. Thus he borrows [the method of] the incantation of names for recording<sup>2</sup> therein the preaching of li. This way li can be preached anywhere, again achieving [the unity of] name and actuality.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, advent of fortune or misfortune has to do with demons and spirits. By using the charms, one can order them not to do any harm. All those who are fearful of the fetters and are afraid of harm should cultivate [the cause of] the sūtra. Having reached [the stage of]

cultivating [the cause of] the sūtra, naturally there is the need for secret words. As the comprehension of the secret words become manifest, misfortune destroys itself.<sup>4</sup> Now, the Dharma Blossom being the ultimate of substrata, the Buddha resorts to incantation in preaching it. People are pleased with the benefits of incantations and like to take advantage of it. They become inclined to and immersed in it; [412c1] they receive and keep it with great care.

25.2 Although li of the incantation is one, the way the words are arranged is not identical. All have [the order of] right and left, which are solely entrusted to the Buddha. Therefore, again, because of this, the words are arranged in the order in which they were uttered by the Buddha. In case any reversal [of the words] occurs later, (the sin)<sup>5</sup> must be grave. If it is the charm for one who keeps [the sūtra], that is called dhāraṇī. Charms, being the words of demons and spirits, are not translatable.

25.3.1 Pūtaṇa (53c11, 321:15) is an inauspicious demon [haunting the people] of the world. One, when afflicted by the disease caused by it, is bound to die.

25.3.2 Kṛtya is a demon arising from a corpse.

25.3.3 Vaiśravaṇa is the heavenly king (mahārājas) of the north, primarily commanding the two demons, "yakṣa" and "rākṣasa". The mahārāja controlling the east (Dhṛtarāṣṭra)

has the two demons under him: gandharva and piśācāh. The mahārāja of the south rules over the two demons: kumbhānda and hungry ghost. The mahārāja of the west controls all [the remaining] dragons (nāgas) and kinnaras. Each of the four mahārājas thus is in charge of his own territory.

25.3.4 Daughters of rākṣasas (59a23, 322:15) and others. These ten female demons possess great powers in the world. They are the mothers of various demons. They respect and obey the Buddha's order as they also pronounce this charm. Even though the demons are wicked, they do not disobey [412c10] their mothers. As their mothers obey the Buddha, their sons follow them.

25.3.5 "[THE TENTH NAMED] ROBBER OF THE VITAL VAPORS OF ALL LIVING BEINGS". In the heart of a man there are seven [measures of] mucus sweet-water for nourishing human life. If a rākṣasa enters into a man's body, and drinks one mucus, then he is caused to suffer a head illness. If [the demon] drinks two, three, or four [measures of] mucus, then a man loses consciousness. Yet, it is curable, but if he is left there, he is bound to die. Thus, he is "robbed of vital vapors".

25.3.6 "APASMĀRAKA". (59b7, 323:3) This demon enters into a man's body, making the muscles of the hands and feet twisted and making him expectorate in the mouth. It is a



fever-demon. If the demons assume these various forms, [it means that] they have penetrated the sick men.

25.3.7 When "a branch of the arjaka tree" falls to the ground it makes seven pieces without fail. Hence, the analogy taken from this [to express "Then may his head split into seven parts" (323:12)].

25.3.8 "THE CALAMITY VISITED ON ONE FOR HAVING PRESSED OIL". Many heretics (tīrthikas)<sup>6</sup> hold the view that all the grasses and plants bear life. The demons all believe this view. Therefore, they are afraid of committing sin by pressing oil.

#### CHAPTER 26. [THE FORMER AFFAIRS OF] THE KING FINE ADORNMENT

(The achievements of some bodhisattvas in the past lives are traced here.)

26 [412d1] The wondrous path of the Dharma Blossom has been so deep and recondite. In addition, the Medicine King, and others have become the propagators. In this way the man is lofty while li is recondite,<sup>1</sup> being separated from the mass [by the dimension of] dark, [absolute realm]. Those of shallow intelligence have been slow in comprehending it and in fact have retrograded.<sup>2</sup> Though they have wanted to propagate the sūtra, they have not dared to try to put it into practice. For this reason [the Buddha] takes up the example of the King Fine Adornment. The King Fine Adornment had earlier been [a man] with "crooked views". (60a2,

326:15) When his "crooked views" were rectified, he then became a propagator of the Dharma Blossom. Those with average intelligence thereupon resolve to propagate the sūtra. Expedient traces have venturesomely been given [by the Buddha], with the result that those who are saved are many. Illustrated as well [in this chapter] is the significance of a good friend<sup>3</sup> (60c3 & 7, 329:26 & 33), implicitly revealing the beauty of learning lessons by way of observing another person.<sup>4</sup> Thus introducing the earlier, past conditions are "the former affairs".

CHAPTER 27. THE ENCOURAGEMENTS OF THE BODHISATTVA  
UNIVERSALLY WORTHY

(Samantabhadra vows to be the protector of all who extol the Lotus and of all who appeal to him for help. The Buddha then entrusts the Lotus to him, once more dwelling on the merit which shall accrue to those who extol this scripture, as well as on the afflictions that shall attend all who harm such persons.)<sup>1</sup>

27 The human sentiment is [the source of] blindness and ignorance; pure [form of] faith is something quite hard [to attain]. [As such], [the Buddha] has found it necessary to [devise] an all-round ruler<sup>2</sup> that is applicable to unrestrictedly to any circumstances, to resort to traces [instead of showing the reality itself], and to corroborate [his theses] by means of the worldly facts. [The process of corroborating by means of the facts being shown, faith is then to be strengthened.

The bodhisattva Universally Worthy (Samantabhadra) made a vow in an earlier reincarnation, [saying] "if there is any place where people read and recite the Scripture of Dharma Blossom, [412d10] I will go there and encourage them, showing them what is false and wrong." [Hence,] the chapter is entitled "Encouragements". Beings were pleased with the [Buddha's] response by way of the supernatural omen [in the previous chapter]. Thereupon [they have been made determined to] cultivate the sūtra definitely with utmost diligence and zeal.

Fa-hua Ching Shu,  
Roll the Second. The End.

Composed by Chu Tao-sheng

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION

## [PREFACE AND EXPLAINING THE TITLE]

<sup>1</sup>I.e., "Commentary on the Saddharmapundarika-sūtra." The text on which this translation is based is that of Hsü Tsang Ching, Vol. 150, 396-412.

<sup>2</sup>Emend 竺 to 竺.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. logos (λόγος): "word, speech, discourse, reason" (The Oxford English Dictionary): "word, speech, argument, explanation, doctrine, esteem, numerical computation, measure, proportion, plea, principle, and reason". (The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. P. Edwards, V. 5, 83) This word is preceded by 夫, but being an initial particle, renderable sometimes as "now", or "as regards the topic", it is left out here in translation.

<sup>4</sup>The word Tao otherwise will be either left untranslated especially when it appears to retain some connotations as found in Chinese philosophical systems, Taoism and Neo-Taoism in particular, or rendered with "path" or "Path", also Leon Hurvitz's rendering of the term in the Chinese text of the sūtra translated by Kumārajīva, which is equivalent to the Sanskrit word mārga.

<sup>5</sup>道而俗反. Tao referring to the religious or absolute order, su to the relative. It represents a variant of the more standard phrase 道(之)與俗反, which is found Pien-tsung lun, T52.225a16&226c7; in Tao-sheng's senior contemporary Hui-yūan's writing Sha-men pu-ching wang-che lun, T.52.30b10: rendered with "the Way is opposed to common practice" in Leon Hurvitz, "'Render unto Caesar' in Early Chinese Buddhism", p. 100; Ta-ch'eng ssu-lun hsüan-i ed. Chun-cheng of T'ang, HTC 74.13a7. For other variants, see Chao-lun shu by Hui-ta, HTC 150.443a10: 道俗相反; attributed to Bodhidharma, the legendary founder of the Ch'an school (6th century): 理與俗反, in Hu Shih's article "P'u-ti-ta-mo k'ao", Hu Shih Ch'an-hsüeh An, p. 57: 理與俗反 It is also important to note that a parallel opposition of the two orders occurs in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 28. 此有道者之所以異乎俗 "This shows how they who possess the Tao differ from common man.", James Legge, The Texts of Taoism, Vol. II, p. 149. Another typical rendering is "monks and laymen", as in Yampolsky, The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch (New York, 1967), p. 156 et passim.

<sup>6</sup>Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 197, presumes it to be Kumāra-jīva's, as does Ocho Enich in "Jiku Dōshō sen Hokeyoso no kenkyū", p. 228 and in Hokke shisō shih (1969, Kyoto) p. 229; Sakamoto Yukio in Sakamoto, ed., Hokeyo no Chūgokuteki tenkai, p. 2. But Liebenthal suspects it to be Fa-t'ai's in "A biography of Chu Tao-sheng", p. 92.

<sup>7</sup> 義 (meaning, doctrine), 談 (discussion), or 經 (sūtra)? Note the fact that, as Ocho points out, Tao-sheng in this commentary sets a pattern for the hsüan-i 玄義 and hsüan-t'an 玄談 of later Chinese Buddhism. See Ōchō, "Jiku Dōchō sen . . .", p. 227; Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 201. Anyway, it is obvious in the context that the lacuna refers to the sūtra concerned or something germane to it.

<sup>8</sup> 博 is emended to 博.

<sup>9</sup> 俱 Ocho, op. cit., p. 228, reads this as 但 ("yet", "merely").

<sup>10</sup> 事理 (the worldly affairs or facts and the principle), referring not exactly in this case to the apposition of two orders or realms, relative and absolute, which were to become the key terms in Hua-yen philosophy. Here they rather appear to denote the human affairs taken up as explanatory tools such as parables and analogies, and the underlying messages or principles respectively. For more discussion, see III, 2.

<sup>11</sup> 界石 the first letter meaning "as long as the time it would take to empty a city 100 yojanas square, by extracting a seed once every century", the second "the time required to rub away a rock 40 li square by passing a soft cloth over it once every century." (DCBT, p. 280). cf. Also the phrase 界石 ("firm as a rock") in the I Ching, hexagram Yu and Hsi-ts'u-chuan (Appended Remarks, hereafter to be referred to as A.R.), pt. II, ch. 5.

<sup>12</sup> 鼓生. Prof. Yüan-hua Jan suggests 鼓 may be a corruption of 豉, so that the phrase means "preservation of food" (literally "fermenting of beans"). Either way, we can discern the connotation that it is not easy for one to recount in written form in original detail what one heard before. Cf. the word 豉酒 in the biography of Hui-yuan, T50.361b, "bean-wine (a beverage made from the fermented juice of soy beans)". C. E. Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 253.

<sup>13</sup>Of the Sung Dynasty (House of Liu) (420-479 A.D.).

<sup>14</sup> 東林精舍 Liebenthal, "A Biography", 67, 68, &

88, distinguishes this from the Tung-lin Ssu 東林寺, the monastery proper. Then they must have been in the same compound on the mountain (Lu-shan). Yet it is questionable if the two terms, ching-she and ssu, refer to two different residences or quarters, for ching-she is the word for vihāra commonly used in reference to the places or monasteries rendered as ssu where the Buddha stayed or resided; see 397b12. For the early history of Tung-lin ssu, see E. Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 209. See also T'ang Yung-t'ung, Fo-chiao shih, I, 251.

<sup>15</sup>"One" is actually "two". See Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 198, n. 2: "The two-chuan arrangement must be the work of a later hand."; T'ang Yung-t'ung, Han-wei liang-Chin Nan-pei-ch'ao fo-chiao-shih, reprint in Taiwan, Vol. II, 148; E. Ocho Enichi, "Jiku Dōshō", p. 240.

<sup>16</sup>Chun-tzu 君子: "superior man" (Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy; Fung-Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy), "gentleman" (de Bary, ed., Sources of Chinese Tradition). For the original idea of the term as defined by Confucius, see the Lun-yü (or the Analects) 1:2, 8, 14 et passim. In 407b11 (ch. 8) the term refers to the arhants (28b).

<sup>17</sup>之 (of)? Cf. 398d4.

<sup>18</sup>Out of this paragraph Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 198, renders: "He hopes that gentlemen of learning, if they deign to read it, will not allow the shortcomings of the author to lead them to a condemnation of the subject."

<sup>19</sup>妙法 (Saddharma): "the True Law" (H. Kern), "the Wonderful Law" (Kato). Other than direct quotes from Hurvitz's translation, I will render 妙 with "wondrous", or less frequently "mysterious". See below note 41.

<sup>20</sup>Cf. Tao-te ching, ch. 41: 大音希聲 大象無形 "Great music sounds faint. Great form has no shape." (Wing-tsit Chan, The Way of Lao Tzu, p. 174; Chuang-tzu, ch. 17: 至精無形 "the ultimate essence has no shape."

