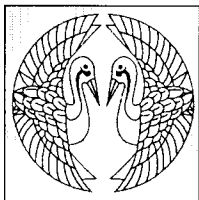


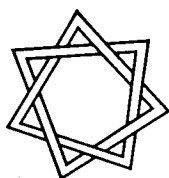
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THE MASTERS OF HONGZHOU IN THE TANGUT STATE

The Tangut collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies preserves two Tangut manuscripts with practically the same title — “Notes on the Basic Intentions of the Masters of the Hongzhou Lineage” [1]. One of the manuscripts, call number Tang 112, No. 2540, is somewhat more extensive than the other and bears a broader title — “Notes on the Basic Intentions of the Masters of the Hongzhou Lineage with Explanation and Commentary” [2]. It presents in effect an expanded version of Tang 111, No. 2529. As my earlier research has demonstrated, both of the texts are in fact identical. The present paper will focus on the more detailed text, which comprises a rather extensive commentary, i.e. Tang 112, No. 2540.

The dimensions of the manuscript under discussion are about 15.0 × 22.0 cm. The manuscript contains approxi-

mately 18 characters per line. The basic text is written in large characters, while the commentary is written in smaller characters. This lengthy version contains 23 butterfly pages and the smaller one only about 5 pages.

Surprisingly, the text written in large characters in Tang 112, No. 2540, which corresponds to the contents of Tang 111, No. 2529, does not constitute a single, logical exposition. This section of the “Notes” is a collection of statements and explanations, sometimes fairly lengthy, rather than the coherent text we find in Tang 111, No. 2529.

Elsewhere, the author of the present paper has made a general survey of the text of the “Notes” [3]. Here I present some additional observations on the contents of the manuscript.

Origin of the Text

It is fortunate that in both the versions the text has been preserved in full. From the colophone of the lengthier version we even learn the name and birthplace of the original commentator. According to this colophone, the commentary (註) was composed by a *śramaṇa* Fa-yong, a native of a place called *Yuanxiang* [4].

Although the colophone of the Tangut text has survived, it bears neither the date of its compilation nor a hint at the origin of the text in general. Judging from the paper, the manuscript can be dated, like other Khara Khoto findings, to the mid-twelfth century. The abridged text in Tang 111, No. 2529 has no colophone at all. The person of Fa-yong is not mentioned in any of the Chinese biographical sources known to me. However, some observations concerning the time of the compilation of the original text can be made on the basis of the text itself [5].

The “Notes on the Basic Intentions of the Masters of the Hongzhou Lineage with Explanation and Commentary” reflect, in the main, a later development of the basic ideas of classical Chan-Buddhism in the late Tang period, namely, the concepts of Ma-zu Dao-yi (馬祖道一; 709—788) and his disciples — Huangbo (黃檗; d. 850) and Baizhang (百丈; 720—814). The latter is mentioned in the text. The founder of the teaching, Ma-zu, preached mainly in the area of Hongzhou in Jiangxi, whence the title of the school: the

“Hongzhou line”. This term seems to have been invented by Guifeng Zong-mi (圭峰宗密; 780—841). It was used in the so-called “Chan Chart” by Zong-mi, which contains an analysis of various schools and teachings contemporary to the author, whose aim was to unite the rites of Chan with the doctrinal teachings [6].

Since our Tangut text mentions both Baizhang and Ma-zu and bears a title linking its author, whoever he might be, with the tradition of Zong-mi (and with Buddhism as a whole in the north-west China), it appears reasonable to date the compilation of the “Notes on the Basic Intentions” to the mid-ninth century and not earlier than 788, for the text mentions, if vaguely, the posthumous title of Ma-zu — Daji (大寂 — “The Great Tranquillity”), which Ma-zu received in that year. No other names are mentioned in either text, which would enable us to date the text to a later period. Moreover, there is some ambiguity concerning the nature of the text, which seems to deny any connections with Zong-mi's teaching and lacks mention of his writings. Nevertheless, the connection of the texts with Zong-mi's thought leaves little room for doubt: the “Notes” seem to share both some of the concepts characteristic of Zong-mi's tradition and his general search for the unity of doctrinal Buddhism and Chan — i.e. for harmony between the schools and the doctrines (宗教一致).

