

**Annotated Translation of the
Ssu-chiao-i (四教義 ; *On the Four Teachings*),
chüan 2**

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Introduction

The following work is a translation of the second *chüan* of Chih-i's (538–597) *Ssu-chiao-i* (*On the Four Teachings*). This is a continuation of my translation of the first *chüan* of the *Ssu-chiao-i*, which appeared in vol. 3 of this journal.

In this *chüan* Chih-i sets forth his understanding of such Buddhist doctrines as the Four Noble Truths, Three Truths, Two Truths and One Real Truth. According to Chih-i these four “objective realms” 境 are the objects of the Buddhist practitioners' insight. In this *chüan* Chih-i argues that the insights that various Buddhist practitioners gain into these objective realms can be classified into four different levels corresponding to the Four Teachings. The *Miao-fa lien-hua ching hsüan-i*, more commonly known by the name *Fa-hua hsüan-i*, has traditionally been esteemed as the fundamental work of T'ien-t'ai philosophy. The *Fa-hua hsüan-i* enumerates seven objective realms: (1) Ten Such-likes, (2) Twelve-fold Chain of Dependent Origination, (3) Four Noble Truths, (4) Two Truths, (5) Three Truths, (6) One Truth and (7) No Truth. They are described in T 33, 693b–696a; 698b–705b. (It must be noted here that the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* itself only mentions by name the first six objective realms, but there is a section after the exposition on the One Truth which deals

with the objective realm of No Truth. Thus traditional T'ien-t'ai scholarship has recognized seven objective realms instead of six. See Toshi Ando, *Tendaigaku—Konpon Shiso to sono Tenkai* (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1986), 112–3.) Among these seven objective realms, 3-6 are identical with those found in the *Ssu-chiao-i*. Moreover, the manner in which these objective realms are explained is very similar in the two works. Thus I first planned to compile a chart listing the points at which the two works were similar. However, Dr. Paul Swanson has recently translated the relevant portions of the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* in his PhD dissertation: *The Two Truths Controversy in China and Chih-i's Threefold Truth Concept* (The University of Wisconsin—Madison, December 1985), pp. 578–678. Thus I have not felt the necessity of compiling such a list. Persons interested in seeing how these objective realms are treated in the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* are directed to Dr. Swanson's work.

Here I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Yamano Toshiro, Special Research Fellow of the Dept. of Buddhist Studies at Otani University, who read the *Ssu-chiao-i* with me, and to Dr. Swanson, from whose dissertation I learned much.

On the Four Teachings¹

chüan 2

Compiled by the Meditation Master Chih-i of Hsiu-ch'an Temple on Mt. T'ien-t'ai

Chapter Two: Exposition of the Objects Disclosed (in the Four Teachings).

Now, the teachings are that which disclose (the principle) and the principle is that which is disclosed (by the teachings). Therefore, the teachings are bestowed by means of the principle, and the principle is revealed through the teachings. While the principle is not the teachings, and the teachings are not the principle, apart from the principle there are no teachings, and apart from the teachings, there is no principle. Therefore, the *Viśeṣacintī-brahma-paripṛcchā* says, "There are no words within *bodhi*, and there is no *bodhi* within words. There are no words apart from *bodhi* and there is no *bodhi* apart from words."² Because there are no words apart from *bodhi*, the teachings are bestowed in terms of the principle. Because there is no *bodhi* apart from words, the teachings which have been bestowed can reveal the principle. This is what is meant by "the teachings are that which disclose (the principle) and the principle is that which is disclosed (by the teachings)."

By principle I mean the Truths which are revealed (by the Buddhist teachings). Here I will explain the principle in terms of the Truths. The principle can give rise to the teachings and the teachings can disclose the principle. The teachings are that which disclose (the principle) and the principle is that which is disclosed (by the teachings).

Here I will explain briefly the meaning of that which is disclosed (i. e., the principle) in four sections.

1. Explanation of the disclosed in terms of the principles of the Four Noble Truths.
2. Explanation of the disclosed in terms of the principles of the Three Truths.
3. Explanation of the disclosed in terms of the principles of the Two Truths.
4. Explanation of the disclosed in terms of the principle of the One Truth.³

(Explanation of the Four Noble Truths)

First, explanation of the disclosed in terms of the Four Noble Truths 四諦. This will be explained in three sections.

1. Explanation of the principles of the Four Noble Truths which are disclosed (by the Four Teachings).
2. Explanation of the teachings which disclose (the principles of the Four Noble Truths).
3. Explanation in terms of *sūtras* and treatises.

(Explanation of the Principles of the Four Noble Truths)

First, explanation of the principles of the Four Noble Truths. There are four kinds of Four Noble Truths: (1) Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing 生滅四諦, (2) Non-arising Four Noble Truths 無生四諦, (3) Infinite Four Noble Truths 無量四諦, and (4) Uncreated Four Noble Truths 無作四諦

Question: Where in the *sūtras* and treatises do these four kinds of Four

Noble Truths appear?

Answer: They are mentioned in passing here and there in various *sūtras* and treatises when the situation calls for it. However (they are not discussed) in any one place. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* distinguishes and explains the four kinds of Four Noble Truths⁴ one after another in its explanation of the Sage Practice⁵ of wisdom.⁶ This is because it wished to make it the basis of the parable of the five flavors.⁷ Passages concerning the four kinds of Four Noble Truths are also found in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra*. They are the so-called Created Four Noble Truths 有作四諦, Measurable Four Noble Truths 有量四諦, Infinite Four Noble Truths 無量四諦 and Uncreated Four Noble Truths 無作四諦.⁸ However, the order in which the Infinite Four Noble Truths appears is not the same in the *Nirvāṇa* and *Śrīmālā Sūtras*, and the meanings attributed to them are slightly different.

Question: You explained above that the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing belong to the (teaching of) incomplete meaning set forth in the *Tripitaka* Teaching. This is as it should be. Next, how do you distinguish between the Non-arising,⁹ Infinite and Uncreated (Four Noble Truths)?

Answer: In terms of the complete (meaning), all three kinds of Four Noble Truths identically (belong to) the complete. (From this perspective,) they should not be distinguished. From the point of view of the five flavors, the three kinds of Four Noble Truths differ in significance. Although the Non-arising Four Noble Truths belong to the *Mahāyāna*, they are shared by the practitioners of the Two Vehicles. The Infinite Four Noble Truths are the Way practiced only by *bodhisattvas*. The Uncreated Four Real Truths are the sphere of the Buddhas. This is how they are different.

(Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing)

First, explanation of the disclosed in terms of the principles of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing. The arising and perishing (of *dharma*s) through dependent origination is what the truth-principle refers to here. Therefore, the *Lotus Sūtra* says, "In the past at *Vārāṇasī*, (you, the Buddha) turned the *Dharma*-wheel of the Four Noble Truths; (you) distinguished and preached the arising and perishing of the *dharma*s and the five aggregates."¹⁰ "Arising and perishing" means "coming into being as composite existence." For this reason, the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* speaks of the Created Four Sage Truths 有作四聖諦.