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Tao-te ching ch. 14, the words "inaudible" and "subtle" in particular.

<sup>22</sup>The word 朕 "sign" is used synonymously along with trace in Kuo Hsiang's commentary to Chang-tzu (hereafter, CTC), chs. 2 (CTI 1:21)9&7 (CTI 3:39). See 403b12.

<sup>23</sup>Liebenthal translates the passage: "The absolute is free from individual features. Where things have got out of sight, where traces (of life) have vanished, what desig-

nation fits that realm? ("The World Conception of Chu Tao-sheng", Monumenta Nipponica, 12, Nos. 3-4 (1956) (hereafter, "The World Conception" II), 74.

24 機. See I Ching, Hsi-ts'u chuan or Appended Remarks, pt. II, ch. 5. I have borrowed the rendering from Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, p. 267, see also p. 784. For a Neo-Taoist usage, see Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 13 (CTI, 5:6).

25 "The circuit (or wheel) of the dharma" was set in motion by the Buddha when he first preached after his enlightenment in the Deer park near Benareth (Sarnath). The "wheel" is able to crush all evil and all opposition, like Indra's wheel, and which rolls on from man to man, place to place, age to age.

26 一善. See 397a2, 400d15. Cf. Chung-yung (The Doctrine of the Mean) ch. 8, Wing-tsit Chan, Source Book, p. 99, "one thing that was good". See also I Ching, Appended Remarks, Pt. 1, ch. 5: 一陰一陽之謂道 繼之者善也. "The successive movement of yin and yang constitutes the way (Tao). What issues from the way is good." Chan, A Source Book, p. 266.

27 'Catur-ārūpya (brahma) lokas', the four immaterial or formless heavens, arūpa-dhātu, above the eighteen brahma-lokas: ākāśānantyāyatana, the state of boundless space; viññānā-nantyāyatana, of boundless knowledge; ākīñcanyāyatana, or non-existence; naivasamjñānāsamjñānāyatana, the state of neither thinking nor not thinking. Ōchō Enichī, "Jiku Dōshō no Hokekyo shisō," in Sakamoto Yukio ed., Hokekyo no Chūgokuteki tenkai, p. 151, takes 四空 as 四空定 four stages of meditation (dhyāna) represented by four heavens.

28 三塗, that is, 三惡道 three evil destinies (apāya): hells, hungry ghosts, and animals.

29 Upadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa or nirvāṇa with remnants and anupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa or nirvāṇa without remnants.

30 Anāsrava-bodhipākṣika-dharmas. 'Anāsrava' means evil influence, depravity, evil, sin, misery, 'the influences which attach a man to the saṃsāra'. (Edgerton, BHS, p. 111) There are 37 constituents conducive to enlightenment.

31 方便, upāya kauśalya, "skillful means".

32 成之一美 Cf. the phrase 一爻之美 (the beauty of one line, a component of a trigram or hexagram) in Wang Pi, Chou-i lüeh-li (Simple Exemplifications of the

Principles of the Book of Changes), 23b.

<sup>33</sup>Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 218, takes the four Dharma-wheels to refer to the Hinayana canon, the Prajñāpāramitā, the Lotus, and the Mahāparinirvāna respectively. But Zukamoto Zenryū, Collective Works, Vol. 3, p. 26, differs in the first (dāna or charity and śīla or morality) and the second (Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna sūtras).

<sup>34</sup>會歸. Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 1 (CTI, 1:2). Cf. also Shu Ching, V. iv. 14, Legge, The Shoo King, p. 332. The term can be paraphrased as 會三歸 - "The three together returns (or belongs) to the One", the idea set to be stressed later in the T'ien-t'ai tradition; see, for example, T34.363a27 et passim, T46.775b12.

<sup>35</sup>Tsung 宗. See R. H. Robinson, Early Mādhyamika in India and China, p. 252, n. 9.: (In reference to "Ideal" rendered for the term in Hui-yuan's writing (p. 112)), "The term tsung 宗 means (a) Absolute Truth, (b) a proposition or thesis, (c) the goal of a quest, (d) an ideological school. Its connotations are those of the historically earlier meaning, 'clan shrine, clan'. But none of the above is exactly equivalent to the present case. It refers to the line of tradition the sūtra belongs to. Thus it is closer to the renderings of the term in T48.360a27 et passim by Wing-tsit Chan, The Platform Scripture, p. 127: "fundamental" (cf. ibid., "school"); by Philip Yampolsky, The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch, p. 170, "the basic teachings".

<sup>36</sup>平等 (sama), lit. "level and equal".

<sup>37</sup>一善. See 400d15: above n. 26.

<sup>38</sup>同歸一極. See 399d17, 400b6. Cf. I Ching, Appended Remarks, pt. II, ch. 5: 天下同歸而殊塗一致而百慮. "In the world there are many different roads but the destination is the same. There are hundred deliberations but the result is one." (tr. by Chan, The Source Book, p. 268). Also see Wang Pi, Commentary on the Tao-te ching (hereafter CTC), ch. 42: 萬物萬形其歸一也. "The ten thousand things have ten thousand different forms, but in the final analysis they are one" (tr. by A. Rump & W. Chan, Commentary on the Lao Tzu by Wang Pi, p. 128); ch. 47: "There may be many roads but their destination is the same, and there may be a hundred deliberations but the result is the same" (p. 137).

<sup>39</sup>大慧 (mahāprajñā). Altern. trans.: "All the accumulation of (many) a tiny part of good deed is what counts"; see 400d15.



<sup>40</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Mahābodhi is attained at the end, but during the progress each little bit of good counts." ("The World Conception", II, p. 4). For punctuation and comment, see T'ang Yung t'ung, Han Wei Liang-Chin Nan pei ch'ao Fo-chiao shih, (hereafter, Fo-chiao shih), II, p. 176.)

<sup>41</sup>See 402b6, 404a7.

<sup>42</sup>妙 (sad), "Fine" (Hurvitz), "mysterious" (Zurcher). Cf. 妙道 in Chuang-tzu, ch. 2, rendered with "the Mysterious Way" (Legge, I, 193), "the Mysterious Way" (Watson, p. 46). See above n. 19. For an interpretation of the rest of the paragraph from here on, see Ōchō Enich, "Jiku Dōshō sen Hokekyoso no kenkyū," p. 249f.

<sup>43</sup>Means also "thread".

<sup>44</sup>On "ching", E. R. Hughes, "Epistemological methods in Chinese Philosophy", in C. A. Moore, ed., Essays in East West Philosophy, p. 55, says: "The character ching meant in that age the warp set up on a loom. But after Confucius' time there came the practice of recording a teacher's noteworthy dicta, and these records came to be called ching, i.e., warp teaching on which disciples could weave the woof of their amplifications."

<sup>45</sup>Ōchō Enichi takes this to mean enlightenment (satori). See "Jiku Dōshō no hoke shisō", in Yukio Sakamoto ed., Hokekyo no Chūgokuteki tenkai, p. 154.

#### NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 1)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (hereafter, SLFD), p. x has a good summary of the contents chapter by chapter. I have nevertheless attempted a more extended summary for every chapter unless otherwise indicated. See also H. Kern, Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or The Lotus of the True Law, p. xxixff.

<sup>2</sup>命 For the meanings of and theories about the term in traditional Chinese philosophy, see Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book, p. 78f.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 409b13. See B. Kato, Myōhō-renge-kyo, The Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law, p. 1, note 1: "As an introductory chapter to the whole Sūtra it indicates (1)

the order of the Sūtra; (2) the origin, or scene of the revelation; (3) the statement of the doctrine of the Sūtra."

<sup>4</sup>See 409b13, 410d14, 411a13; Ōchō, "Jiku Dōshō no hoke shisō", p. 156.

<sup>5</sup>Evam. Tao-sheng dissects the word 如是 into "like (如) this (是)" for the exegetical purpose. Sanskrit words are based on U. Wogihara and Tsuchida, eds., Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtram, Romanized and Revised Text of the Bibliotheca Buddhica Publication (Tokyo: The Sankibo Buddhist Book Store, 1958).

<sup>6</sup>The first reference is to the page, column and line of the text (HTC); the second to the page and line of Hurvitz's translation. For the original lines of the sūtra, I follow Hurvitz's translation unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>7</sup>The transmitter is known to be Ananda. See Kato, Myōhō-rence-kyō, The Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law (Tokyo, 1971), p. 1, n. 2.

<sup>8</sup>Emend 符 to 符 .

<sup>9</sup>五事 . They are, as listed in the following section, testimonial seal (yin 印 ), transmitter or witness, time, place, and other "cohearers", in that order.

<sup>10</sup>從設 Cf. 假設 "prajñapti, ordinary teaching, doctrines derived from the phenomenal" (Soothhill, DCBT, p. 342), "prajñapti" being "manifestation in words, . . . verbal expression, . . . verbal convention, . . . arrangement, provision" (Edgerton, BHSD, 358).

<sup>11</sup>可謂道貴兼忘者也 . See 407d18. For the expression 道貴 see Chuang-tzu, ch. 17. (CTI, 6:12): 然則何貴於道耶 "What then is there so valuable in the Tao?" (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, pt. I, p. 383); "If that is so, then what is there valuable about the way?" (Watson, The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, p. 182). See also Analects, VIII.4, 君子所貴於者三 "There are three principles of which the man of high rank should consider specially important." (Legge, Confucius, p. 209). For the expression 兼忘, see Chuang-tzu, ch. 17: 兼忘天下難, 兼忘天下易. 使天下兼忘我難 . "[If it were easy to make my parents forget me,] it is difficult for me to forget all men in the world. If it were easy to forget all men in the world, it is difficult to make them all forget me." (Legge, I, p. 347) Also cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 12 (CTI, 4:12): 壽夭兼忘 E. Zuercher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, p. 251, renders the two-letter phrase with "universal oblivion".

<sup>12</sup>Apropos of the I Ching, Fung Yu-lan observes: "The development of a thing cannot go counter to its shih (time, i.e. circumstance, time plus environment). That is, for a development to succeed it must be at the proper time in the proper environment . . . on Feng Hexagram say, ' . . . The heavens and the earth cannot go counter to the shih factor . . .'" (Fung, tr. Hughes, The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy, p. 98.)

<sup>13</sup>Kan and ying are also traceable to the I Ching, for instance, Hexagram hsien. Also see Kuo Hsiang, ch. 12 (CTI, 4:33). For a brief general observation on the terms in this regard, see Tsukamoto, ed., Eon kenkyū, p. 408.

<sup>14</sup>Liebenthal translates: "When the spiritual state of a Being calls for the Sage he is able to bend down and answer (the call). For the relation of the Sage to the Beings is reciprocal (like that of Heaven to Earth) and no true spiritual need is slighted." ("The World Conception", II, 80).

<sup>15</sup>Emend 狂 to 孟. The term meng-lang occurs in Chuang-tzu, ch. 2, 孟浪之言 "wild and flippant words" (Watson, p. 46), "a shoreless flow of mere words" (Legge, pt. I, p. 193), "nonsense" (A. C. Graham, "Chuang-tzu's essay on seeing things as equal", in History of Religions, vol. 9, No. 1 (Aug, 1969), p. 158).

<sup>16</sup>More accurately, "a great congregation of bhiksus". See Skt. MSS, U. Wogihara and C. Tsuchida, p. 1:7: "mahātā bhikṣu-saṃghena", "a numerous assemblage of monks" (Kern, p. 1). But Kato, p. 1, note 6, has "Mahābhikshu, a 'great monk'".

<sup>17</sup>Emend 勉 to 免. Cf. sūtra, T9.13b3&6.

<sup>18</sup>See above [2], note 9; 397b1.

<sup>19</sup>"Evil" may refer to "defilements" (fan-nao), as identified by Seng-chao and Kumārajīva, T.328b5&12. Cf, T'ang, op. cit., II, 37. See 400cl0.

<sup>20</sup>That is, Hīnayāna followers are introvertive or self-centered while Mahāyāna followers are extrovertive or altruistic.

<sup>21</sup>道無不在. See 398b15, 398d14. Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 33 (CTI, 10:35): 道無所不在; Chuang-tzu, ch. 22: 道 . . . 無所不在. Hui-yüan also uses or cites this expression, see Eon kenkyū, p. 400.

<sup>22</sup>Emend 寂 to 取 .