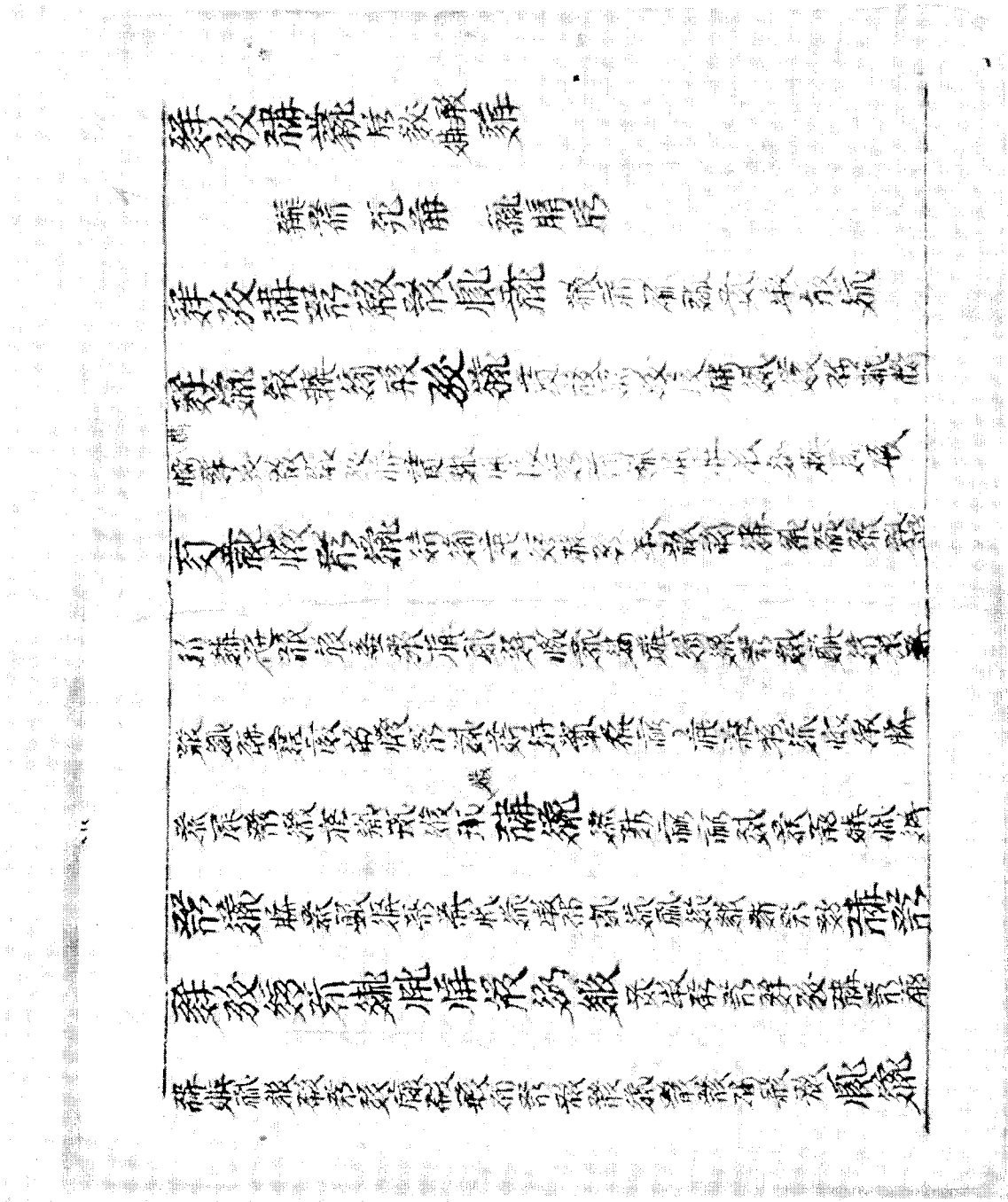


Fig. 1

Contents of the “Notes”

The Tangut text under discussion is quite extensive. Here I shall limit myself to the basic ideas it contains. To obtain an adequate understanding of the contents of the “Notes”, it is necessary to provide some information on the religious and cultural circumstances under which Buddhism developed in north-west China in the ninth—twelfth centuries.