The Four Noble Truths are (1) Truth of Suffering, (2) Truth of Accumulation, (3) Truth of Cessation, and (4) Truth of the Way. Suffering means oppression. Because the three marks of impermanence¹¹ oppress form and mind, it is called "suffering." Since it is unmistakably real and not false, it is called "Truth."

Accumulation means "to incur and gather." When defilements and *karma* come together, they incur and gather the fruits of suffering and birth-and-death. Therefore it is called "accumulation." Because it is unmistakably real and not false, it is called "Truth."

Cessation means "the Unconditioned." Because both bondages of seed and fruit¹² have ceased to exist, it is called cessation. Because it is unmistakably real and not false, it is called "Truth."

The Way means "that which allows passage." Because precepts, concentrations and wisdom allow passage and lead to *nirvāṇa*, they are called the Way.

Because it is unmistakably real and not false, it is called Truth.

These are the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing. Therefore, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “Śrāvakas have suffering and have the Truth of Suffering. (They) have accumulation and the Truth of Accumulation. (They) have cessation and the Truth of Cessation. (They) have the Way and the Truth of the Way.”¹³

Question: (Because) the Way and Cessation are the cause practiced, and the fruit attained, by the Sages, they can be called “unmistakably real.” Suffering and accumulation are false. How can they be called unmistakably real?

Answer: The false causes and fruits of sentient beings are truly false, and there is nothing which is not false. Therefore, both the defiled and undefiled causes and fruits are all unmistakably real, and they are not subject to disorder. Therefore the *I-chiao ching* says, “Even if the sun were to freeze and the moon to boil, the Buddha’s teaching of the Four Noble Truths is not subject to change.”¹⁴ The meaning of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing is expounded in detail by the followers of the Sarvāstivāda¹⁵ and in the *Ch’eng shih (lun)*.¹⁶ It will not be discussed in detail here.

(Non-arising Four Noble Truths)

Second, the Non-arising Four Noble Truths. As the *Viśeṣacintī-brahma-paripṛcchā* says, “To know that suffering does not arise is called the Sage Truth of Suffering. To know that accumulation is devoid of the mark of coming together (of causes and conditions) is called the Sage Truth of Accumulation.

Contemplation by means of the mark of non-duality is called the Sage Truth of the Way. That *dharma*s originally do not arise and presently do not perish, is called the Sage Truth of Cessation.”¹⁷ In other words, (comparing the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing with the Non-arising Four Noble Truths), the four *dharma*s of suffering, accumulation, cessation and the Way are identical as far as their name and particular characteristics goes, but they are different when it comes to the meaning of “Truth.” Before (in the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing,) “Truth” referred to the principle that (suffering, etc.) arises and perishes. Here (in the Non-arising Four Noble Truths,) “Truth” refers to the principle of “absolute emptiness,”¹⁸ in which (suffering, etc.) neither arises nor perishes. They are also called the Four Absolute Truths 四眞諦. Therefore, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “*Bodhisattvas* understand that there is no suffering to suffering, but have the Absolute Truth. They understand that there is no accumulation to accumulation. Therefore they do not have accumulation, but have the Absolute Truth. They have cessation and have the Absolute (Truth). They have the Way and they have the Absolute (Truth).”¹⁹ Therefore they are called the Four Absolute Truths.

The practitioners of the Three Vehicles all contemplate (these Non-arising Four Noble Truths) to attain the Truth of Supreme Significance, and realize the two kinds of *nirvāṇa*.²⁰ Furthermore, they are the Measurable Four Noble Truths which appears in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra*.

Question: If the practitioners of the Three Vehicles (all) share in the study of (the Non-arising Four Noble Truths), then why does the *Nirvāṇa* explain the Truth of Cessation (i.e., *nirvāṇa*) as being eternal, bliss, self, and pure?²¹

Answer: The practitioners of the Three Vehicles all gain insight into the

Non-arising Absolute Truths which is explained in the *Vaipulya* and *Prajñāpāramitā* (*Sūtras*).²² However, the practitioners of the Three Vehicles and the *bodhisattvas* of the Shared Teaching do not gain insight into Buddha-nature,²³ and the eternity of the Truth of Cessation was not explained (to them). When we get to the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, the Buddha-nature is preached in the same way to (all) the practitioners of the Three Vehicles. For this reason the Four Non-arising Absolute Truths are shared with the Distinct and Complete (Teachings). This, then, is what is meant by the fact that the explanation of the four virtues of the Truth of Cessation (expounded in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*) is different from that (taught in) the *Vaipulya* and *Large* (*Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*).

(Infinite Four Noble Truths)

Third, explanation of the Infinite Four Sage Truths. As the *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “To know the various aggregates as suffering is called the Truth of Suffering. When the various aggregates are discriminated, there are infinite marks, and they are all suffering.”²⁴ This is called the Infinite Truth of Suffering. Scriptural passages for the Infinite Truths of Accumulation, Cessation and the Way will be given in detail below.²⁵ As for the principles of these Four Noble Truths, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “They cannot be known by *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*.”²⁶ For this reason we can see that these are the principles disclosed in the Distinct Teaching.

Question: What is infinite about the four Truths in the Infinite Four Sage Truths?

Answer: (The principles) disclosed by the Four Teachings explained here

are the Infinite Four Noble Truths which the *bodhisattvas* all attain when they study the knowledge of the modes of the Way 道種智.²⁷ These Infinite Four Noble Truths clearly belong only to the Distinct Teaching.

Question: If this is so, how can we know for certain that the Four Noble Truths with its infinite marks mentioned in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* refer to the Infinite Four Noble Truths disclosed in the Distinct Teaching?

Answer: If one takes up the Infinite for discussion without taking the Buddha-nature into account, this is the Infinite as disclosed in the former two (i. e., *Tripitaka* and Shared) Teachings. A discussion of the infinite marks which takes the Buddha-nature into account naturally becomes the Infinite as expounded in the latter two (i. e., the Distinct and Complete) teachings. The Infinite Four Sage Truths also spoken of in the Complete Teaching, are another name for the Uncreated Four Real Truths.

(Uncreated Four Noble Truths)

Fourth, explanation of the Uncreated Four Noble Truths. As the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* explains, "The Four Noble Truths are expounded in terms of the One Real Truth 一實諦."²⁸ These are the Uncreated Four Real Truths. Because it is explained that the Four (Noble Truths) do not create four (different Truths), they are called "Uncreated." Because when one contemplates these four (Noble Truths), one attains the Real, they are called the Four Real Truths.