<sup>23</sup>What this number stands for is not immediately clear. According to Tao-sheng's commentary on the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra, refers to the kinds of the scriptures, possibly Mahāyāna ones (T38, 415c11f.). Seng-chao, however, speaks of it indicating as many heretics (tirthikas) (*ibid.*, 329a & c). In a sūtra called P'u-yao-ching (tr. Chih-ch'ien and Dharma-rakṣā) reference is made to (tao-shu), see Tsukamoto Zenryū, Shīna bukkyō shi kenkyū, p. 17. Hence, the number seems to suggest, as Kumārajīva, T.38.328b9ff says, the number of the heretical views which the Bhikṣus can counter and rebut or the very views they can hold against the heretical arguments.

<sup>24</sup>Literally, "in the language of Sung", Sung referring to the Sung Dynasty (House of Liu) (420-477) Tao-sheng belonged to at the time of writing.

<sup>25</sup>Actually nadī is a common noun for "river", not a proper noun as taken by Tao-sheng. So, Tao-sheng should say, "It means 'river'".

<sup>26</sup>辨 (c15) is taken here in the sense of 辯 .

<sup>27</sup>Here, as usual, the editor's note is respected: "母 (c16) is suspected to be 人 ."

<sup>28</sup>德著於內名揚於外 . Its variants occur in 397d11, 398a13, & 407d5 cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 5, (CTI, 2:30): 德充於內應物於外 "Virtues are full within and [he] responds to the beings without."; see also ch. 21, (CTI, 7:9; 7:13).

<sup>29</sup>As in many other cases (7e, n, o, r, & 3b) Tao-sheng's literary rendering of the term does not exactly match with the Sanskrit equivalent. It rather means "Great Mistress of Procreator." This can support a generally-held view that the Chinese Buddhists, except those who travelled to India, did not possess a direct knowledge of the Sanskrit language.

<sup>30</sup>累 . It can be identifiable in the sūtra (lcl7) with either kleśa ("anguish", Hurvitz; "depravity", Kern) or samyojana ("the bonds of existence", Hurvitz; "the ties which bound them to existence", Kern). Fung/Bodde, History of Chinese Philosophy, II, 273, renders the Chinese term as used by Tao-sheng's contemporary Buddhists with "(mortal) ties." It is not certain in this particular context if lei is semantically synonymous and interchangeable with chieh , Kumārajīva's rendering of the above term samyojana and the term Tao-sheng uses in the subsequent sentence (d6). It is

basically a Taoist term, see Chuang-tzu, ch. 32, "fetters" (Legge, II, 206), "entangled" (Watson, p. 356). For a discussion on the concept with reference to the Neo-Taoist language, see above III, 1.

<sup>31</sup>兼被. It occurs also in 406a11, 407d18; see also 398b12, 409b8.

<sup>32</sup>See Hurvitz, 1:6.

<sup>33</sup>濟物. Cf. Chuang-tzu, ch. 32: "But at the same time he wishes to aid in guiding to (the secret of) the Tao." (Legge, II, 206). Cf. also I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 4.

<sup>34</sup>In case the letter 然 (d6, "such") better be transposed to after 方 as the first letter in the next.

<sup>35</sup>Inter. with 四無礙辯 (catasrahprati-saṃvidah): "unhindered speech" (Chi.) or "special knowledge" consisting of dharmapratisaṃvid (no obstacles in communicating the meanings) nirukti-p. (no obstacles in communication in various dialects), and pratibhāna-p. (no obstacles in being ready to preach). In the sūtra only the word 樂說 (pratibhāna) (2a3) is represented, which Hurvitz renders with "preaching with joy and eloquence" (p. 1) (樂說辯才. talented or excelled in being prepared to preach for any occasion) and H. Kern takes as "firmly standing in wisdom" (Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or The Lotus of the True Law, p. 3) (Mahā-pratibhāna-pratisthair, being conversant with the great way of being prepared to preach). What appear to be more appropriate English equivalents for pratibhāna are "readiness in speech", "quickwittedness" as found in Edgerton, BHSD, p. 366r. Anyway, Tao-sheng interprets this term as representing the four powers.

<sup>36</sup>Emend 拔 to 拔. See 412b2, sūtra 13a6, 27 and b9. Cf. also 404a15.

<sup>37</sup>Action, word, and thought committed through body, mouth, and mind, the effects of which remain as agents for transmigration.

<sup>38</sup>See below para. [13].

<sup>39</sup>對揚. See 399b17, 407b11 (ch. 8, n. 1). Cf. Shu-ching, IV. viii: "to respond to, and display abroad." (Legge, The Shoo King, p. 263).

<sup>40</sup>This applies only to the first two kings, Nanda and Upananda, not eight as the word "all" would mean, referring to nanda.

<sup>41</sup>Hurvitz puts what Tao-sheng takes as two phrases in the sūtra 供養恭敬 into one: "showered with offerings" (3:19).

<sup>42</sup>"Deferentially treated and revered" (Hurvitz, 3:13).

<sup>43</sup>Ocho, "Jiku Dōshō sen", p. 238, suspects the letter 皆 might be 昔.

<sup>44</sup>Cf. Liebenthal's tr. from "[The Buddha] is" up to this sentence: "With the aim of preaching the Lotus of the Law in mind (the Buddhas) lead (the believers) first to the goals of their own liking and give them all the Heavens they may wish (amitārtha). When then (the believers), having stuck to the word of the Scriptures so long, would suddenly hear that the three Vehicles (and their Heavens) do not exist, they might doubt the good (intention of the earlier revelation) and turn back in sight of the yonder shore. And the Great Path would be barred to them. Better proceed gradually." ("The World Conception", II, 93).

<sup>45</sup>See 397a3, 402b6.

<sup>46</sup>動靜 . Cf. I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 1; Chuang-tzu, ch. 33: 動靜不離於理 .

<sup>47</sup>窮理盡性 found verbatim in the I Ching, "Shuo-kua" ch. 1. Wilhelm/Baynes, The I Ching, p. 262: "By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the law of their nature to the deepest core." Legge, I Ching, p. 422: "They (thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of (every) nature." Liebenthal, "The World Conception of Chu Tao-sheng," II, p. 66: "(The sages), in perfect harmony with Cosmic Order, in realization of their own nature." Some contemporary Buddhists cite the phrase; for example, Seng-chao, T38.350c9; Seng-jui, T18.536c15, 537a3; a certain Liu shao-fu, T52.224b17. Also see Hui-ta, HTC 150.424c13.

<sup>48</sup>Alternate trans.: "entered the utmost samādhi".

<sup>49</sup>Liebenthal translates: "When Heaven and Earth stir how can men be silent?" ("The World Conception", II, 81).

<sup>50</sup>Catvāriphalani, the four stages of the result of cultivation in Hīnayāna: stream-entrant (srotapatti), once-returner (sakriddāgami), non-returner (anāgāmi), and arhat.

<sup>51</sup>It refers to the phrase in the sūtra: ". . . trembled in six different ways." (2b12, 3:30).

52 中正 . This and its variant 正中 occur frequently in the I Ching, in Hexagram Hsü et passim.

53 功平 (398b12) may be a misprint of 公平 , which is found in Wang Pi's commentary on the Lao Tzu (hereafter, LTC), ch. 16, Rump/Chan, p. 50.

54 The letter 無 (b15) seems to be unnecessary, as Ocho questions it. ("Jiku Dōshō", p. 258).

55 See 397b17, 398d14; see note 18.

56 Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 2 (CTI, 1:29): "故曰道通為一 . . . 唯達者無滯于一方" Thus it is said "the Tao makes them all into one. . . Only those who have reached the (Tao) do not stagnate in one direction."

57 The six worlds 六道 or the six kinds of living beings 六趣 , refer to the six forms of reincarnation: hell-dweller (naraka-gati), hungry ghost (preta-g.), animal (tiryagyoni-g.), malevolent nature spirit (asura-g.), human existence (manuṣya-g.), and heavenly existence (deva-g.).

58 Cf. the Buddha's last words: "all the constituents of being are transitory; work out your salvation with diligence" (H. C. Warren, Buddhism in Translations, p. 109). Cf. also the parting words of Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch of the Ch'an school: "After I have gone just practice according to the Dharma in the same way that you did on the days that I was with you." (P. B. Yampolsky, The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, p. 181f.)

59 意 (i), probably a copier's mistake of its homonym 疑 (?).

60 Referring to (Hurvitz, 4:24) "the Dharma-prince", (2b28), "prince royal" (Kern, p. 16).

61 I have emended 光 (c11) to 化 . Cf. 399a8f.

62 偈: Hymn or chant in form of metrical verse. This particular question is found in 2c10 (Hurvitz, 5:9f.).

63 無間然 . Cf. Confucian Analects, 8:32. Legge takes the phrase to be 無間然 , Confucius, p. 215; Tao-te ching, ch. 43: 無間 "with no space".

64 Besides the two mentioned already there are four more as the constituents of the six virtues to be perfected: patience (kṣānti), vigour (vīrya), meditation (dhyāna), wisdom (prajñā).

<sup>65</sup>See the Chuang-tzu, ch. 24; Watson, p. 169, Legge, II, 101.

<sup>66</sup>See the sūtra 2b8.

<sup>67</sup>十方 "ten directions", but here used as a synonym of 十號 (4a:1) ten "subsidiary designations" (Hurvitz, 13:17) or "titles".

<sup>68</sup>The same phrase in 397b17, 398b15f. See n. 21

<sup>69</sup>如是 . Cf. sūtra, 5c11f., "suchness" (Hurvitz, 22:29ff.); yet, it appears to be an adjective, "such" and punctuation of the text may be correct. B. Kato, Myōhō-  
renge-kyo, p. 33f., has "such a".

<sup>70</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Though the ten thousand dharma are manifold they are yet uniform (as integral parts of) the Self-same. The Sage, absorbed in the vision of their integral state 'comes'; 'coming' he transforms creation. He is therefore called tathagata (same-coming or "nature developing")." ("The World Conception", V, 73-4).

<sup>71</sup>Etymologically, the translation of the word "arhat" as 應供 is justified, for it is derived from the root arh: "to deserve, merit, be worthy of" (Monier Williams, SED, p. 93).

<sup>72</sup>至道 . It is found in Kuo Hsiang, CTC, Ch. 1 (CTI, 1:7), ch. 2 (CTI, 1:29) et passim.

<sup>73</sup>無邪 See the Shih ching, IV, ii, 1: 思無邪 "his thoughts are without depravity" (Legge, The Shu King, p. 613), repeated in the Analects, II, ii: "having no depraved thoughts" (Legge, Confucianism, p. 146).

<sup>74</sup>Hurvitz, 12:29, has "clarity" from 明 instead of "enlightenment".

<sup>75</sup>無非 , a misprint of 無比 (?). Cf. 397b3.

<sup>76</sup>The sala-trees under which the Buddha entered nirvāṇa.

<sup>77</sup>The constituents of existence: forms or matter (rūpa), perception (vedanā), mental conceptions (sañjñā), volition (saṃskāra) and consciousness (vijñāna).

<sup>78</sup>Tao-sheng obviously departs from what is supposed to be the original meaning of the Sanskrit word 'vid' (knowing) by taking it in the sense phrased here, although the



Chinese letter has also the connotation of 'vid'.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. 400a6.

<sup>80</sup>See 400a6, 412d2.

<sup>81</sup>化. It is a term of diverse meanings, traceable to Taoism and Neo-Taoism. In the sūtra, it, rarely appearing by itself, means "to convert" (6c23) (Hurvitz, p. 28) and often makes a compound with "chiao" (to teach), "chiao-hua" (7a29 et passim). In the context of Hui-yuan's system of thought, which is believed to be close to Tao-sheng's, it can be taken as "transformation" (Robinson, op. cit., pp. 198 & 281, n. 36), or "transfiguration" (Hurvitz, "Render unto Caesar", p. 96, also see p. 98, n. 42). For a further treatment of the term, see part III, 1.

<sup>82</sup>Emend 筌 to 詮.

<sup>83</sup>二 should read 三.

<sup>84</sup>必明當? See 398c9. Cf. 399b15.

<sup>85</sup>Hurvitz has omitted "At that time" (是時), in compliance with the Sanskrit text, where the words are not repeated; see SPSR, 18:24.

<sup>86</sup>自崖, 岸 interchangeable with 岸 (see 401b14). See also 403d14. Cf. HTC 150.426a.

#### NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 2)

<sup>1</sup>Ocho, "Jiku Dōshō sen". p. 251, suspects (一)顯 (399b10) to be 寶.

<sup>2</sup>See 399b17&c1, 400a1&8.

<sup>3</sup>聖人設軌. Cf. I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 2: 聖人設卦 "The Sage set forth the hexagrams"; 聖人...設教 (Hexagram "kuan") "The Sage . . . set forth the teaching".

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Wang Pi's commentary on the I Ching, on the latter passage above: "by means of 'kuan', he moves and transforms the beings . . . ."