It is quite obvious now that no such thing as “Chinese Buddhism” ever existed as a unified entity except in the minds of scholars. It was different in different regions and at different periods, every time presenting a blend of various traditions, beliefs, and local cults. It had its own local religious centres in various areas of China. One can clearly discriminate between central-southern Buddhism, i.e. the schools of Ma-zu and Shitou, and the northern or north-west variant of the Buddhist faith. The latter comprised the doctrines of Huayan and esoteric Buddhism. As for the development of Chan, for certain historical and geographical reasons, the synthetic school of Guifeng Zong-mi, centred in the Straw Hut Temple in Shenxi, was predominant [7]. It is now obvious that after Huichang persecution of Buddhism in the 840s the lineage of Zong-mi was not interrupted, but continued to develop both in its place of origin and in the Tangut State, where it became extremely popular [8]. Many works by Zong-mi were translated into Tangut; some of them have survived both in Chinese and Tangut versions [9]. At the same time, there are treatises which do not belong to Zong-mi but closely follow his thought and ideas, with Zong-mi’s writings frequently quoted in them. Such is “The Mirror” (鏡), which has been discussed elsewhere [10].

There are also several texts which, while not connected directly with Zong-mi, demonstrate a dependence on his thought, especially as concerns bringing Chan together with the doctrines. Such is, to my mind, the case with the text of the “Notes”. The problem that existed was in fact the problem of shift: the initial efforts to unite Huayan and Chan of Heze Shen-hui (河澤神會; 686—760) were abandoned because of the decline of Shen-hui tradition; furthermore, the followers of Zong-mi turned to the increasingly prominent school of Ma-zu. Such was the case with Zong-mi’s disciple Pei Xiu (裴休; d. 860), once the Tang prime-minister, who turned to the teaching of Huangbo and became the publisher of his works [11]. The “Notes”, though not linked to Pei Xiu directly, probably represent the same school of thinking.

The “Notes” begin with a traditional explanation of the meaning of the word “Hongzhou” and notes on Ma-zu’s biography and appearance, which seem to agree with all other surviving records [12]. The account of his early career, however, differs slightly from the traditional one; Ma-zu is said to have taken monastic vows under a certain “*vinaya* master Yuan”, who is mentioned only once. Furthermore, the commentator of the “Notes” seems to discriminate between Ma-zu and Da-ji, though the latter was, as mentioned above, the master’s posthumous title. For some unknown reason, Fa-yong treats the name as though it refers to a different person.

Further, the text holds that Chan contemplation was studied by Ma-zu under Huairang Er-san, who probably stands erroneously for Nanyue Huairang (南嶽懷讓; 677—744), Ma-zu’s actual master. The process of Chan

study is described in this way: “[Ma-zu] has obtained the mysterious seal of mind from Huairang Er-san and gained knowledge that everything [possesses] true reality, and [thus] has acquired perfection. After that his disciples appeared like a [multitude] of clouds”.

This note suggests that Ma-zu is represented here as a follower of the “sudden enlightenment and gradual perfection”, i.e. as a follower of Guifeng Zong-mi’s tradition. Fa-yong further notes: “The [Hongzhou] doctrine is in that which all living beings possess — the direct, clear, and wise mind ... since its masters elaborate their ‘straight’ teaching (of the innate identity of the individual mind with the Buddha-nature — *K. S.*), it is precisely they who are the teachers who transmit [what is] most important”. Basing himself on the idea that “everything is true”, i.e. that each mental phenomenon contains in itself the completeness of the Buddha-nature, Fa-yong remarks: “From the beginning the people have no misconceptions”, thus claiming the priority of Chan over doctrinal Buddhism, which is in full accordance with Hongzhou teaching.

As was mentioned above, the text of the “Notes” is a collection of records of the school, with commentaries interwoven. Though it is not possible to reconstruct the original text in every instance, we may conclude, relying on the brief version, that the first part of the text presents an adequate exposition of Ma-zu’s teaching. The most interesting section begins with a statement on the necessity of studying “the two main points of the teaching — man and *dharma*” (i.e. the Buddhist teaching) — a dichotomy formulated by Zong-mi in his “Chan Preface”. Its employment in the “Notes” provides indirect evidence of a certain connection between Guifeng’s line and the tradition represented in the “Notes”. Zong-mi’s assertion is that “it is hard to approximate *dharma* through the people but easy to join the people through *dharma*” [13].