The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, "Suffering which is spoken of here refers to the mark of impermanence. This is a mark which can be severed. This is the Real Truth. The nature of the *Tathāgata* is neither suffering nor impermanent; neither

does it have the mark of being severable. For this reason it is called Real. Space and Buddha-nature are also like this.”²⁹ (Explanations of the) Uncreated (Truths of) Accumulation, Cessation and the Way will be quoted in detail below.³⁰ This passage from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* is a clear exposition of the Uncreated Four Real Truths. If one understands that the Four Noble Truths are One Real Truth on the basis of this *sūtra*, this is the principle disclosed in the Complete Teaching.

The *Śrīmālā Sūtra* discusses the Uncreated Four Noble Truths but does not unite them into One Truth. The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* does not speak of the Uncreated, but everywhere uses the One Truth to unite the Four Noble Truths. They are already inter-related in meaning. Here I have brought together (the expositions of) the two *sūtras* and set up the name (Uncreated Four Real Truths). For this reason they are called the Uncreated Four Real Truths.

Question: The *Śrīmālā Sūtra* mentions the Infinite Four Sage Truths and the Uncreated Four Sage Truths. They are also found in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. Do the passages in the two *sūtras* refer to the same thing, or are they different?

Answer: There are (cases where) the Infinite Four Sage Truths, although they are based on the store-consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), are not (the same as) the Uncreated (Four Noble Truths). (On the other hand), there are (cases where) the Infinite Four Sage Truths, although they are also based on the store-consciousness, are (the same as) the Uncreated (Four Noble Truths). Why? If one interprets the Infinite (Four Noble Truths) in terms of the particular number of *dharma*s of the Four Noble Truths (arising from) the innumerable (delusions and the delusion of) ignorance,³¹ then this is the Infinite (Four Noble Truths) disclosed in the Distinct Teaching. It is not the

Uncreated (Four Noble Truths). If one explains the infinite number (of marks concerning the) Four Noble Truths in terms of the *dharma*-nature, then this is the Infinite (Four Noble Truths) disclosed in the Complete Teaching, and these Infinite (Four Noble Truths) are the Uncreated (Four Noble Truths). When, in the *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa Sūtra*, (the Buddha) set forth the Infinite Four Noble Truths in answer to Kāśyapa³² (the explanation) was made in terms of the Infinite (Four Noble Truths) as conceived of as particular numbers. This is (the Infinite Four Noble Truths) disclosed in the Distinct Teaching. The Four Noble Truths (which the Buddha) set forth in answer to Mañjuśrī³³ reveals the Uncreated Four Real Truths. It is not yet possible to establish whether the two kinds of Four Noble Truths found in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* are identical or different.

Question: Why are the Infinite Four Noble Truths taken up after the explanation of the Uncreated Four Noble Truths in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra*?

Answer: The *Śrīmālā Sūtra* says, "The Infinite are explained on the basis of the Uncreated."³⁴ However, "on the basis of" can mean three things:

1. The cause is explained on the basis of the fruit. The infinite is the cause for the uncreated.³⁵
2. The meaning is explained on the basis of the principle. The principle which is uncreated can be neither fathomed nor measured. Thus it is infinite.
3. The function is explained on the basis of the substance. The numerical measure of the uncreated is infinite.

If you understand these three meanings, the fact that the Infinite Four Noble Truths are explained after the Uncreated should not be cause for any doubts.

Question: How are the Non-arising (Four Noble Truths) and the Uncreated (Four Noble Truths) different? How are the Absolute (Truths) and Real (Truths) different?

Answer: In investigating the names (of Buddhist concepts) and discussing their meanings, (when one encounters) something which seems like a difficulty at first sight, one must always interpret them in a way that accords with the Buddha's intention. (Just because a certain doctrine is not mentioned) does not mean that each of the main points are not there.

**(Explanation of the Teachings which Discloses
the Principles of the Four Noble Truths)**

Second, explanation of the teachings which disclose (the principles of the Four Noble Truths). These are the Four Teachings 四教 which disclose the principles of the four kinds of Four Noble Truths. This will be explained in four sections.

**(Explanation of the *Tripitaka* Teaching which Discloses the Principles
of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing)**

First, the initial *Tripitaka* Teaching 三藏教 discloses the principles of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing. But the principles of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing is what are meant by the arising of the arising 生生, which the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* elucidates.³⁶ (However) the arising of the arising is inexpressible; how can it be said that the *Tripitaka* Teaching

discloses these principles? The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* further says, "Because there are causes and conditions, they can also be expressed." This means that (the principles of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing) can be disclosed by means of the skillful device of the four *siddhāntas* 四悉檀.³⁷ If the (first) three *siddhāntas*—the worldly 世界 (*siddhānta*), remedial 對治 (*siddhānta*) and (*siddhānta*) for each person 爲人—are used to express the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing, this (is the case where the teachings) which disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with (the listeners') emotions 隨情. If the supreme 第一義 (*siddhānta*) is used to express the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing, this (is the case where the teachings which) disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the knowledge (of the listeners) 隨智.³⁸ If (sentient beings) do not have the capacities to respond (to the teachings preached) in accordance with their emotions and knowledge, then (these Truths) cannot be expressed. When these two capacities are aroused (in sentient beings), then it is possible to accommodate to their capacities using expedient devices and skillfully preach the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing. For this reason, the *Lotus* says,

The various *dharma*s are of the mark of quiescence;

They cannot be proclaimed through words.

It is because of the power of expedient devices

That it was preached to the five *bhikṣus*.

This is called "turning the wheel of the *Dharma*"

Then there was the sound "*nirvāṇa*"

As well as "*arhats*". . .³⁹

**(Exposition of the Shared Teaching which Discloses
the Principles of the Non-arising Four Noble Truths)**

Second. Next, the explanation of the Shared Teaching 通教 which discloses the principles of the Non-arising Four Absolute Truths. The Non-arising Four Absolute Truths is what is meant by the non-arising of the arising 不生 which the *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa Sūtra* elucidates. (However) non-arising of the arising is inexpressible; how can it be said that the Shared Teaching discloses these principles? The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* further says, “Because there are causes and conditions, they can also be expressed.” This means that (the principles of the Non-arising Four Absolute Truths) can be expressed using the causes and conditions of the four *siddhāntas*. If the (first) three *siddhāntas*—the worldly (*siddhānta*), (*siddhānta*) for each person and remedial (*siddhānta*)—are used to express the Non-arising Four Noble Truths, this (is the case where the teachings which) disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the emotions (of the listeners). If the supreme (*siddhānta*) is used to express the Non-arising Four Noble Truths, then this (is the case where the teachings) which disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the knowledge (of the listeners). If (sentient beings) do not have the capacities to respond (to the teachings expounded) in accordance with their emotions and knowledge, then (these Truths) cannot be expressed. If these capacities are aroused, the expedient devices are used to accommodate to their capacities, and they are skillfully preached. When people who are headed towards the Way through the (practices of the) Three Vehicles hear these expositions, they enter the Truth of Supreme Significance, and sever defilements of views and

attitudes⁴⁰ by means of the wordless and inexpressible Way.