<sup>5</sup>對揚: "One who drew out remarks or sermons from the Buddha." (Soothill, DCBT, p. 423). The locus classicus of the term is the Shu Ching, pt. 4. "Shuo-ming", to mean

"to propagate [the will of the king] in response to [the latter's decree]", or, in Legge's rendering, "to respond to, and display abroad, [your Majesty's excellent charge]." (Legge, The Shoo King, p. 262) See 397d14.

<sup>6</sup>Prof. Hurvitz suggests in our discussion on the passage that this phrase seems to be out of place.

<sup>7</sup>權 See the Chuang-tzu, ch. 17: 達理者必明於權 "Circumstances" (Watson, Chuang Tzu, Basic Writings, p. 104) or "all varying circumstances" (Legge, p. 383). See ch. 3, note 4.

<sup>8</sup>Emend 致 (399d4) to 故. See Ōchō, "Jiku Dōshō sen", p. 265.

<sup>9</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Consummation reached by accumulation of merit is 'marvellous'". ("The World Conception", II, 94).

<sup>10</sup>無方 "without any set pattern". It is found in the I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 4: Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 12. (CTI, 4:33).

<sup>11</sup>無非. Rather 無比 "Incomparable degree [of skillfulness]." (?)

<sup>12</sup>Rephrasing of the sūtra 5c4f. Hurvitz, 22:17f.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. the dictum that indicates the dual goal of a bodhisattva, 上求菩提下化衆生 "Above, he seeks bodhi or enlightenment; below, he converts all the beings." See Chih-i, Mo-ho chih-kuan, T 46,6a18.

<sup>14</sup>Hurvitz, p. 22f., takes 如是 as a noun, "suchness", thus matching it with ten items, from "the suchness of the dharmas" to the "suchness of their retributions", which is discrepant from the generally accepted reading, that is, the way the passage is punctuated in Taishō edition (5c11ff.). Tao-sheng's reading is in agreement with the latter, taking the word as an adjective. He draws eleven factors from it by dissecting what others take as one the last factor, "beginning and end" into two. See J. Takakusu, The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, p. 135.

<sup>15</sup>曆數所鍾. 曆數 means a calendrical, cosmic order, governing the divisions of times, i.e., years, seasons, months, days. The term occurs in the Shu Ching, Chu-shu: Hung-fan; in Confucian Analects, 20:1 (Legge, Confucius, p. 350, 天之曆數 "the Heaven-determined order of succession."); Chuang-tzu, ch. 27. (CTI, p. 9:6), 天有曆數 "Heaven has its places and spaces which can be calcu-

lated". (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, Part II, p. 146) or "Heaven has its cycles and numbers" (Watson, The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, p. 306). For 鍾 see Chung-hua tai-tzu-tien, p. 2753: 天所賦予 "What is endowed by the heaven."

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Liebenthal's tr. up to this point: "The (way of) good deeds begins at the end; it ends in the beginning with the attainment of the Buddha wisdom. Only the Buddha understands this." ("The World Conception", II, 74). Here Liebenthal fails to distinguish between the words from the sūtra and Tao-sheng's own words.

<sup>17</sup>On the seventh stage, Takakusu, The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, p. 125, says: "The seventh is the Stage of Far-Going (dūraṅ-gamā) which is the position farthest removed from the selfish state of two Vehicles. Here one completes the perfection of expediency (upāya)."

<sup>18</sup>Cf. 398c8.

<sup>19</sup>Emend 諧 to 階.

<sup>20</sup>Cf. 398c17.

<sup>21</sup>Liebenthal translates: "The Buddha is called three times, not because he is interested but because it is demanded by the state of the Beings." ("The World Conception", II, 81).

<sup>22</sup>See 409c11, 411d9. Cf. 397a1, 403d2, 407a7.

<sup>23</sup>This may refer to 6b4, 26:2 "The Buddha has preached the doctrine of unique deliverance". See 400a2.

<sup>24</sup>宗: "the First Principle", Hurvitz, "Render unto Caesar", p. 99.

<sup>25</sup>Liebenthal translates: (from "The Buddha is") "'The Buddha is the one center (of the universe); to proclaim this oneness he has arisen'. [ . . . ] Cosmic Order (li) does not allow three (Vehicles); it is unum mysticum and nothing else." ("The World Conception", II, 74).

<sup>26</sup>Hurvitz renders 開 "open [their eyes]" as "hear of" (30:5), which can be drawn rather from 聞. Kato also takes it as "open" (44:7). The Sanskrit equivalent is "samadapana" (Wogihara, 37:7), which has the meaning of "instigation (of others) to assume, to take on themselves." (BHSD, p. 568).

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Liebenthal's tr.: "All the beings possess the innate ability to see what is known only to the Buddhas. But

this knowledge is covered with rubbish. This the Buddha removes and thus makes (knowledge) possible." ("The World Conception", II, 74).

<sup>28</sup> Suspected to be one of Tao-sheng's contemporary scholars such as T'an-ying and Tao-jung, both Kumarajiva's disciples. See Ocho, "Jiku Dōshō sen", p. 230.

<sup>29</sup> 常樂 : two of the four virtues of nirvāṇa, the other two being personality (我) and purity (淨).

<sup>30</sup> 悟 . Or "understanding the One" (?)

<sup>31</sup> "Ages" (Kato, p. 46).

<sup>32</sup> 稟質 . Chih (basic stuff) as used by Confucius and Tung Chung-shu (2nd c. B.C.) refers to "man's inner, spontaneous nature", or "man's original nature in its totality"; see Fung, History, II, p. 33, notes 1 & 2.

<sup>33</sup> 之 威 陰 惡 (苦 ?), five being material form (rūpa), sensation (vedanā), conception (sañjñā), predisposition (samskāra), and perception (viññāna).

<sup>34</sup> They are the heretical views that there is a real self (satkāya-dṛṣṭi); the heresy of extreme views (antar-grāha-d.); false heretical views (mithyā-d.); attachment to perverted views (dṛṣṭi-parāmarśa-d.); and attachment to heretical practices and disciplines (śīla-vrata-parāmarśa-d.).

<sup>35</sup> 聖主 . See the sūtra (8c8): 大聖主 "the Chiefs of the Great Saints" (Hurvitz, 37:30).

<sup>36</sup> The letter 三 (400d7) should be repeated.

<sup>37</sup> 三界 (triloka): the realm of desire (kāmadhātu), the realm of form (rūpadhātu), and the formless realm (arūpadhātu).

<sup>38</sup> 理本無言 cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 2, (CTI, 1:34) 至理無言, and 理無所言, "The (ultimate) Li cannot be expressed in words."

<sup>39</sup> Emend 一 (400d15) to 之 ; see 397a2.

<sup>40</sup> Liebenthal translates: "Under past Buddhas the Beings have planted Roots-of-good. Little bits, single deeds, accumulating, secure salvation to the believers." ("The World Conception", II, 83).

41 第一空義 . It might rather be 第一義空 "the emptiness of the highest order" (paramārtha-sūnyatā). This phrase can be a strong candidate for the indicator that Tao-sheng was trained in the Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtras and the Mādhyamika doctrine, the contention by Ōchō.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 3)

<sup>1</sup>Capacity 根 (indriya: "power" "faculty of sense", rather than mūla, "root") stands for the more frequently used terms 根機 or 機根, and a man's spiritual power of capacity is expressed in either way, "sharp" 利 or "dull" 鈍 as described here.

<sup>2</sup>悟 or "understanding" (Hurvitz), in the sense of awakening (satori) to the truth, accounting for the third (pratibodhana) of the four stages (開示悟入) as the purpose of the Buddha's appearance in the world.

<sup>3</sup>See Analects 7:8.

<sup>4</sup>曲 . See I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 4. 曲成萬物 "by ever-varying adaptation he completes (the nature of) all things" (Legge, The I Ching, p. 354).

<sup>5</sup>權 denotes the temporal, provisional means of teaching, synonymous with expedient devices (方便), in contrast with the real facet (實). Cf. the Chuang-tzu, ch. 17 (CTI, 6:12): 達理者必明於權 "he who has command of basic principles is certain to know how to deal with circumstances." (Watson, p. 182). See ch. 2, note 7.

<sup>6</sup>失大 . Cf. the sūtra, 10c18: "I have never lost the Greater Vehicles." (Hurvitz, 50:8).

<sup>7</sup>Emend 示 to 爾 (?); see the editor's note in 40ld6.

<sup>8</sup>取證 (sūtra 10c10) Hurvitz, 49:22.

<sup>9</sup>道大則兼王 . Allusion to 內聖外王之道 "the Tao of sageliness within and kingliness without" (the Chuang Tzu, ch. 33). Also cf. Tao-te ching, chapt. 25: 故道大天大地大王亦大 (Therefore Tao is great, Heaven is great, Earth is great, and the King is also great.)

<sup>10</sup>Referring to the sūtra 7b4ff. or 12b9ff.

<sup>11</sup>救濟 . See sūtra 13a6, "rescue" (Hurvitz). Cf. Wu-liang-i ching (Amitārtha-sūtra) T.9.388c12.

12 十無極 . 十 is here not taken to mean numerically, but symbolically to mean "perfect", "ultimate", "final". See 410d3f.

13 "A man of great power" (Hurvitz 58:18); the Sanskrit equivalent, gr̥ha-pati: "the master of a house".

14 牙 taken here in the sense of 芽 ; in fact, both are interchangeable.

15 Liebenenthal translates: "Cultivating he removes the weeds that the sprouts of the Tao may rise." ("The World Conception", II, 74).

16 堂閣朽故 . "And chambers" 閣 are added to Hurvitz's translation (58:22), to match with Tao-sheng's partition of the two letters into two separate words.

17 橫造 . One of the meanings listed in the Chinese dictionaries is 不順理 "non-conforming with Li." It seems to be synonymous with the word 橫計 of the Nirvāṇa-sūtra as it is found in Tao-sheng's commentary to it. (Taisho 1763, 454c20). So the word can be taken in the sense of false discrimination or imagining (vikalpa).

18 See 400c10; Ch. 2, note 32.

19 惠命 , interchangeable with 慧命 ([8] [a]).

20 五欲 , referring to either the set of desires for wealth, sexual love, eating and drinking, fame, and sleep, or the group of desires arising from the sense-objects, viz., form, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

21 For the purpose of following Tao-sheng's exegesis letter by letter, the phrase "with [powerful] body arms", which is obviously redundant, is added to Hurvitz's translation.

22 兼濟 . Cf. Chuang-tzu, ch. 32: 而欲兼濟道物 "But at the same time he wishes to aid in guiding to (the secret of ) the Tao" (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, vol. II, p. 206).

23 Cf. Mencius, Book VI ("Kao-tzu"), pt. A: 聖人與我同類者 "The sage and I are of the same kind" (tr. D. C. Law, Mencius (Penguin Books, 1970), p. 164.

24 四等 , which is the same as 四無量心 (catvāri-apramānāni): kindness (maitrī), compassion (karuṇā), joy (mudītā), and indifference (upekṣā).

<sup>25</sup>Alternate translation: "The li underlying the fact that a table has four equal [legs] is that [the Buddha's various] preachings are level, similar, and equal [in their validity].

<sup>26</sup>Emend 無 (402a8) to 先. See 401c7, 402a15.

<sup>27</sup>敞 (ch'ang, "open", "uncovered", 402a8) is taken as 蔽(pi).

<sup>28</sup>三塗, 塗 (t'u) being used synonymously with 途(t'u), which is in turn interchangeable with 道. Thus 三塗 appears to refer to nothing else than 三惡道, the three evil paths.

<sup>29</sup>五道. The five ways of existence (gatis) are five of the six gatis (六道), from which asura or evil spirit is excepted.

<sup>30</sup>六塵, or the six qualities (guṇas) which is the same as 六境 (ṣadvisayaḥ) or the six sense objects corresponding to the six sense-organs (六根, 六入), namely form (rūpa), sound (śabda), smell (gandha), taste (rasa), touch (spraṣṭavya), and elements (dharma).

<sup>31</sup>Hurvitz's translation, 59:17 is slightly modified here. (See 59:17).

<sup>32</sup>The first 爲 of 於無爲爲苦 (402a18--402b1) is emended to 樂.

<sup>33</sup>Emend 日 (402b1) to 曰.

<sup>34</sup>It is possible that (無) 爲 is the copying error of (無) 苦. In that case, the sentence should be translated: "Speaking of li, it is capable of nullifying suffering, [providing] the pleasure replacing walking [a long way of suffering]", which is analogized by "carriage". Cf. 402a18-b1, above note 31. Cf. also 397a3, 398b1. For the term wu-wei, see 404b8 (ch. 4, note 23).

<sup>35</sup>Emend 諍 (402b8) to 爭.