The problem of man and *dharma* requires special attention. Briefly, the dichotomy stresses the necessity of doctrinal learning, i.e. *dharma*. On the one hand, *dharma* is considered a changeless criterion of truth, regardless of the individual’s state of mind; on the other hand, it is a particular role played by particular individuals who transmit the Teaching. Transmitting the *dharma* from mind to mind is the role of the Chan master. Consequently, the Teacher and his Teaching constitute the union, which forms the essence of harmonious teaching.

Further, the “Notes” turn to the exposition of the relationship between substance and its manifestations, namely, between “virtue” and “reward”. The text reads: “[IF WE] DO NOT RELY ON THE WORDS OF THE TEN THOUSAND SAGES, WHAT IS LEFT TO RELY UPON THEN?” The commentary of the compiler, Fa-yong, is as follows: “[According] to the intention of the doctrine under consideration, [you] should not believe in what you hear and [should] perfect [your] faith in the benevolent ties of the Buddha family. [In this case] the fruit of heaven is achieved. Why? [The reason is that] the principle of Chan is the summit ... of the *dharma* treasure of the Buddhas of the three periods, [which is] the heart of the teachings of all the sages”. The “Notes” continue: “EVERYTHING IS TRUTH. This implies that the supreme instrument of a single mind dwells in its uniqueness, having no equals to itself. THE INITIAL EQUALITY, THE NON-DUALITY OF OPPOSITES. Additionally: the

question: ‘What is the single characteristic [of this]?’ [The answer]: ‘It is virtue’. Is it that substance dwells in the five *skandhas*? Considered directly as a whole, substance is one in and of itself. What does it contain? If deeds originated from virtue, no virtue would originate from substance. What is the ultimate sense of deeds and virtue? The answer: ‘Substance and deeds are purity. True substance is not subject to attachment or vice. Thus, that is why one speaks of virtue coming from substance. The *dharmas* manifested do not differ from each other and they all are nothing but the virtue coming from deeds’” [14].

In my view, the most interesting portion of Fa-yong's notes cited above are the passages which reveal the close relation of Chan thought to the whole of Chinese Buddhist philosophy, notable for its special attention to the problems of substance and non-duality. The lengthy discourse on the interrelations of substance, virtues, and deeds tends to elucidate the initial equality of all the phenomena with the help of the Huayen concept of *ti-yong* (體用). The main purpose of the basic text is to connect Ma-zu's idea that “everything is true” (i.e. that every manifestation of mental activity is ontologically valid), with the traditional Huayen outlook or even to refer to the *ti-yong* concept as the foundation of Ma-zu's thinking. It is interesting that Zong-mi accused the Hongzhou line of misunderstanding the concept of *ti-yong*, which was evident to him from their notion that “everything is true”.

Zong-mi believed that the Hongzhou teachers did not discriminate between the pure and deluded mind. To avoid this, Fa-yong developed the idea of the double manifestation of substance, with the first level of manifestation being the “deed” and the “virtue” being the manifestation of the latter and not of substance itself. Consequently, everything, be it pure or not, is related, directly or indirectly, to the initial purity. This idea of Fa-yong introduced a certain mediator between the initial purity and worldly delusion, not separated from each other but existing in unity, without purity of substance suffering any damage. Thus “everything is true” and *ti-yong* concepts could have coexisted without contradicting one another. The invention of such a highly sophisticated doctrine was important to Zong-mi's followers, who sought to establish their teaching as the doctrinal basis of Chan, rather than to the Hongzhou line.

The “Notes” also quote a *gātha* of Baizhang. Nothing similar to this Tangut *gātha* has survived in extant Baizhang texts. Taking into consideration the nature of Baizhang's religious activity as a Chan adept, it is hard to imagine that he was overly concerned by the problem of interrelations or mutual dependence of substance and phenomena. It is more likely that Baizhang's name was merely used for the purpose of authority.