**(Explanation of the Distinct Teaching which Discloses
the Principles of the Infinite Four Truths)**

Third, explanation of the Distinct Teaching 別教 which discloses the principles of the Infinite Four Noble Truths. The principles of the Infinite Four Noble Truths is what is meant by the arising of the non-arising 生不生 which the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* elucidates. (However) arising of the non-arising is inexpressible; how can it be said that the Distinct Teaching discloses these principles? The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* further says, "Because there are causes and conditions, they can also be expressed." This means that (the principles of the Infinite Four Noble Truths) can be expressed using the causes and conditions of the four *siddhāntas*. If the (first) three *siddhāntas*—the worldly (*siddhānta*), (*siddhānta*) for each person and remedial (*siddhānta*)—are used to express the Infinite Four Noble Truths as skillful means and expedient devices, this (is the case where the teachings which) disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the emotions (of the listeners). If the supreme (*siddhānta*) is used to express them, this (is the case where the teachings which) disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the emotions (of the listeners). If (sentient beings) do not have the two capacities (to respond to the teachings expounded) in accordance with their emotions and wisdom, then (these Truths) cannot be expressed. If these two capacities are aroused, then it is possible to use expedient devices to accommodate to their capacities, and preach the Distinct Teaching. When *bodhisattvas* hear it being preached, they enter the ten

abodes 十住, ten practices 十行, ten merit-transferences 十廻向 and ascend onto the First Stage 初地.⁴¹

(Explanation of the Complete Teaching which Discloses the Principles of the Uncreated Four Noble Truths)

Fourth. Next, explanation of how the Complete Teaching 圓教 is used to disclose the principles of the Uncreated Four Real Truths. The principles of the Uncreated Four Real Truths is what is meant by the non-arising of the non-arising 不生不生 which the *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa Sūtra* elucidates. (However) non-arising of the non-arising is inexpressible; how can it be said that the Complete Teaching discloses these principles? The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* further says, “Because there are causes and conditions, they can also be expressed.” This means that (the principles of the Uncreated Four Real Noble Truths) can be expressed using the causes and conditions of the four *siddhāntas*. If the (first) three *siddhāntas*—the worldly (*siddhānta*), (*siddhānta*) for each person and remedial (*siddhānta*)—are used to express the Uncreated Four Real Truths, then this is only (the case where the teachings which) disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the emotions (of the listeners). If the supreme (*siddhānta*) is used to express the Uncreated Four Real Truths, then (this is a case in which the teachings which) disclose (the principles) are expounded in accordance with the wisdom (of the listeners). If (sentient beings) do not have the capacities (to respond to the teachings preached) in accordance with their emotions and wisdom, then (these Truths) cannot be expressed. If their capacities are aroused, then (the Truths) can be expressed. When great beings

of sharp faculties hear this preaching, they open the Buddha's knowledge and wisdom, perceive the principle of the Buddha-nature and abide in *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa*.

(Explanation of How the Four Kinds of Four Noble Truths Correspond to the *Sūtras* and Treatises)

Third, explanation of (how the four kinds of Four Noble Truths) correspond to the *sūtras* and treatises. This will be explained in two sections.

1. (How the four kinds of Four Noble Truths) correspond to the *sūtras*.
2. (How the four kinds of Four Noble Truths) correspond to the treatises.

(How the Four Kinds of Four Noble Truths Correspond to the *Sūtras*)

First, (how the four kinds of Four Noble Truths) correspond to the *sūtras*. In the case of the *Hua-yen* teaching, it employs two teachings—Distinct and Complete—to disclose the principles of the Infinite Four Noble Truths and the Uncreated Four Noble Truths. The *Tripitaka* of the *Hīnayāna*, which is the first of the gradual teachings, only discloses the principles of the Four Noble Truths of Arising and Perishing. The *Great Collection*, the *Vaipulya*, as well as this *sūtra*,⁴² employ (all) four teachings to disclose (all) four kinds of Four Noble Truths. The *Mahāprajñā-(pāramitā Sūtra)* employs three teachings to disclose three kinds of Four Noble Truths. The *Lotus* employs only the Complete Teaching to disclose the principles of the Four Real Truths. The

Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa Sūtra employs all four teachings to disclose the principles of the four kinds of Four Noble Truths. What this specifically means is shown in the quotation from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* above.⁴³

**(How the Four Kinds of Four Noble Truths
Correspond to the Treatises)**

Second, (how the four kinds of Four Noble Truths correspond to) the treatises. The ways in which treatises (take up) specific *sūtras* (corresponding to the four kinds of Four Noble Truths) can be understood by seeing how (the Truths) correspond (to the *sūtras*). As for the way in which treatises take up the *sūtras* as a whole—it is like the way in which the *Middle Treatise* refutes all the mistaken attachments and disputations, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist.

(In this treatise), the contentious non-Buddhist questions, “If all (the *dharma*s in) the world are empty and non-existent, then there should be neither arising nor perishing. Since there is neither arising nor perishing, neither the Four Noble Truths, the four fruits of the *śramaṇas* 四沙門果, nor the Three Treasures could exist. If you accept the emptiness of *dharma*s, then errors like these would arise.”⁴⁴

The author of the *Treatise* answers: “Now, you do not really know the causes and conditions of emptiness. The various Buddhas always rely on the Two Truths to preach the *Dharma* to sentient beings. If you do not know the Two Truths, you do not know the absolute *Dharma*. Because of the meaning of emptiness,⁴⁵ all *dharma*s are fulfilled. If the meaning of emptiness does not

exist, they are not fulfilled. If all *dharma*s are fulfilled, then the Four Noble Truths, four fruits the *śramaṇas* and the Three Treasures exist."⁴⁶

I interpret these words to mean that once the author of the *Treatise* has finished destroying attachments and views (in the previous chapters), he explains (in this chapter) that the Four Noble Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇas* and the Three Treasures exist. (This passage) sets forth the three kinds of Four Noble Truths, three kinds of four fruits the *śramaṇas* and the three kinds of Three Treasures, found within the *Mahāyāna*.

Question: How do you know?

Answer: Because the author of the *Treatise* states as following in the verse,⁴⁷ we know they exist. The verse says,

*Dharma*s arising from causes and conditions,

I preach them to be empty.

This verse sets forth the *Mahāyāna* Shared Teaching and discloses the Non-arising Four Noble Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇas* and Three Treasures. (Next) the verse says,

They are also called provisional designations.

This sets forth the *Mahāyāna* Distinct Teaching and discloses the Infinite Four Sage Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇas* and Three Treasures. (Next) the verse says,

They are also the meaning of the Middle Way.

This sets forth the *Mahāyāna* Complete Teaching and discloses the Uncreated Four Real Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇas* and Three Treasures.