<sup>36</sup>Again 諍 (of 諍前, 402b9) should read 爭. 前 ("to go ahead of others") is Tao-sheng's coinage.

<sup>37</sup>結使. See Soothill, DCBT, p. 386.

<sup>38</sup>障, mraṅka: "concealment of the good qualities of others, jealous disparagement, nasty disposition, ill-will" (BHSD, 441).

39 障 . There are two kinds of "obstruction" or "hindrance": kleśāvaraṇa 煩惱障 or moral fault and jñeyāvaraṇa 所知障 or intellectual fault, which build obstacles on the way to one's enlightenment.

40 扣 literally, "to strike", "to fasten", or "to detain". When it occurs elsewhere (403a9 & 17, 404b16, 412b4), the object is always the "Sage" 聖 ; in those cases, I render it: "to stimulate actively".

41 Liebenthal translates: "That the children question in this way shows that the final day dawns which brings them in contact with the One." ("The World Conception", II, 81).

42 無生智 (anutpāda-jñāna or anutpāda-mati), the knowledge an arhant attains by realizing the four noble truths, which is the tenth of the tenfold knowledge (十智). See Abhidharmakośakārika VI, 51 in "The Text of the Abhidharmakośakarika of Vasubandhu"; ed. V. V. Gokhale, Journal of the Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, N.S., Vol. 22, p. 73-103.

43 行者, which can also be taken as practitioner or novice (acārin). See also 397b:10.

44 數表 . See 398d4f. Cf. Hui-yuan's use of the term in T.2103a7.

45 彌綸 . Cf. I Ching, A.R. pt. I, ch. 4: "comprehend" (Wilhelm, p. 293; Legge, p. 353 "shows us . . . without rent or confusion"), "always handle and adjust" (Chan, A Source Book, p. 265).

46 無極 . The sūtra has the word (12c15) later in the paragraph in the sense of "limitless", but it is more likely that the word denotes the absolute point of reality as taken by the Taoists. The term occurs in Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 2 (CTI, 1:45), which Chan renders, "the ultimate of non-being." ("The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle", (rep.) in Chan, Neo-Confucianism, Etc., p. 60.) Strikingly, the whole sentence of Kuo in which the term is found has another common word "Li": 至理暢於無極 "the utmost Li extends to the ultimate of non-being." The term wu-chi as such goes back to the Chuang Tzu, ch. 11, (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, Part I, p. 300: "the illimitable"), and ch. 6, in which the term occurs adverbially, namely "beyond the utmost limits of (things)" (Legge, ibid., p. 250). The term was later to be treated significantly in Neo-Confucianism, especially by Chou Tun-yi (1017-73) in his "T'ai-chi T'u-shuo" (Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate Explained), and D. Bodde renders the term "The Ultimateless" (Fung-Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy, Vol. II, p.



435) Kuo Ksiang employs the word in CTC, ch. 1 (CTI, 1:1 & 5), ch. 6 (CTI, 3:21).

<sup>47</sup> Magic formula or charm. One form of it is mantra, incantation or spell.

<sup>48</sup> 四辯. This must be 四辯 or 四弁, that is, 四無礙辯. See chapter 1, [9], n. 30 (397d7).

<sup>49</sup> 七財, that is, 七法財, which are faith, zeal, morality, shame, obedient hearing, abnegation, and meditation-wisdom.

<sup>50</sup> 七覺, that is, 七覺支 (sapta bodhyangāni). The seven factors are: mindfulness (smṛti), investigation of the dharma (dharmā-pravicaya), vigour (vīrya), joy (prīti), repose (praśrabdhi), concentration (samādhi), and equanimity (upekṣā).

<sup>51</sup> 六通, the six miraculous powers the Buddha attained. They are associated with Mahayana while five are associated with Hinayana. The five are: godly vision, godly hearing, insight into others' thinking, knowledge of former existences, and free activity, and the sixth is exhaustion of depravities (āsrava).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. 407d18. Robinson, Early Mādhyamika in India and China, p. 282, n. 52, renders 大悲 with "Great Compassion" and 大慈 with "Great Kindness".

<sup>53</sup> Liebenthal translates: "The spiritual state created by a former contact (with the Sage) calls him. He then bends down and answers." ("The World Conception", II, 80).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. 403a16.

<sup>55</sup> 感應遂通. The I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 10: 感應遂通天下之故 "when acted on, it immediately penetrates all things" (Chan, A Source Book, p. 267). It should be noted that, besides the word "to penetrate", "the Sage", "moving" (kan), and "activating force" (chi) are the common terms shared by the present paragraph and the chapter concerned of the I Ching.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Idiom in current usage 曲高和寡 "Highbrow music can be appreciated by only a few people".

<sup>57</sup> See 396d10; [Preface], n. 22.

<sup>58</sup> Emend 蕙 (403b13) to 蕙. See 408d9.

<sup>59</sup>See 398b15.

<sup>60</sup>For a discussion of above two passages, see Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 201. See above 402c10.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 4)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, Scripture, pp. xi-xii.

<sup>2</sup>They are, as listed in the sūtra, Subhūti, Mahākātyāyana, Mahākāśyapa, and Mahāmaudgalyayana. Mahākāśyapa is omitted in Hurvitz's translation.

<sup>3</sup>信解, faithful understanding, understanding resulting from faith, or understanding by faith. The Sanskrit equivalent adhimukti (SPSR, p. 95) means "confidence" (SED, p. 21) "earnest, zealous application" (BHSD, p. 14).

<sup>4</sup>無上道, viz., anuttarasamyaksambodhi.

<sup>5</sup>See 399b1 (ch. 1, note 86), 401b14.

<sup>6</sup>二(乘) (403c16) seems to be an error of 大(乘).

<sup>7</sup>Emend 府 (403d1) to 俯.

<sup>8</sup>Liebenthal translates a part of this passage: "When an individual has mysteriously grown to a state of spiritual maturity which now shows, Śākyamuni bends down and responds." ("The World Conception", II, 81).

<sup>9</sup>Emend two 或 (403d5) to 惑.

<sup>10</sup>Liebenthal translates: "He wavers in his faith, pursues mundane ends and also goes occasionally in the right direction." ("The World Conception", II, 95).

<sup>11</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Rise and decay, which are created by a mind, adverse to Nature, are the 'foreign country'". (Ibid.).

<sup>12</sup>Liebenthal here wrongly takes Tao-sheng's words and those from the sūtra as if they were one statement by Tao-sheng as he translates: "A fruit does not ripe suddenly but very, very gradually" ("World Conception", II, 96).

<sup>13</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Not knowing that such is demanded by his spiritual state, he feels an urge rising and

contrary to his own intention finds himself longing (for the Buddha). (Ibid.).

<sup>14</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Now the former impulse would bear fruit were he not attached to mundane pleasures. His will to live leads him away from Origin, and the father responding to his (unexpressed) demand, bows down and, though a Buddha, is incorporated into a human body." (Ibid.).

<sup>15</sup>Liebenthal translates: "His appearance on the phenomenal plane is not real." (Ibid.).

<sup>16</sup>七聖財 (sapta-dhanāni) which is identical with 七法財, the seven dharma-riches: faith (śraddhā), morality (śīla), modesty (hrī), fear of evil (apatrāpya), learning (śruta), self-denial (tyāga), and wisdom (prajñā).

<sup>17</sup>理過於言. Cf. 理無所言 "Li cannot be spoken of," and 至理無言 in Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 2. (CTI, 1:34).

<sup>18</sup>See 397a3, 402b6.

<sup>19</sup>五通 identical with 五神通, namely, heavenly-vision (divyacakṣus), heavenly-hearing (divyaśrotra), ability to know the thoughts of other minds (paracittajñāna), knowledge of all former existences of self and others (pūrvanivā sāmusr̥ti-jñāna), and power to be anywhere or do anything at will (rddhisākṣātkriyā).

<sup>20</sup>至 (404a12). But according to the sūtra, it should read 到, though there is no difference in meaning. Cf. Liebenthal's translation: "The former impulse leads him to the place where the Father lives. His time has come." ("The World Conception", II, 96).

<sup>21</sup>大慈 (mahāmaitra). See R. H. Robinson, op. cit., p. 282, n. 52: 大慈 大悲 "Great Kindness and Great Compassion". But Tao-sheng does not seem to make a distinction between the two semantically, though the two are used separately, 大慈 occurring besides here in 407d18, 大悲 in 401c7, 402a2, 402d18, et passim. He interchangeably uses the two terms particularly in 408b6 and 409b8 with respect to the sūtra. Hurvitz, 217:27, renders 大慈, "great good will."

<sup>22</sup>Liebenthal translates in two ways: "Li is the dharmakāya; freedom from fear (vaiśāradya) is there enjoyed." ("The World Conception", II, 77); and with the addition of the sūtra word "father", the last word of the immediately preceding sentence, "The Father represents in the religious milieu (li) the dharmakāya where there is no fear

(vaiśāradya)", (Ibid., 96). On Dharmakāya, D. T. Suzuki says: "The Dharmakāya, which literally means "body or system of being", is, according to the Mahāyānists, the ultimate reality that underlies all particular phenomena; it is that which makes the existence of individuals possible; it is the *raison d'être* of the universe, it is the norm of being, which regulates the course of events and thoughts." (Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism, p. 46).

<sup>23</sup>Probably not in the sense of the Taoist concept of non-being but in the sense of asaṃskṛta, i.e., without (a-) saṃskāra: "predisposition(s), the effect of past deeds and experience as conditioning a new state: ... the second item in the pratītya-samutpāda, q.v. (arising from avidyā, and cause of vijñāna)" (Edgerton, BHSD, p. 542; see also p. 82, "asaṃskṛta").

<sup>24</sup>Cf. 404a2.

<sup>25</sup>無漏 anāsrava, i.e., without (an-) āsrava: "evil influence, depravity, evil, sin, misery" (Edgerton, BHSD, p. 111; see also 112).

<sup>26</sup>Emend 惑 to 惑.

<sup>27</sup>Liebenthal translates: "He is afraid that the Order (li) of the Father may subdue his desire. He is entitled (mature) to be taught Mahayana: he calls the Sage. But his fancies dim his mind and make this impossible" ("The World Conception", II, 96).

<sup>28</sup>五戒 (pañca-śīla). They are the first five of the ten commandments. The five involve prohibitions of killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying, and drinking intoxicants.

<sup>29</sup>十善 (daśa-kuśalāni). They are, in addition to the first four of the five precepts, the non-committal of double-tongue, coarse language, filthy language, covetousness, anger, and perverted views.

<sup>30</sup>Liebenthal translates: "He decides to go to a poor hamlet', i.e., in the Three Worlds, to practice the five śīlāni and the ten kuśalāni, in order to be reincarnated as man or god. For this is the easy way." ("The World Conception", II, 96).

<sup>31</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Though he is still following his own will, he will awake to the Great Vehicle". (Ibid., 97).

<sup>32</sup>Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 9 (CTI, 3:53): 聖人者 . . . 非所似迹也 "The Sage" is not that by which the trace is". For more on the term so-i-chi, see Fukunaga Koji's article, "Sojo to Roso shiso", in Tsukamoto Zenryu, ed., Jōron kenkyū, p. 259ff. Wang Pi also uses a similar term 所以然之理 in his commentary on the I Ching, hexagrams nos. 16 and 1, rendered by Chan as "principle by which things are". ("The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle", op. cit., p. 56).

<sup>33</sup>See the text of the sūtra, 17a:8-9. Hurvitz has translated: "you may go to that place . . . . There is a work place here, to which we will accompany you." (87:7) He obviously has taken 倍 (pei) as 陪 (p'ei). Kato is faithful to the sūtra as it is (p. 120). The Sanskrit version is in agreement with the Chinese version on this phrase: ". . . dvi-gunaya . . ." (SPSR, p. 99:13). Tao-sheng, as will be seen, does not show any deviation from the text, as far as this point is concerned.

<sup>34</sup>It refers to the last words of the Buddha: "All the constituents of being are transitory; work out your salvation with diligence." (H. C. Warren, Buddhism in Translations, p. 109).

<sup>35</sup>七方便 (位). They are composed of the three sacred positions and the four good roots. The three are: the five meditations (五停心觀), consisting of impurity, composition, causation, right discrimination, and breathing; reflection on the specific characteristics of all phenomena (別相念住); and reflection on the universal characteristics. The four are the dharmas of warmth (煖法), apex (頂法), patience (忍法) and the world-first (世第一法).

<sup>36</sup>Kato's translation has been adopted here (MSLW, p. 121). Cf. SLFD, 87:31.

<sup>37</sup>The second of the five groups or aggregates (pañcaskandha). All sensations are divided into three: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral.