We read in the “Notes”: “THUS BAIZHANG UTTERED A *GĀTHA*, namely, explained different meanings in order and respectively demonstrated the totality of truth and turmoil. If substance, deeds, and virtues lack duality, then in their relation to the Buddha they do not exist from the [very] beginning. True mind is primordially wise and tranquil, [hence] the mind does not exist from the beginning. Manifestations are non-dual, they are encompassed by the deeds [and] liberated by substance; thus it is said that everything is true. For this reason, two paths — substance and deeds — are obvious. THE EXISTENT: [that means] that there is nothing which is not the principle. ALL *DHARMAS*, [namely], the unchangeable principle, POSSESS THE

EMPTINESS OF FORM [which is] the virtue of following the causes”.

It is easy to recognise in this last thesis the particular Huayen concept of true reality remaining unchangeable and yet subject to changes. The existence of *dharmas* is interpreted in the text through their union with the true principle, in other words from the point of view of the absolute. *Dharmas* possess reality and in their worldly mode they are empty and constitute a phenomenal plurality, the principle being manifested through their constant motion. *Dharmas* thus retain their principal existence, which does not deny their phenomenal emptiness, and vice versa [15]. Only empirical being is an illusion of a special kind — the supreme existence of true reality manifests itself through it.

The passages and discourses quoted above, however concise they may seem, offer some evidence to evaluate the “Notes” as a Chan-Huayen text, seeking to unite Chan practices with the basic Huayen doctrines to create a perfect teaching again. In any case, I would like to return to the original text in order to demonstrate the key idea more clearly. Elsewhere, the Tangut text reads: “BASIS AND DEEDS DO NOT EXCLUDE EACH OTHER. Following self-nature is an ancient way. [Concerning] the contradiction [between basis and deeds] someone said [that] the source was Chan. Though Chan is the source, if the path of perfection is followed without full contemplation of the doctrine, contradiction arises between your way and the way of attaining [enlightenment]. [But] if only the practices are used, would it not contradict the secret seal of mind transmitted by Bodhidharma? The answer: ‘... if complete contemplation of the Teaching on the path of perfection occurs, the [distinct] features of duality will escape you because of your understanding that everything is true. That is the Dao. As was said before, that which never changes contains no contradiction’”.

This part of the text clearly stresses the necessity of uniting Chan with doctrinal knowledge, which would prove efficiency of Chan practices. The Huayen concept of true reality bringing forth all the variety of phenomena, while remaining unchangeable, is now used in the text to support the predominantly Chan concept of direct identity of mind with the Buddha. Thus was Huayen explanation of Ma-zu's assertion that “every meeting is Dao” [16].

Other phrases in the “Notes” seem to support the supposed proximity of our text to the Huayen tradition and conform to the spirit of establishing the “round teaching”. These are: “THE CHAN MASTER JUE-HUI [17] ATTAINED THE ENLIGHTENED MIND, [he] awakened outside the words (of doctrinal teachings — K. S.) [and] not relying on the words. He became attached to that which was outside the words, and did not desire to follow the words. [THIS IS AS IF] HE OPENED HIS RIGHT EYE, LEAVING HIS LEFT EYE CLOSED. Those who follow only the words or exclusively what is outside the words are equally non-enlightened. They lack a part of the teaching, and this has [always] generated sin. If one follows this strictly, there will be no one among people without perfect wisdom”. The text goes on to elucidate the doctrine of mutual interaction of Chan and the teachings in creating a perfect unity.

To demonstrate a certain connection between the contents of the Tangut text and Huayen thought, I would refer to the following passage: “ALL *DHARMAS* ARE *DHARMAS* OF TRUTH, [i.e.] all *dharmas* pertain to the *dharmas* of truth and not to different *dharmas* established by means of

deviation from the truth. ALL NAMES ARE NAMES OF TRUTH. The origin from the single name [implies that this is] the name of the total truth (total reality — *K. S.*) and not the name relating to the variety of real names established on the account of a subdivision of true reality. For example, from a single grain of wheat ten thousand dishes are prepared, but all of them are wheat”.

The general meaning of the above discussion is quite transparent; all phenomena derive from the single true reality and their worldly existence rests on the principal of linking with this reality, but not on that of its division. This general idea is similar to the Huayen concept of the relationship between a particular phenomenon and the total reality as they are rendered in Fa-zang's “Golden Lion of Huayen” and Zong-mi's “Chan Preface”. There is also a certain similarity in the parables used by the authors, though Zong-mi's parable treats gold instead of wheat [18].