The significance (behind the words) destroying (the attachments and views) and setting forth the (Four Noble Truths, etc., as well as) the three

teachings of the *Mahāyāna* are (revealed) using only this verse. The skillfulness with which this *Treatise* was composed can be found here in a sublime way.

Next, among the final two chapters expounded (in the *Middle Treatise*), the first chapter says, “Question: We have already understood how the *Mahāyāna* (practitioner) enters the (Truth of) Supreme Significance. Here I wish to hear (how the practitioners of the) *śrāvaka Dharma* enter the (Truth of) Supreme Significance. Answer:... ”⁴⁸

(In answer) the author of the *Treatise* explains in detail how (insight into) the twelve-fold chain of dependent origination of arising and perishing destroys the sixty-two views⁴⁹ and (allows one to) enter the Truth of Supreme Significance. This is how (the author) explains the dependent origination of arising and perishing for *śrāvaka* disciples of dull faculties. “Dependent origination” (in the passage above) refers to the Four Noble Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇas* and the Three Treasures of Arising and Perishing.

The *Middle Treatise* first sets forth above the Shared, Distinct and Complete (Teachings which are) the three teachings of the *Mahāyāna*, and their (respective) three kinds of Four Noble Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇas* and Three Treasures. In the final two chapters, it sets forth the *Tripitaka* Teaching and its Arising and Perishing Four Noble Truths, four fruits of the *śramaṇa* and Three Treasures. This is because the faculties of the people of later ages become progressively dull and they need to revert to and use this teaching.

This shows that the *Middle Treatise* is pithy in words but abundant in meaning. This is already clear (by the way the *Treatise*) it sets forth the Buddha’s Four Teachings. This has already been revealed in the principles of the Four Noble Truths. Therefore I say that there are Four Noble Truths. This

is an exposition which is like a wish-fulfilling gem. It is not a water-sipping exposition.⁵⁰ If one did not understand this, one would weave provisional existence, singly or in multiples. I fear his efforts will be wasted and be in vain. Now, if one uses the four provisional existences to interpret the Buddha's *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna sūtras*, (the Buddha's) intention will in the end be difficult to perceive.

(Explanation of the Principles which are Disclosed in terms of the Three Truths)

Second, explanation of the principles which are disclosed by the Four Teachings in terms of the Three Truths 三諦. This will be explained in three sections.

1. Explanation of the Three Truths, which are the principles disclosed (by the teachings).
2. Explanation of the Four Teachings which disclose (the Three Truths).
3. Explanation in Terms of *Sūtras* and Treatises.

(Explanation of the Principles of the Three Truths which are Disclosed by the Teachings)

First, explanation of the Three Truths, which are the principles disclosed (by the teachings). The names and concepts of the Three Truths appear in detail in two *sūtras*: *Ying-lo (ching)*⁵¹ and *Benevolent Kings (Sūtra)*.⁵² (The Three Truths are:) (1) Truth of Existence 有諦, (2) Truth of Nothingness 無諦 and (3) Truth of Supreme Significance of the Middle Way 中道第一義諦. As for the

so-called Truth of Existence: existence refers to the objects perceived by the deluded emotions of worldly sentient beings within the 25 modes of existence.⁵³ Since what they see through deluded emotions is unmistakably real and not false, it is called “Truth”. Therefore, it is called “Truth of Existence.” It is also called the Conventional Truth 俗諦 and the Worldly Truth 世諦. As the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “That which is perceived in the minds of worldly beings is called the Worldly Truth.”⁵⁴

Second, the Truth of Nothingness. Because the absolute emptiness 眞空 seen by the transworldly practitioners of the Three Vehicles is nameless and markless, it is called “nothingness.” Because it is unmistakably real and not false, it is called “Truth.” Therefore, it is called “Truth of Nothingness.” It is also called the Absolute Truth 眞諦 and the Truth of Supreme Significance 第一義諦. Therefore the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “Since it is what is perceived in the minds of transworldly beings, it is called the Truth of Supreme Significance.”⁵⁵

Third, Truth of Supreme Significance of the Middle Way. Because it averts 遮 the two extremes, it is called the Middle Way. Averting the two extremes means to avert the extreme of the existence (arising from) love and views of common beings, and to avert the extreme of the nameless and markless emptiness perceived by the practitioners of the Two Vehicles. (It means to) avert the two extremes of the Conventional Truth and the Absolute Truth. (It means to) avert the two extremes of Worldly Truth and Truth of Supreme Significance. When the two extremes such as these are averted, it is called non-duality. The principle of non-duality is what is meant by the “Middle.” This principle pervades all things without obstruction. This is what is meant

by "the Way." Because it is ultimate and unsurpassable, it is called "Supreme." It has profound reasons. This is what is meant by "Significance." (Since) that which is realized and seen by the Buddhas and *bodhisattvas* is unmistakably real and not false, it is called "Truth." For this reason, it is called Truth of Supreme Significance of the Middle Way. It is also called One Real Truth. It is also called the sky, Buddha-nature, *Dharma*-realm, Suchness and *tathāgatagarbha*. Therefore the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, "Common beings are attached to existence and practitioners of the Two Vehicles are attached to nothingness. The *bodhisattva's* *Dharma* is neither existence nor nothingness."⁵⁶ This means that the principle of the Three Truths are different (from one another). Since these principles are all disclosed by the Four Teachings, the disclosed is explained in terms of the principles of the Three Truths.

Question: As for the principles of the Three Truths which you spoke of above, are these the principles which accord with (sentient beings') emotions or are they the principles which accord with wisdom?

Answer: According to the understanding of our sect, there are three different kinds truth-principles: (1) those which accord with emotions 隨情, (2) those which accord with emotions and knowledge 隨情智,⁵⁷ and (3) those which accord with wisdom 隨智. They will be explained elsewhere.⁵⁸ Here we will take up one aspect and classify the principles of the Three Truths on the basis of the *Nirvāṇa*. They are (1) the principle which accords with emotions, (2) the principle which accords with wisdom. Or it is said that the second is the principle which accords with emotions and the first is the principle which accords with wisdom.⁵⁹ If emotions and wisdom are explained together, these are the principles of the Three Truths.

**(Explanation of the Four Teachings which Disclose
the Principles of the Three Truths)**

Second, explanation of the Four Teachings which disclose the principles of the Three Truths. This will be explained in four sections.

First, the *Tripitaka* Teaching discloses the principles of the Two Truths. Therefore those who receive this teaching hear neither of the Buddha-nature nor of the eternal *nirvāṇa*. The practitioners of the Three Vehicles still remain in the fruit (wherein they) turn (their bodies) to ash and sever (all defilements).⁶⁰

Second, the Shared Teaching also only discloses the principles of the Two Truths. Therefore those who receive this teaching also hear neither of the Buddha-nature nor of the eternal *nirvāṇa*. The practitioners of the Three Vehicles still remain in the fruit (wherein they) turn (their bodies) to ash and sever (all defilements).