<sup>38</sup>For this and a more detailed sketch of the conception of duḥkha, see Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught, p. 16ff., particularly p. 19.

<sup>39</sup>Liebhenthal translates the above three passages: "When the akuśala mūla yearn (for external things) they stir up the anuśaya. These flare up and produce the three types of karma. Karma and the anuśaya in cooperation call forth retributions." ("The World Conception", II, 80).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 5)

<sup>1</sup>Emend 筵 to 筵 . See 396d2 (Preface, note 1).

<sup>2</sup>Ocho suspects 致 (405c7) as 教 "teaching" (see C9) in "Jiku Dosho no . . . .", p. 257. Then, it should read, "the purport of the Sage's teaching".

<sup>3</sup>Emend 地 (405c16) to 慧 . See T9.19a25.

<sup>4</sup>MSLW, p. 140.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Tao-te ching, ch. 42: 道生 — "Tao produced the One."

<sup>6</sup>Liebenthal translates the above paragraph, beginning with a word from the sūtra as if it belonged to Tao-sheng's own words: "The three thousand chiliocosms constitute deviation from li and belong to illusion, the realm of manifoldness. Turn the back (to that manifoldness) and you face li. Li is never manifold; the Tao of the Tathagata is one. The defectiveness of things is symbolized in the three Vehicles; these originate in individual life (ch'ing). Li is only one, as the cloud which spends rain is one, while the grasses and trees (which it waters) are many. One cannot from the manifoldness of the grasses deduce that of the rain." ("The World Conception", II, 76).

<sup>7</sup>Kindness (maitrī), compassion (karuṇā), joy (muditā) and indifference (upekṣā).

<sup>8</sup>See T9.19b5, "nature" (Hurvitz, 101:26), "nature and kind" (102:32).

<sup>9</sup>牙 "teeth" (405d13) should read 芽 ; see 401c15.

<sup>10</sup>See 402c10.

<sup>11</sup>Liebenthal translates: "All the Beings are watered in the marsh of the Tao yet they are unconscious of the source (from where the rain pours)." ("The World Conception", II, 75).

<sup>12</sup>Emend 斯 (406a5) to 期 .

<sup>13</sup>Liebenthal translates: (From "Such cause and effect"). "All Karma is conducive to Buddhahood, but the Beings do not know and each of them aims at another goal. Only Buddha knows that (in fact) there exists only one goal for all of them." (The World Conception", II, 94).

<sup>14</sup>See 397d6.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Liu Ch'iu, "Preface to the Wu-liang-i ching", T9.384a; Liebenthal, The Book of Chao (Peiping, 1948), p. 175f. & 169.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 6)

<sup>1</sup> 曆數. See the Chuang-tzu, ch. 27: "places and spaces which can be calculated" (Legge, 146), "cycles and numbers" (Watson, The Complete Works, p. 306). It also occurs in the Confucian Analects, 20:1, in the sense of "the represented and calculated numbers", or "order of succession". (Legge, Confucius, p. 350); the Shu Ching, V. iv. 8, "the calendaric calculations" (Legge, The Shoo King, p. 328), also II, ii, 14.

<sup>2</sup>Unlike the case in, 405a15f., "tzu-jan", used here as a noun, here partakes of the Taoist metaphysics. Tzu-jan is synonymously identified with t'ien (heaven), Tao, and Li in Kuo Hsiang, CTT, ch. 13 (CTI, 5:10). Robinson renders the term, "autogenous, self-so", and "self-so-ness". (Early Mādhyamika, p. 278, n. 8).

<sup>3</sup>Liebenthal translates (from the beginning): "It is prearranged in nature that good deeds must bear (good) fruits." ("The World Conception", II, 94) Cf. Tao-te ching, ch. 17: 功成事遂百姓皆謂我自然. "When his task is accomplished and his work done, the people all say, 'It happened to us naturally.'" (D. C. Law, tr., Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching, p. 73). Cf. 406d3.

<sup>4</sup> 說必當理 See 397b2&7. Cf. Han Fei-tzu, ju-hsiao 言必當理.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Pien-tsung lun, T52.225c24: 累不自除故求理以除累 Chang Chung-yuan, Creativity and Taoism (New York, 1970), p. 126: "It is not until we have completely freed ourselves from all conditions and limitations that we can see 'the rising sun'."

<sup>6</sup>The passage from "However, the coming into . . . ." is translated in Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 199: "The coming into being of particulars and shapes is the work of the fetters [of existence]. Once the Sage has united with the Universal Principle, then subtly the fetters vanish. When the fetters have vanished, how can one admit the existence of 'lands'? But, though I say that there is no 'land', yet there is no 'not-land'. There is neither body nor name, but the more the

body is not, the more does it exist. Hence one knows that Buddha-lands and Buddha-names and the meaning of the Buddha's prophecy vary with the beings [to whom these things are preached]."

Also cf. Liebenthal WCC, II, 87: "All phenomena in the Buddha domains created by good karman, still feature inside World. As the Sage is in union with li, they disappear altogether, World has then disappeared. If so, what further purpose could Buddha domains serve? (But) though (in reality) there are no domains, yet all the domains there are; though there are no bodies and names (of Buddhas), yet none of them is lacking. It follows that the domains, the Buddha names, and the prophecies are responses answering the expectations of the Beings. They are expedients, not final." See also T'ang yung-t'ung, Fo-chiao shih, Vol. II, p. 165, in which T'ang interprets the last phrase: "All [are devised to] lead men in such a way that they are made to turn to the good, (when they are not satisfied with themselves, they will turn to the good.)"

<sup>7</sup>Chieh-li 解理 . Cf. li-chieh, "to comprehend; to understand" in current usage.

<sup>8</sup>(406b2-4). Liebenthal translates this paragraph, changing, possibly by mistake, the letter 意 to 義: "Believers ask for an announcement of their impending liberation (vyākaraṇa). For they feel that what they are pregnant with will be miraculously delivered. A natural law (li) demands that they be informed. So they ask. (The embryo) is secretly expected though not yet visible, it presses for delivery in an act of Illumination. When what is going to be delivered has become seed, the announcement is simultaneously due." (The World Conception", II, 81).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 7)

<sup>1</sup>The synopsis of the parable cited from Hurvitz, p. xii.

<sup>2</sup>Transpose 者遠 (406b12) to 遠者 .

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 408b11, 398c9, 399a16 & b15.

<sup>4</sup>至理 . Cf. Wang Pi, the commentary on the I Ching, hexagram 1; Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 2 (CTI, 1:45), ch. 13 (CTI, 5:8), and ch. 33 (CTI, 10:39), et passim. See Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept Li as Principle", in Neo-Confucianism, Etc. (Hanover, N.H., 1968?), p. 58.



<sup>5</sup>Lit., "What calamities will leave them far off [from the goal]?"

<sup>6</sup>It refers to 25c5: "The sixteenth is I myself, Sakyamunibuddha". (147:15).

<sup>7</sup>Possibly referring to Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana-sutta, 9:20. See Buddhist Suttas, trans. T. W. Rhys Davids (New York: Dover Publications, 1969; originally published by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1881, as The Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XI) pp. 150-152: for instance, "10. 'And Again, O Bhikkhus, that I should comprehend that this was the noble truth concerning sorrow, though it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.'" (p. 150).

<sup>8</sup>See ibid., p. 152: "21. 'So long, O Bhikkhus, as my knowledge and insight were not quite clear, regarding each of these four noble truths in this triple order, in this twelvefold manner . . . .'"

<sup>9</sup>Emend 習 (406c15) to 集 .

<sup>10</sup>Two letters 四諦 (406c16) should be repeated.

<sup>11</sup>"Inclarity" (Hurvitz, 144:6).

<sup>12</sup>For what they are, see H. C. Warren, Buddhism in Translations (New York, 1972), p. 188.

<sup>13</sup>"Action" (Hurvitz, 144:6).

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Tao-sheng's statement found in Chi-tsang, Erh-ti i, T45.111b, cited by T'ang, Fo-chiao shih, II, 178.

<sup>15</sup>See Tao-te ching, ch. 17; ch. 6, n. 3 above.

<sup>16</sup>Sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and idea.

<sup>17</sup>Pleasant, unpleasant, and indeterminate.

<sup>18</sup>Catvāry-upādānāni: clinging to desire, to enlightened views, non-Buddhist practices and observances, and ideas arising from the conception of self.

<sup>19</sup>Deed, word, and thought committed by body, mouth and mind.

<sup>20</sup>The term 高羅 (406d18) might be Tao-sheng's own coinage referring to anuttarasamyaksambodhi (unexcelled, right enlightenment).

21 八極, probably the copier's mistake of 八苦 (?), eight kinds of suffering put forward by the Buddha in his first sermon after his enlightenment.

22 獨悟 seems to refer to the kind of enlightenment pursued by the practitioners of the Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna) which is self-centered in contradistinction to the altruistic type of enlightenment by the Greater Vehicle (Mahāyāna) which seems to be implicit in "great enlightenment" (all) in the passage that follows.

23 (亦可) 隨意. This phrase (in 26a6) is put in place of (亦可) 去 "to leave" (26a8).

24 Or "false words".

25 Cf. 27a17, 自謂已得度. "And saying to themselves that they have been saved." (Hurvitz, 154:14).

26 See Soothill, DCBT, p. 141, "化城 The magic, or illusion city in the Lotus Sūtra; it typifies temporary or incomplete nirvāṇa, i.e. the imperfect nirvāṇa of Hīnayāna."

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 8)

1 對揚, "Answering questions" (H. Nakamura, BDJ, p. 909); "One who drew out remarks or sermons from the Buddha" (Soothill, DCBT, p. 423). See 397d14 (ch. 1, n. 34), 399b17.

2 影響. See 410c6, 411c3, 412b10. Cf. the Shu ching, "the shadow and the echo" (Legge, The Shoo King, p. 54).

3 君子. Note that this term refers to "arhant". See 396d8 ([Preface], n. 16).

4 It refers to the three turns of the Dharma-wheel. See above 406c8ff. (Chapt. 7:3).

5 The first 成 (b16) is redundant and should be taken out. Cf. 408a2, 397b5f.

6 Liebenthal translates: (from "they entertain") "(The disciples) are longing for transcendental insight. This insight is given by the Buddha, and it is (only) through the Buddha that it can be achieved." ("The World Conception", II, 95).

<sup>7</sup> 質, "Basic stuff", Fung Yu-lan, trans. D. Bodde, A History of Chinese Philosophy, II, p. 33; "The term 'basic stuff' (chih) had already been used by Confucius to designate man's inner, spontaneous nature." (Note 2).

<sup>8</sup> 歸本. Cf. Wang Pi's commentary on the I Ching, Hexagram "fu" 復: "復者反本之謂" "Fu means return to the origin" (T'ang Yung-t'ung, trans. Liebenthal: "Wang-Pi's new Interpretation," p. 147). See CNS, 531c, 532b.

<sup>9</sup> 所所得之樂 (407c14) should read without one 所.

<sup>10</sup> Liebenthal translates: (from "going astray") "The period of striving is opposed to the Great Tao; in comparison with li it is toil. Whatever happiness (the Lower Vehicles) may find there, it is always small when compared with the Great Vehicle, though it might look great enough when compared with worldly pleasures." ("The World Conception", II, 79).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 9)

<sup>1</sup> See 397d1 (ch. 1, n. 24).

<sup>2</sup> 名實. See 412b15. For a discussion of the concept in the entire Chinese tradition, see Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, pp. 40f., 232, 787. Cf. a15. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 13 (CTI, 5:11): 必由其名者名當其實故由名而實不濫也.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 10)

<sup>1</sup> See ch. 23; Hurvitz, p. 295:7.

<sup>2</sup> See 410d15.

<sup>3</sup> See 401b16. Cf. 397b5.

<sup>4</sup> Emend 寤 (two cases in a14) to 寤.

<sup>5</sup> Thus, it can be interpreted: "The Thus Come One enters [the room of] the thought of . . . ."

<sup>6</sup> Thus, "The Thus Come One puts on the [cloak of] the thought of . . . ."

<sup>7</sup>Thus, "The Thus Come One obtains and sits on [the throne of] the emptiness . . . ."

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 11)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, p. xiii.

<sup>2</sup>For what seems to be proper segmentation and punctuation and interpretation, see Ōchō, "Jiku Dōshō sen", p. 259f.

<sup>3</sup>Liebenthal translates: (from the beginning of the passage) "The passions becloud li; they must by miracles be induced to believe. The pagoda is raised in order to bear testimony for the truth (of the message). A visible demonstration is needed." ("The World Conception", II, 99).

<sup>4</sup>泥 (408b17) should be complete with 涇 as Ocho, op. cit., p. 259, suspects.