Any analysis of the “Notes”, even one as brief as that presented in this paper, would be incomplete without a discussion of the relationship between the main concepts treated in the text and the doctrine of Heze Shen-hui. Fortunately, the text itself provides some material on the problem: “QUESTION: WHAT IS DHARMA TRANSMITTED FROM MASTER TO PUPIL IN THE SCHOOL OF THE FOUNDING MASTER HEZE? The explanation has always been clear and well-known, though living beings inquire into the [nature] of true substance on the basis of contemplation that follows the words. [These], however, do not discriminate between white and black. With regard to the “precious seal of great antiquity”, [it implies] a non-duality of [contemplation following the words] and contemplation following what is beyond the words [19]. Is there any difference between the views of Da-ji (大寂 Ma-zu), [who establishes] the realisation of self nature through the presence of external characteristics, and the views of Heze? The answer is: ‘[The difference] both exists and does not’. Why? According to Da-ji, everything exists truly. Therefore, there is no difference. ... Is there any true substance in that? From the point of view of existence (i.e. worldly existence of phenomena), [both] sages and fools exist, [consequently] it is not possible for enlightenment to be brought about — what is the use of that? Reverend Śākya had attained full and perfect enlightenment and attained the mind

of the *dharma* realm. If the full vision of self is acquired once, self and the Buddha will essentially constitute no difference. Living beings are not enlightened and are subject to retribution. According to the law (rite — *K. S.*), there are distinctions between the masters”.

Thus, the Tangut text seeks to demonstrate the ultimate unity of the doctrines of Ma-zu and Shen-hui, since both masters deal with the realisation of the innate Buddha-nature, ever-present in mind. According to the “Notes”, the two teachings are identical in substance, but differ in their manifestation. Thus a consequent line of Chan teachings amalgamation is developed, as well as the problem of establishing the “orthodox” Chan had is solved: the shift from Shen-hui to Ma-zu is regarded as of no principle significance, because both the masters are equally true and are teaching the same “Buddha-nature”. This fact testifies to efforts to update Zong-mi's views to the changing reality of late Tang and Sung Buddhism, and at the same time to an effort to preserve the key function of Huayen philosophy.

Furthermore, there is something that causes Fa-yong's views to differ from Zong-mi's main intention. For the Master of Guifeng, Huayen philosophy served as the basis for further constructions, while for Fa-yong it had lost much of its original value and was preserved by him only in its explanatory function, but not as some “ultimate theory” or constructive ideology. No harmony of Chan and teachings existed anymore; Chan became dominant. The evidence for that is that Huayen concepts in the “Notes” were attributed to Chan masters, but not to Huayen authorities — neither Zong-mi nor anyone else is mentioned in the Tangut text.

This analysis, brief as it may seem, shows that the lineage of Zong-mi did survive in Xi-Xia. It took a new direction; efforts to combine the approach of the Ma-zu line with Huayen doctrinal foundations were made there. Although the origin of the “Notes” is probably Chinese, the text could be understood and appreciated only in Xi-Xia, with its long-lasting interest in Huayan. The “Notes” deviate from classical Zong-mi's views in many points, thus representing a new development of his thought, Chinese in origin, but flourishing in Xi-Xia. If Chinese Buddhism was destined to transform into some sort of native Tangut Buddhism, the Chan-Huayan trend might have been crucial in the process.