Third, the Distinct Teaching distinctly discloses the principles of the Three Truths.⁶¹ Therefore those who receive this teaching only actualize the expedient Way of the two contemplations and knowledges⁶² (while they practice) the thirty minds,⁶³ but once they ascend to the (First) Stage,⁶⁴ they gain insight into Buddha-nature and enter the flow of the *Dharma*.

Fourth, the Complete Teaching completely discloses the principles of the Three Truths. For this reason, those who receive this teaching open the Buddha's knowledge and insight at the incipient mind⁶⁵ and naturally flow into the ocean of *sarvajñatā* 薩婆若 (i.e., omniscience).

**(Explanation of How the Three Truths
Correspond to the *Sūtras* and Treatises)**

Third, explanation (of how the Three Truths) correspond to the *sūtras* and treatises.

The *Hua-yen (Sūtra)* only discloses the Middle Way of the Conventional Truth of provisional designation. Or else, it can be said that the *Hua-yen* teaching discloses the Three Truths (perceived in) one mind in which (each of) the Three Truths have distinct marks. Among the gradual teachings, the *Tripitaka* Teaching reveals two Truths—Absolute and Conventional. The *Vaipulya*, which is the *Mahāyāna* teaching, discloses three Truths. In one sense, it is identical to the *Hua-yen*. The *Mahāprajñā-(pāramitā Sūtra)* also discloses all the Three Truths. In one sense, it is identical to the *Hua-yen*. The *Lotus* only reveals the Three Truths in one mind. The *Nirvāṇa* discloses in detail the Three Truths. In one sense, it is also identical to the *Hua-yen*.

You should understand how the various treatises follow and correspond to the *sūtras*.

The *Middle Treatise*⁶⁶ verse says,

Dharmas arising from causes and conditions,

I preach them to be empty.

This discloses the Absolute Truth. (The verse) also says,

They are also called provisional designation.

This discloses the Conventional Truth.

They are also the meaning of the Middle Way.

This discloses the Truth of Supreme Significance of the Middle Way. This

verse sets forth the principles of the Three Truths as disclosed in the *Mahāyāna*. As for the final two chapters (of the *Middle Treatise*), they show that (the teaching of) the *śrāvaka sūtras* (also indicates the way in which to) enter the (Truth of) Supreme Significance. They set forth distinctly how the *Tripitaka* Teaching (discloses the Three Truths).

**(Explanation of the Principles which are Disclosed
in terms of the Two Truths)**

Third, disclosure of the Two Truths 二諦. The explanation of the principles which are disclosed in terms of the Two Truths will again be in three sections.

1. Explanation of the principles which are disclosed.
2. Explanation of the teachings which disclose (the principles of the Two Truths).
3. (Explanation) in terms of *sūtras* and treatises.

**(Explanation of the Principles of the Two Truths
which are Disclosed by the Teachings)**

First, explanation of the principles which are disclosed (by the teachings). These are the principles of the Two Truths. There are two kinds of Two Truths: (1) Two Truths outside the principle 理外二諦, and (2) Two Truths within the principle 理内二諦. If the Absolute Truth is not Buddha-nature, this is the Two Truths outside the principle. If the Absolute Truth is the

Buddha-nature, then this is the Two Truths within the principle.

There are two kinds of Two Truths outside the principle. The first is the Two Truths in which (the Two Truths) are not identical to each other 不即之二諦. This is the Two Truths of Arising and Perishing. Second is the Two Truths in which they are identical to each other 相即之二諦. This is the Non-arising Two Truths. Therefore the *Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* says, "Form is emptiness. It is not that form is eradicated (to attain) emptiness."⁶⁷ When form is eradicated (to attain) emptiness, this is the Two Truths in which they are not identical with each other.

Second, explanation of the Two Truths within the principle. Again, there are two kinds: (1) the Two Truths in which (the Two Truths) are not identical to each other, and (2) the Two Truths in which they are identical to each other. The first Two Truths which are not identical to each other are the Infinite Two Truths. Therefore the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, "In discriminating the worldly Truth, there are infinite marks. The Truth of Supreme Meaning also has infinite marks. They cannot be known by *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*."⁶⁸ Second, the Two Truths which are identical to each other are the Uncreated Two Truths. The Uncreated (Truths) of Suffering, Accumulation, Cessation and the Way are called the Worldly Truth. Because they are identical to the One Real Truth, it is called the Truth of Supreme Significance.

(Explanation of the Four Teachings which Disclose the Principles of the Two Truths)

Second, explanation of the Four Teachings which disclose (the principles

of the Two Truths). As for the *Tripitaka* Teaching, it discloses the Two Truths outside the principle (in which the Two Truths) are not identical to each other. As for the Shared Teaching, it discloses the Two Truths outside the principle (in which the Two Truths) are identical to each other. The Distinct Teaching discloses the Two Truths within the principle (in which the Two Truths) are not identical to each other. The Complete Teaching discloses the Two Truths within the principle (in which the Two Truths) are identical to each other.

**(Explanation of How the Two Truths
Correspond to the *Sūtras* and Treatises)**

Third, (explanation of how the Two Truths) correspond to the *sūtras* and treatises. The *Hua-yen Sūtra* discloses the two kinds of Two Truths within the principle. The *Tripitaka* Teaching discloses the Two Truths outside the principle (in which the Two Truths) are not identical to each other. The *Vaipulya Mahāyāna* (Teaching) discloses (all) four kinds of Two Truths, (both those) outside the principle and within the principle.⁶⁹ The *Mahāprajñā-(pāramitā Sūtra)* discloses the Two Truths outside the principle (in which the Two Truths) are identical to each other, and the two kinds of Two Truths within the principle. The *Lotus Sūtra* only discloses the Two Truths within the principle (in which the Two Truths) are identical with each other.

The way in which the various treatises follow the *sūtras* should be understood. The *Middle Treatise* verse⁷⁰ says,

Dharmas arising from causes and conditions,

I preach them to be empty.

This sets forth the Two Truths outside the principle (in which the Two Truths) are identical to each other.

They are also called provisional designations.

They are also the significance of the Middle Way.

This sets forth the Two Truths within the principle (in which the Two Truths) are not identical with, and are identical with, each other (respectively).

The final two chapters (of the *Middle Treatise*) explain how *śrāvakas* enter the (Truth of) Supreme Significance. They set forth the Two Truths outside the principle (in which the Two Truths) are not identical with each other (which is taught in) the *Tripitaka* Teaching.

(Explanation of the Disclosed in terms of the Principle of the One Truth)

Fourth, exposition of the disclosed through the explanation of the principle of the One Truth 一諦. This will again be explained in three sections.

1. Explanation of the principle which is disclosed.
2. Explanation of the teachings which disclose (the principle).
3. (Explanation) in terms of *sūtras* and treatises.