<sup>5</sup>本在於空理(408c1). Yabuki Keiki takes 理 to be 地 in "Tongogi no shushosha Jiku Dōshō to sono kyōgi", p. 794. Ocho, op. cit., pp. 259 and 269, leaves it as it is. Cf. CVS, 335b:4 空地, 328a:4 理空, a:5 空理.

<sup>6</sup>Liebenthal translates: (from "all the living beings") "We are all Buddhas, all in Nirvāṇa. In the eternal aspect what difference is there between Nirvāṇa and a Buddha? But (our Buddhahood is covered by moral dirt (kleśa-anuśaya) as the pagodas when under the earth were covered by it. (Our true nature) is destined to appear in its glory, it cannot be covered for ever. It must come to light all at once as the pagoda shoots forth from the earth. This cannot be hindered. For from the beginning we are in the heaven of li as the pagodas are in the sky." ("The World Conception", II, 82).

<sup>7</sup>Ocho, op. cit., p. 259, suspects 難 (c4) to be 欲, in which case it would be rendered; "Even though they do not want to believe it, they can not help but obtain it."

<sup>8</sup>The second 說 (c11) seems to be redundant or simply a misprint.

<sup>9</sup>樂. It may have to be emended to 惡 "evil" in line with the correlated term 善 which subsequently occurs.

<sup>10</sup>變 (c16), the same word for "conjured up" in the sūtra as rendered by Hurvitz.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Liebenthal's translation: (from "[But] Why") (408c16-17) "Why does (the Buddha) transform (the Buddha domains) by degrees (and not at once)? This procedure shows that (the final state of) Li cannot be reached in one instant. One must work through matter in order to reach the immaterial. 'Diminish and further diminish in order to reach the undiminshable'." ("The World Conception", II, 93) Cf. Tao-te ching, ch. 48: "(The pursuit of learning is to increase day after day. The pursuit of Tao is to decrease day after day.) It is to decrease and further decrease until one reaches the point of taking no action." (Chan, The Way of Lao Tzu, p. 184). A variation occurs in the Chuang-tzu, ch. 22.

<sup>12</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Only of things we may say that they exist or do not exist. How to say that of the Sage?" ("The World Conception", I, 85, n. 54).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 12)

<sup>1</sup>Chapter 12 of Kumārajīva's translation as found in the Taishō edition is "Devadatta". Tao-sheng's commentary is no doubt based on Kumārajīva's version. It was during the period of T'ien-t'ai Chih-i (538-597) that the "Chapter on Devadatta" was added to Kumārajīva's version, and thus that version came to be made up of 28 chapters, one more than the original 27.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 13)

<sup>1</sup>親近處 (37b11 and 17, 210:1 and 11). Kato renders it as "sphere of intimacy" (MSLW, pp. 271 and 272).

<sup>2</sup>淺識 (409a2), lit. "shallow or superficial knowledge", referring to the information regarding the three vehicles in contradistinction to the knowledge of One. For a synonymous expression, see 403b13, 412b11 and d2.

<sup>3</sup>See 399b1, 401b14.

<sup>4</sup>Lokayatas are classified as a heterodox school like the Buddhists in Indian tradition.

<sup>5</sup>Hurvitz, 209:1, breaks down what Tao-sheng takes as one group of people into two by translating the phrase concerned (37a:22) into "naṭas [dancers, actors], [practi-

tioners of] any of a variety of magical games". Kato agrees with Tao-sheng: "to the various juggling performances of Nartakas and others" (MSLW, p. 270:9).

<sup>6</sup>See 397d6 (ch. 1, n. 27).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 14)

<sup>1</sup>Cf. 397a13.

<sup>2</sup>結使: kleśa or anuśaya.

<sup>3</sup>The phrase is found in the gāthās (41b20), "under side, in open space, they dwell" (233:11).

<sup>4</sup>而 (c7). The letter still makes sense in the sense of 與 "to share in" (Matthews' Chinese-English Dictionary, p. 1142) but it seems safer if we emend it to 有 (see c3). Or it is rather unnecessary as in the immediately preceding line.

<sup>5</sup>See 408b18ff.

<sup>6</sup>The ten originally account for the stages, eleventh to twentieth, in the scheme of the fifty-two bodhisattva stages. But it is often interchangeable with the 十地 (daśa-bhūmi). Cf. Liebenthal, The Book of Chao, p. 169ff. In interpreting this passage, Ōchō, op.cit., p. 269f., points to the passages of the two versions of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra, which states that the Buddha-nature innate in oneself can not be perceived by even a bodhisattva in the tenth stage.

<sup>7</sup>Another variation of the pattern similar to the passage in 408c:16, traceable to the Taoist texts, the Tao-te ching ch. 48, in particular. The word 積學 occurs in Kuo-Hsiang, CTC, ch. 32 (CTI, 10:11); see also ch. 6 (CTI, 3:6) for the variations of the pattern and the term.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 15)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, p. xiv.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Seng-chao, Chao-lun, T45.153a2: 虛心玄鑒 "His empty mind mirrors the metaphysical." (Robinson, op. cit., p. 213).

<sup>3</sup> 今日 (c5), probably the copyist's mistake of 今  
 曰 (?) "now he speaks" [to prove].

<sup>4</sup> See 402b6 (ch. 3, n. 33); 404b8 (ch. 4, n. 23).  
 Cf., Hurvitz, p. 256, note; sūtra, 19a4.

<sup>5</sup> Hurvitz, Chi-i, p. 200, translates (from "This day"): "This day, by holding to eternity as true, he shows Bodhgaya to be false. But if one can perceive that Bodhgaya is untrue, one must also understand that eternity is not true either. Hence one knows that long and short are on the side of the beings [who are the objects of the Buddha's salvation], and that the Sage is ever quiescent . . ." Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 12 (CTI, 4:31) 壽夭兼忘所謂懸解 "Longevity and untimely death are both forgotten; it is what is said that someone has been released from hanging." loc. cit. (4:37): 至人極壽命之長 "The superior man is the one who has brought the length of life to the extreme point."

<sup>6</sup> 方形 (d9). Liebenenthal reads it as (萬)形 "all the phenomena" ("The World Conception", II, p. 85).

<sup>7</sup> Another 有 is needed here to read: 若有時不有, (有)處不在者 (dl0f.), in agreement with Liebenenthal (loc. cit.) and Sakamoto Yukio, in Sakamoto, ed., Hokkekyō no Chugokūteki tenkai, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> According to Sakamoto, ibid., it should read: 長短斯非(七)則所以長短(恒)存焉 (dl3). The whole passage is translated by Liebenenthal: "The mortal Buddhas appear as they are called. They have no definite shape and therefore also no definite age. It follows that (to the real Buddha) who integrates all the phenomena in all the ages the past is present and the present past. He is always and everywhere. If there existed any time or any place where his is not, he would be like other creatures. The Sage is different. If one agrees that the word "long-lived" is used as symbol for a summum and that this applies to Gayā also, (I maintain that) if Gayā is such, it is no more Gayā (the place on earth) and "long-lived" cannot refer to (mundane life which, though long, is limited). If (the life of the Buddha) is neither short nor long, it is potentially long as well as short." ("The World Conception", II, 85).

<sup>9</sup> 受死生識. Note that the four letters happen to account for four of the twelve links in the doctrine of conditioned origination or causation (pratītya-samutpāda) as discussed by Tao-sheng himself in 406d. Syntactically they do not have any relevance with the chains. Yet the implication of the life-and-death (saṃsāra) process is apparent here. Cf. 410b11.

<sup>10</sup> Compare the meaning and terms of the phrase with the theory of multiple (triple, for example) body of the Buddha, by matching "form" (形) with the "corporeal body" (色身, rūpakāya) and "response" with "response body" (報身). See D.T. Suzuki, Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, p. 250; Studies in the Lankavatara Sūtra, p. 308ff., especially pp. 310-311.

<sup>11</sup> Liebenthal translates above two passages: "When penetrating to the meaning (of the Scriptures) we meet the Buddha in the medicine he offers though not in person. (The Buddha) came home to those children (who swallowed the medicine) . . . His intention was that they should accept (his message) and be saved in reality. Though words are not everlasting (truth), if they do not conflict with truth, then talk, though continued the whole day, does not involve the sin of untruth." ("The World Conception", II, 98).

<sup>12</sup> (43c12), which is taken by Tao-sheng as 衆生, by Hurvitz as "the multitude" (243:27).

<sup>13</sup> 無必在穢. It may make sense in its own, but it is possible that it is a misprint of 無穢必在, i.e., the phrase immediately preceding it, as it is quite usual that repetition of the same phrase occurs elsewhere in the text as Tao-sheng's style.

<sup>14</sup> 七珍, identical with 七寶, which are: gold (suvarna), silver (rūpya), lapis lazuli (vaidūrya), crystal (sphaṭika), agate (musāragalva), rubies (rohita-mukta), and cornelian (aśmagarba). They are the things that appear in the Western Paradise. It should be noted that the original title of Tao-sheng's essay, "The Buddha is not found in the Pure Land" was "On the Seven Precious Things". See Chitsang, Fa-hua hsüan-lun, T34.442a; Liebenthal, "A Biography", 94.

<sup>15</sup> Emend 名汝 (b16) to 石沙. See CVS, T38.337b, 338a; Fuse Kokaku, Nehanshū no kenkyū, p. 190, p. 196 (note 43).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. a similar statement by Tao-sheng in CVS, 334c15ff.: "'Land' refers to the area to which the living beings belong. When it is undefiled we say it as pure; being undefiled, it is non-existent (wu) and, being what they belong to, it is existent (yu)."

<sup>17</sup> 今 has been emended to 今. See T'ang Yung-t'ung, Fo-chiao shih, vol. II, p. 165.

<sup>18</sup> The phrase (410c4) slightly varies from the equivalent words in the sūtra (44a3).



## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 16)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, pp. xiv-xv.

<sup>2</sup>Lit. "in the language of Sung", (Liu) Sung (420-479) being the state Tao-sheng belonged to at the time of compilation of the commentary.

<sup>3</sup>應物無窮 . Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 25 (CTI, 8:33): 應感無窮 "He responds to and is moved by [the need of the beings] in endlessly varied ways."; ch. 12 (CTI, 4:33): 應感無方 .

<sup>4</sup>The source of this analogy is The Chuang Tzu, ch. 26: "The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you've gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words." (B. Watson, Chuang Tzu, Basic Writings, p. 140, and The Complete Works, p. 302.)

<sup>5</sup>Eka-jati-pratibaddha: "limited to one (more) birth." (BHSD, p. 152).

<sup>6</sup>Anutpattika-dharma-kṣāntiḥ: "Intellectual receptivity to the truth that states of existence have no origination." (*ibid*, p. 27). It is a trait associated with the eighth stage (bhūmi).

<sup>7</sup>Liebenthal translates: "Hearing the Sūtra once, one acquires the state of ekajātipratibaddha or that of anutpattidharmakṣānti, but certainly that is not li." (The Book of Chao, p. 182). Compare another translation by him (see note 8 below). For the pattern of the last sentence (理固無然), see Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 1 (CTI, 1:2): 理固然 .

<sup>8</sup>Cf. translation by Liebenthal: (from "Why is there" ([2][b])) "Why (does the Buddha) tell that to one who has seen the Truth? It is done in order to praise this Sūtra that he enumerates all those who have reached Enlightenment. (For) it contains guidance for everybody, an inexhaustible (store) where each Being gets what he needs. Implicitly he urges those who seek salvation to study this Sūtra. As long as li is not yet seen we must necessarily make use of speech; thereafter speech, as an effort of the mundane kind, is superfluous. Fishes and hares are caught in baskets and traps, but after the fishes and hares have been caught these devices are no longer needed. (We are told that) hearing the Sūtra once (the Saint) immediately attains the fruit of

ekāgamin or anutpattidharmakṣānti. But in reality that is certainly not so. Would (the hearing of) the words (of the Sūtra) be of any use if (those Bodhisattvas addressed) were not already released? There is (for one released) no alternation possible, neither for the better nor for the worse. And the fact that the Sūtra (enumerates all these rewards) must be explained by its (above outlined) intention. Li occupies the tenth bhūmi. (It is the end.) Though (these rewards) are not lies they are yet, taken literally, lies. The story the Sūtra tells us is not (in itself) a means to salvation but the possibility exists that it becomes a means to salvation. The enumeration of rewards (given to those who hear the Sūtra) is therefore made, (not as an aim in itself, but) in order to draw our attention to the meaning (of the Sūtra). (Or, are we supposed) to be content with the knowledge gained (from listening to somebody else)? Is (what we are told in the Sūtra) our own experience?" ("The World Conception", II, 92).

<sup>9</sup>That is, transcendence to birth-and-death, which means no more rebirth.