Notes

1. Tang 111, No. 2529; Tang 112, No. 2540.
2. 洪州宗趣註開明要記. Here and further in the paper the Chinese equivalents of original Tangut names and titles are referred to. In our previous publications the title of the text was translated in a slightly different way, but the variant used here sounds more adequate.
3. See K. Iu. Solonin, “Po povodu chan'-buddiiskikh tekstov iz Tangutskogo sobraniia SPbF IV RAN” (“Concerning the Chan-Buddhist Texts in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies Tangut Collection, Russian Academy of Sciences”), *Petersburgskoe vostokovedenie*, fasc. 7 (St. Petersburg, 1995), pp. 390—412; K. J. Solonin, “Guifeng Zong-mi and the Buddhism in Xi-Xia”, *The Chung-hwa Journal of Buddhist Studies* (pre-print). The discussed text is also cited by Nishida Tatsuo in his list of Buddhist writings, preserved in St. Petersburg, see 西田龍雄西夏文華嚴經, vol. 3.
4. 法勇. This is in fact a transcription of the Chinese equivalent of the original Tangut name. In fact, the discussed person could as well have been a Chinese. Since Buddhist monastic names are rendered here into Tangut semantically rather than phonetically, it seems more convenient to use the Chinese transcriptions than the Tangut ones. The same is true of the situation with geographical names. The place-name *Yuanxiang* remains obscure, therefore it is rendered here in italics (possible Chinese 源響).
5. Here and elsewhere, by the “original” we mean the text of the shorter version and that part of the lengthier version which is written in large characters.
6. For “The Chan Chart” of Zong-mi, see P. Gimello, “Sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation”, *Sudden and Gradual Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought* (Honolulu, 1987), pp. 304—7. In the St. Petersburg Tangut Collection this work of Zong-mi is present both in Chinese (TK-254) and Tangut (Tang 227, No. 5172) versions. Occasionally, the extant Tangut version contains

Zong-mi's discourse on the nature of Hongzhou teachings. See Solonin, "Po povodu chan'-buddiiskikh tekstov", pp. 407–8; also *idem*, "Guifeng Zong-mi".

7. For a discussion on the nature of north-west Chinese Buddhism, see Solonin, "Guifeng Zong-mi"; also *idem*, *Ucheniia i religioznaia praktika shkol kitaiskogo buddizma v tangutskom gosudarstve Si-Sia* (Teachings and Religious Practice in Chinese Buddhism in the Tangut State), abstract of PhD thesis (St. Petersburg, 1996), pp. 18–9. A surprising piece of evidence on the popularity of Huayan tradition in the Tangut State came unexpectedly; this school was mentioned as the equivalent for Buddhism as a whole in the so-called "Big Ode" of the Tangut, which could be considered an "official" source of knowledge on Xi-Xia. See *More znachenii, ustanovlennykh sviatymi* (The Sea of Meanings Ascertained by Saints). Publication of the text, translation from the Tangut, study, commentary and appendices by E. I. Kychanov (St. Petersburg, 1997), p. 223.

8. For an analysis of Tangut texts related to the tradition of Zong-mi, see Solonin, "Po povodu chan'-buddiiskikh tekstov", pp. 396–400; also *idem*, "Guifeng Zong-mi".

9. The list of Zong-mi's works from the St. Petersburg Tangut collection can be found in Solonin, "Guifeng Zong-mi".

10. For a discussion of the nature of "The Mirror", see Solonin, "Po povodu chan'-buddiiskikh tekstov", pp. 405–11. Full translation is given in Solonin, "Guifeng Zong-mi".

11. The relationship between Pei Xiu and Chan schools deserves a special discussion. Preliminary discussion of the point see in Solonin, "Po povodu chan'-buddiiskikh tekstov", p. 407 and *idem*, "Guifeng Zong-mi". In effect, Zong-mi composed some works of his own, which were also translated into Tangut.

12. The description of Ma-zu's appearance, in particular, of two wheel-shaped spots on his heels, seems to occur in all the sources dealing with Hongzhou matters.

13. See K. J. Solonin's Russian translation of the "Preface to the Collection of the Explanations of the Chan Sources" by Zong-mi (Part 1), in *Buddhism in Translations*, vol. I (St. Petersburg, 1993), p. 110.

14. I.e. a trichotomy of substance, virtue, and deeds.

15. The Huayan formula for this interrelation is much simpler: 隨緣不變不變隨緣.

16. 每遇即道 in Chinese rendering.

17. 覺慧, an unidentified person.

18. "Preface to the Collection of the Explanations of the Chan Sources" by Zong-mi, trans. by K. J. Solonin (see n. 13), p. 114.

19. Chinese equivalents of the Tangut signs are 隨語 and 語外禪.

Illustrations

Fig. 1. "Notes on the Basic Intentions of the Masters of the Hongzhou Lineage with Explanation and Commentary", manuscript Tang 112, No. 2540 in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, fols. 1b–2a, 15.0 × 22.0 cm.