First, explanation of the principle which is disclosed. This is the principle of the One Truth. What is meant by the One Truth? "Truth" means unmistakably real. The unmistakably real *Dharma* is non-dual. How can there be Three Truths or Two Truths, all of which are called "unmistakably real"? Here the explanation that the Absolute and Conventional (Truths) are "Truths" is only an expedient device, and, in reality, they are not Truths. For this

reason, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “The so-called Two Truths are, in reality, one. It is only because the *Tathāgata* employed expedient devices to convert sentient beings that he preached them to be two. . . .⁷¹ For example, although the sun and moon are not spinning, drunken people see them spinning. You should know that the only thing which exists is the sun which is not spinning. Sober people see them in the same way. Why should there exist another sun which spins around? If there really exists a spinning sun, then sober people should see them as well. The One Truth is like the authentic sun, and the Two Truths are like the spinning sun. The authentic sun is unmistakably real, and thus is called the One Truth. The spinning sun is unreal. How can there be Two Truths? The Two Truths are preached as expedient devices. They cannot be real. For this reason, they are not Truths.”⁷² The principle which is disclosed here is this One Real Truth.

**(Explanation of the Teachings which disclose
the Principle of the One Real Truth)**

Second, explanation of the teachings which disclose (the principle). The *Tripitaka* Teaching and Shared Teaching are those in which the evil wine of defilements has not yet been vomited. They only disclose the spinning sun and teach the existence of the Two Truths. They are incapable of disclosing the One Real Truth. The Distinct Teaching discloses the One Real Truth. This is like when one leaves the spinning sun behind. The Complete Teaching discloses the One Real Truth, wherein the spinning sun is (shown to be) the sun which does not spin.

**(Explanation of How the One Real Truth
Corresponds to the *Sūtras* and Treatises)**

Third, (explanation of how the One Real Truth) corresponds to the *sūtras* and treatises. The *Hua-yen* Teaching discloses the One Real Truth (but it) incorporates the Conventional Truth within the principle, and expedient devices wherein (the Two Truths) are not identical (to each other). The *Tripitaka* Teaching does not disclose the One Real Truth at all. The Vaipulya Teaching discloses the One Real Truth, just as in the *Hua-yen* Teaching. (However) it contains expedient devices wherein the one-sided Absolute 偏真⁷³ is merged with the One Real Truth. The *Mahāprajñā-(pāramitā Sūtra)* Teaching discloses the One Real Truth, again just as in the *Hua-yen*. (However) it also incorporates expedient devices wherein the one-sided Absolute is merged with the One Real Truth. For this reason, the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Meanings* says, "For forty-odd years since the Buddha attained the Way, he has not yet revealed the Truth."⁷⁴ Let me say here: how can it be that the Real Truth is not preached (in these forty-odd years)? It is only that, sometimes (the Buddha) accommodated with sentient beings and opened up Two Truths and Three Truths. (For this reason, his teachings) are veiled by expedient devices of the non-identical One Truth.

The *Lotus* Teaching discloses the One Real Truth and is not veiled by expedient devices of non-identical One Truth. It only discloses the One Real Truth which is identical to all (*dharmas*). Therefore the *Lotus Sūtra* says that twenty thousand Buddhas (named) Sun and Moon Glow all said, "I have already preached for you the meaning of the Reality of the *dharmas*."⁷⁵ (It also

says) “The present Buddha emits (rays of) light to help disclose the meaning of Reality.”⁷⁶ “After the various Buddhas (have preached) their *Dharma* for a long time, they will preach the Truth without fail.”⁷⁷ “I will straightaways cast aside expedient devices and only preach the unexcelled Way.”⁷⁸ The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* is identical to the *Vaipulya*. It is different on the point that it comprehensively explicates the way to enter Buddha-nature.

The various treatises follow the *sūtras* (in the way they employ the various teachings). The way they correspond (to the teachings) should be known. As the *Middle Treatise* verse says, “They are also the meaning of the Middle Way.”⁷⁹ This sets forth the teachings of the One Real Truth. For this reason, Piṅgala says in his commentary,⁸⁰ “Because it averts the two extremes, it is called the Middle Way.”⁸¹ This means that both the extreme of emptiness due to causes and conditions, and the extreme of provisional existence, are averted. When these two extremes are negated, then the Two Truths—the Absolute and the Conventional—are averted. This is called the One Real Truth. Therefore, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “The One Real Truth is non-dual.”⁸² It also says, “The nature of non-duality is the real nature.”⁸³ The nature of non-duality is “entrance into the *Dharma*-gate of Non-duality.”⁸⁴

Furthermore, the One Real Truth is the non-arising of the non-arising. Non-arising of the non-arising is inexpressible. For this reason the layman Vimalakīrti shut his mouth and remained silent, and Mañjuśrī praised him.⁸⁵

On the Four Teachings, chüan 2

ABBREVIATIONS

Hurvitz: Leon Hurvitz, tr., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*,

Annotated Translation of the *Ssu-chiao-i* (*On the Four Teachings*), *chüan* 2

(New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

Kato: Bunno Kato, *et. al.* trs., *The Threefold Lotus Sutra*, (Tokyo: Weatherhill/Kosei, 1975).

Lamotte, *Vimalakirti*: Étienne Lamotte, tr. (rendered into English by Sara Boin), *The Teaching of Vimalakirti*, (London: The Pali Text Society, 1976).

Sato: Tetsuei Sato, "Sangan Shiso no Kigen oyobi Hattatsu," in his *Tendai Daishi no Kenkyu*, (Kyoto: Hyakkaen, 1964) pp. 734–768.

T: Junjiro Takakusu and Kaikyoku Watanabe eds., *Shinshu Taisho Daizokyo*, 85 vols. (Tokyo: Taisho Issaikyo Kankokai, 1924–1934).

Yamamoto: Kosho Yamamoto, tr., *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra*, 3 vols., (Ube: Karinbunko, 1973, 1974, 1975).

NOTES

¹ This translation is based on the text found in Junjiro Takakusu and Kaikyoku Watanabe, eds., *Shinshu Taisho Daizokyo* (Tokyo: Taisho Issaikyo Kankokai, 1924-1934), vol. 46, pp. 725b-729a. The Taisho text in turn is based upon a Japanese edition published in 1660. The Taisho text is collated with two other texts: (1) that found in the Ming edition of the *Tripitaka*, dated 1661 and (2) a Japanese text dated 1688. Where I have amended the text on the basis of these two texts, they will be noted in the footnotes. I have also added headings for each section for convenience of the readers.

² These words are not found in the *sūtra*. See Koku's 皎空 commentary to the *Ssu-chiao-i*, *Shikyōgi Shijiki* 四教義資始記 (woodblock edition dated 1785), *chüan* 2, 1a.