<sup>10</sup>"Five" because one, prajñā, is not included in the otherwise six "perfections" (see next passage).

<sup>11</sup>Cf. The Analects 4:8: 朝聞道夕死可矣 "If a man in the morning hear the right way, he may die in the evening without regret." (tr. Legge, Confucius Confucian Analects, The Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean, p. 168). Cf. also I-tsing, A Record of the Buddhist Religion, tr. J. Takakusu (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 185.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 17)

<sup>1</sup>Cf. 407d15f.

<sup>2</sup>For a similar pattern, cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 32 (CTI, 10:9):

<sup>3</sup>Catur-yoni: "To wit, birth from eggs, birth from a womb, birth from moisture, and birth from transformation". (46c7, 259:1). Cf. The Diamond sūtra (Vajracchedikā), ch. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Catvāri-phalāni, the four stages of achievement in Hinayanic cultivation: as enumerated in the Sūtra, srota 'āpanna (the first-stage śrāvaka), sakṛdāgāmin ("once-returned"), anagamin ("non-returned"), and arhant. (Hurvitz, 259:18).

<sup>5</sup>Or "complete penetration without bound".

<sup>6</sup>Liebenthal translates: (From "they have accomplished.") "The Tao of the Tathagata is adaptive complying with the status of each single Being. (The Buddha) is not deceitful. Promising a thousandfold reward (for the study of the SPS) he certainly does not tell a lie." ("The World Conception", II, 98).

<sup>7</sup>The term occurs in 46c28 (260:2, "albeit indirectly") and 47a26 (261:12).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 18)

<sup>1</sup>Probably 上 or 前 is the missing letter (a13).

<sup>2</sup>As suggested by the editor, the missing letter is believed to be 听 .

<sup>3</sup>此 (?).

<sup>4</sup>十方 daśa diśah: the four cardinal and the four intermediary directions plus up and down. See the sūtra, 48a25.

<sup>5</sup>三根 as deciphered by the editor is possibly 六根 (47c7) "six faculties".

<sup>6</sup>Liebenthal translates: (from "the three thousand being of such nature") "As the Three Thousand (Buddha Worlds) are one, how can there be many spread out in the ten directions? Surely, in the light of the dharmakāya (World) appears integrated, but the three types of human intelligences must be taught by means of scriptures and sermons. Thus the explanations vary. The general idea is one but expressed in innumerable ways. Explanations bring (the Buddha) near to us." ("The World Conception", II, 75).

<sup>7</sup>Two letters were unclear in the original and are guessed by the editor. Hence, my translation must be tentative.

<sup>8</sup>資 (tzu) or natural property, possibly referring to Buddha-nature.

<sup>9</sup>Amṛta (see 49c6, 274:8), nectar of immortality.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Confucian Analects, XI: 25, "What harm is there in that?" Legge, Confucius, p. 248.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 19)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, p. xv.

<sup>2</sup>See 403b16ff.

<sup>3</sup>The lacuna is probably 若 but the editor suspects it to be 信 "to believe in".

<sup>4</sup>Emend 端 (c2) to 段, two being homophonym tuan.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. CNS, 380c2f.; CVS, 415c6 (in Kumārajīva's words). Cf. also CVS 414b28; Hui-jui, Yü-i lun, T53.41b4.

<sup>6</sup>可不慎哉 Cf. The Chuang-tzu, ch. 4 (CTI, 2:20): 可不慎與 "Can you afford to be careless?" (Watson, p. 61); "ought he not to be careful?" (Legge, The Texts of Taoism, pt. I, p. 214). Also cf. I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 8: 可不慎乎 "may he be careless in regard to them?" (Legge, p. 362). See 412a1 for a parallel statement of the idea expressed in the passage.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 20)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, p. xv.

<sup>2</sup>Liebenthal translates: "When Karma draws to a stand, the consummation of existence is reached in li, then all affairs are settled." ("The World Conception", II, 94).

<sup>3</sup>(天?) (c6).

<sup>4</sup>Or "without any interval", that is, immediately.

<sup>5</sup>(光?) (c10).

<sup>6</sup>(道?) (c11).

<sup>7</sup>理暢黃中 Cf. I Ching, Wen Yen, ch. 2: 君子黃中通理 . . . 暢 "The superior man (emblemized here) by the 'yellow' and correct (colour), is possessed of comprehension and discrimination . . . diffuses its complacency . . ." (Legge, p. 421), "The superior man is yellow and moderate; thus he makes influence felt in the outer world through reason . . . gives freedom . . ." (Wilhelm/Baynes, p. 395). As Wang Pi points out in his commentary on the same hexagram (k'un), yellow is regarded as the colour of the center or middle. (CII, 1:23).

<sup>8</sup>(天?) (c14).

<sup>9</sup>Alternate translation: ". . . sense their endowment of enlightenment coming to the fore."

<sup>10</sup>(~~與~~?) (c16).

<sup>11</sup>(411c18). Liebethal translates: "When within longing is deepest it rouses the feeling (of the Cosmic Agent) which is expressed without (by a miracle)." ("The World Conception", II, 81).

<sup>12</sup>For the expression 孰能如此乎 (411d1), cf. I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 10. (Legge, p. 370; Chan, The Source Book, p. 267).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 21)

<sup>1</sup>Probably referring either to ch. 10 or to ch. 12.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 22)

<sup>1</sup>(子?) (d10). See Ōchō, "Jiku Dōshō sen", p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>In using the two words, Tao and Te here in one statement, Tao-sheng seems to have had in mind the fact Tao as principle and Te as its representation in individuals according to the Tao-te ching.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 411c3.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 23)

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 12 (CTI, 4:52): 聖人道同

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 24)

<sup>1</sup>(412a15). Cf. I Ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 4: 神無方 "spirit has no spatial restriction" (Chan, A Source Book, p. 266), "spirit-like, unconditioned by place". (Legge, I Ching, p. 354).

<sup>2</sup>See Hurvitz, Chih-i, p. 200: "The purpose, as here, is to fix the minds of the beings upon the One."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Liebenthal's translation: "When the sages hang up their lamps (in the darkness we are in) and guide (the Beings to salvation) making use of expedients, they may avail themselves of miracles or may argue. For Beings are in a varying state of maturity and (what they must be told to) acquire and to renounce cannot be the same (in all cases). Therefore, though (the Sūtra in this chapter) praises Kuan-yin alone, (this does not mean that the Buddha is a deity with definite characteristics, but that) it wishes to lead the Beings to the way home. (Thus it allows them to worship any deity they like (if only they would do that) with their whole might and let their hearts be filled (with veneration). If they are able to worship one (deity) then (in that act) they have worshipped all others. (This Sūtra does not intend by its admonition (to worship Kuan-yin) to play off (one deity against another one).)" ("The World Conception", II, 99-100).

<sup>4</sup> 曲濟無遺 (412c18). Cf. 曲成無遺 in I Ching, A.R., pt. 1, ch. 4: "it stoops to bring things into completion without missing any" (Chan, The Source Book, p. 266) "by an ever-varying adaptation he completes (the nature of) all things without exception" (Legge, p. 354). Wang Pi recounts the theme in Chou-i lüeh-li, pt. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Or "sets in motion", "brandishes" or "ushers in".

<sup>6</sup>初 Prof. Leon Hurvitz in our private communication suspects the letter, in fact blurred in the original, as a corruption of 利 "sharply".

<sup>7</sup>Cf. the meaning of the Buddha as the turner of the wheel of Dharma or the one who sets in motion the wheel (Dharma-cakravartin). Liebenthal reads 初 as (物) ("The World Conception", II, 82).

<sup>8</sup>Hurvitz seems to refer to this passage when he says, "As for being saved by virtue of a mere invocation of a name, it stands to reason that one cannot uproot that which has no roots." (Chih-i, p. 200). For the term 不拔 (b2), see the Tao-te ching, ch. 54: 善建者不拔 "He who is well established (in Tao) cannot be pulled away." However, the nuance is different, to wit, it is positive in the case of Tao-sheng whereas the usage in the Taoist text has a negative connotation.

<sup>9</sup>道機 Or "subtle, triggering mechanism of the Tao".

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 26 (CTI, 8:58).

<sup>1</sup>For the phrase 遂通 cf. I ching, A.R., pt. I, ch. 10. See 403a17 (ch. 3, note 53).

<sup>2</sup>Liebenthal translates: (From "The Sage sets in motion") "The Sage can save a Being only when there is a root of which he can get hold. When he is not expected (lit. "when within there is not a spring of tao", i.e. when the being is not impregnated before) he cannot respond. Can one attain salvation by the calling of the name (of Kuan-yin, i.e. by a magical act)? No. Then, what does (the Sūtra) mean expressing itself in this way? Kuan-yin is such that she reaches everywhere and releases every Being. If (a believer) desires earnestly to see (the Truth) (lit. "has a spring of Illumination") and knocks (at the Gate of) the Sage, he possesses the means to guide him to the goal. He extends these means to him and he will be released. (Thus understood it can be said that salvation is attained by calling the name of Kuan-yin and this calling) is not meaningless. ("The World Conception", II, 81f.). For an interpretation of the passage see Ōchō's article "Jiku Dōshō no Hoke shisō", pp. 168-9.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 25)

<sup>1</sup>Cf. 411c3.

<sup>2</sup>Rather a misprint of 銘 ("to inscribe")?

<sup>3</sup>See 407d6 (ch. 9, note 2).

<sup>4</sup>Liebenthal translates: (from the beginning of the chapter) "Whatever happens in this universe (is occasioned by Karma that) operates like a reflection and an echo; unavoidable are the changes of fortune (in consequence of this law). (Its function is wrapped in secret. For) the truth expressed in the Scriptures is beyond the understanding of common people. Their narrow minds harbour shallow desires; so to comply with the fashion of the time (the Sage) gave them the mantras. Foreigners favor dhāraṇīs because they give them power to call forth fortune and ward off disaster. There is nothing which they cannot control. In our period of decay people are afraid. They do the good for this reason. Pitying their foolishness the merciful Sage taught them this means, so that those to whom final insight is denied, and who look with apprehension to their future may suddenly believe. He uses the syllables of the dhāraṇīs as symbols for truth which cannot be directly applied. (Apart from the real truth) he creates a symbolic truth. Further, good and bad luck comes from the demons whom the words of the

dhāraṇīs order to desist from doing damage. Those people who fear for their future eagerly memorize sutras. At the end of that activity they must get behind the mere verbiage. Behind the verbiage is found the true meaning. When that appears, bad luck vanishes automatically. ("The World Conception", II, 98f.). The above translation typifies the way Liebenthal tackles Tao-sheng's writings. It is a very liberal, or rather arbitrary translation, not faithful to either the letters or the meaning of the text, let alone Tao-sheng's thought as a whole.

<sup>5</sup>(罪), following the editor's suggestion.

<sup>6</sup>Reference, in particular, to Jainism. Hurvitz renders it with "the external paths" (336:2).

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 26)

<sup>1</sup>Cf. 399b2, 412d2.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Kuo Hsiang, CTC, ch. 2, (CTI, 1:42): 理有至極... 則冥然自合.

<sup>3</sup>Int. 善友 kalyāṇa-mitra: "good friend, regularly said of one (not as a rule a Buddha) who helps in conversion or religious progress" (Edgerton, BHSD, p. 174).

<sup>4</sup>切石差 (d5) denotes, first of all, persistent self-cultivation, as it is used in the Shih ching, Wei-feng, ch. 1.

## NOTES TO TRANSLATION (CHAPTER 27)

<sup>1</sup>Hurvitz, p. xv.

<sup>2</sup>In the current usage 曲尺 refers to "a (carpenter's) square", but Tao-sheng may have coined the word in the abstract sense that has bearing on the classical meaning as found in the I Ching; see 412a18 (ch. 24, n. 4).



## ABBREVIATIONS

BHSD	F. Edgerton, <u>Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary</u>
BGDJ	H. Nakamura, <u>Bukkyōgo daijiten</u>
CNS	Tao-sheng's Commentary on the <u>Nirvāṇa Sūtra</u> , T37(nr. 1763)
CSPS	Tao-sheng's Commentary on the <u>Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra</u> , HTC, vol. 150
CTCS	<u>Chuang-tzu chi shih</u>
CVS	Tao-sheng's Commentary on the <u>Vimala kirti-nirdeśa Sūtra</u> , T38(nr. 1775)
DCBT	W. Soothill and L. Hodous, <u>A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms</u>
HTC	<u>Hsū Tsang Ching</u>
IBK	<u>Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū</u>
LTI	<u>Lao-tzu i</u>
MN	<u>Monumenta Nipponica</u>
SLFO	<u>Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma</u>
T	<u>Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō.</u>

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