³ Seven objective realms are enumerated in the *Fa-hua lien-hua ching hsüan-i* (hereafter cited as *Fa-hua hsüan-i*): (1) Ten Such-likes, (2) Twelffold Chain of Dependent Origination, (3) Four Noble Truths, (4) Two Truths, (5) Three Truths, (6) One Truth and (7) No Truth (T 33, pp. 693b-696a; 698b-705b). These sections have been translated by Dr. Paul Swanson in his excellent PhD dissertation: *The Two Truths Controversy in China and Chih-i's Threefold Truth Concept* (The Univeristy of Wisconsin—Madison, December 1985): 415-473; 528-678. Among the *Fa-hua hsüan-i*'s seven objective realms, 3-6 are identical with those found in the *Ssu-chiao-i*. There is considerable overlap between the expositions of the two works, but in general that of the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* is more detailed than that of the *Ssu-chiao-i*.

⁴ The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* itself does not set forth the theory of the four kinds of Four Noble Truths. But in the *sūtra*'s explanation of Sage Practices, a lengthy section is devoted to a discussion of the Four Noble Truths (T 12, 676b-684c; Yamamoto, I, 291-325). Chih-i holds that the four kinds of Four Noble Truths can be inferred from these passages.

The statement that the four kinds of Four Noble Truths derive from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* is also found in the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* (T 33, 700c-701a) and *Mo-ho chih-kuan* (T 46, 5b).

⁵ Sage Practice is one of five practices described in great detail in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. The five are: (1) Sage Practice, (2) Pure Practice, (3) Heavenly Practice, (4) Child-like Practice and (5) Illness Practice. T 12, 673b-729b; Yamamoto, I, 281-II, 499.

⁶ T'ien-t'ai Buddhism divides the Sage Practice into three: precepts, concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom. Wisdom, in this context, is said to refer to

that concerning the four kinds of Four Noble Truths. See the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* (T 33, 716c; 720c).

⁷ The five flavors refer to the stages in which milk turns to ghee. They are (1) fresh milk, (2) cream, (3) curd, (4) butter and (5) ghee. The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* uses them as a parable of the different kinds of teachings which the Buddha taught. In the *sūtra*, the teachings are (1) the twelvefold scriptures, (2) *sūtras*, (3) *Vaipulya Sūtras*, (4) *Prajñāpāramitā* and (5) *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa* (T 12, 690c–691a; Yamamoto, I, 348). The theory of the five flavors is also used in the T'ien-t'ai tenet classification system to explain the temporal sequence in which the Buddha taught the various teachings. They are said to correspond to (1) *Hua-yen* period, (2) Deer Park Period, (3) *Vaipulya* Period, (4) *Prajñāpāramitā* Period and (5) *Lotus-Nirvāṇa* Period.

⁸ T 12, 221b. This section has been translated in Diana Mary Paul, *The Buddhist Feminine Ideal: Queen Śrīmālā and the Tathāgatagarbha* (American Academy of Religion, 1980): 191.

⁹ “Non-arising” added following 1661 and 1688 texts. See T 46, 725, note 40.

¹⁰ T 9, 12a; Hurvitz, 56-7.

¹¹ Marks of arising, change and perishing which characterize all composite *dharmas*.

¹² “Seed” refers to the cause of transmigratory existence i. e., the delusions of views and attitudes (on these delusions, see note 40). “Fruit” refers to transmigratory existence. Beings who have attained cessation are free from bondage to both delusions of views and attitudes and transmigratory existence (birth-and-death) which results from the delusions.

¹³T 12, 682c; Yamamoto, I, 317. The *sūtra* says, “Good son! It is for this reason that the various common beings have suffering and do not have the Truth. *Śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* have suffering, have the Truth of Suffering, but do not have Reality. The various *bodhisattvas*, etc., understand that there is no suffering to suffering, and for this reason do not have suffering but have the Absolute Truth. The various sentient beings have accumulation and do not have the Truth. *Śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* have accumulation and have the Truth of Accumulation. The various *bodhisattvas* etc., understand there is no accumulation to accumulation. For this reason, they do not have accumulation and have the Absolute Truth. *Śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* have cessation (but) is not the Absolute. *Bodhisattvas* and *mahāsattvas* have cessation and the Absolute Truth. *Śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* have the Way (but) is not the Absolute. *Bodhisattvas* and *mahāsattvas* have the Way and have the Absolute Truth.”

¹⁴T 12, 1112a. The *sūtra*’s full title is *Fo ch’ui pan nieh p’an lioh shuo chiao chiai ching* 佛垂般涅槃略說教誡經. Translated by Kumārajīva in one *chüan*.

¹⁵Many Sarvāstivāda texts take up the Four Noble Truths. But among them, the *Fa-hua hsüan-i* takes up in particular the explanation of the Four Noble Truths found in the *Samyukta-abhidharma-hṛdaya-śāstra* (T 33, 701a).

¹⁶The *Ch’eng shih lun* contains the “Chapter on the Four Noble Truths” (chapter 17). T 32, p. 250-252a.

¹⁷T 15, 39a. The *sūtra* says, “Brahma! You should know that, because of dependent origination, the Sage Truths are neither suffering, accumulation, cessation nor the Way. As for the Sage Truths—to know that there is no arising to suffering is called the Sage Truth of Suffering. To know that accumulation

has no (mark of) coming together is called the Sage Truth of Accumulation. To know that there is neither arising nor perishing within the *Dharma* of ultimate cessation is called the Sage Truth of Cessation. To attain the Way by means of the *Dharma* of non-duality is called the Sage Truth of the Way.”

¹⁸Refers to a nihilistic emptiness, wherein emptiness itself is not yet seen to be empty.

¹⁹Refers to the passage from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* quoted above (note 13).

²⁰*Nirvāṇa* with remainder and *nirvāṇa* without remainder. The first is where one has destroyed all defilements but still retains physical existence. The latter is where one has relinquished physical existence as well.

²¹These are the fourfold virtues, which are enumerated in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* as the characteristics of the *Mahāyāna parinirvāṇa*. T 12, 617b; Yamamoto, I, 54.

²²That is to say, they gain insight into emptiness.

²³That all beings possess Buddha-nature is one of the central tenets of the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*.

²⁴T 12, 684a; Yamamoto, I, 323. The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* says, “Good son! In knowing the Four Sage Truths, there are two kinds of knowledges. The first is the mediocre knowledge. The second is the superior knowledge. The mediocre is the knowledge of the *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*. The superior is the knowledge of the various Buddhas and *bodhisattvas*. Good son! To know the various aggregates as suffering is called the mediocre knowledge. When the various aggregates are discriminated, there are infinite marks, and they are all suffering. This is not something which can be known by the various *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*. This is called the superior knowledge.”

²⁵In *chüan* 9 (T 46, 755a), in connection with the discussion of the stages of practices in the Distinct Teaching.

²⁶See the quote from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* in note 24 above.

²⁷Second of the three knowledges enumerated in the T'ien-t'ai teachings. It is knowledge of the infinite marks of the *dharma*s which exist provisionally. This is said to be insight into Provisional Existence, the second of the Three Truths enumerated in T'ien-t'ai Buddhism. The other two knowledge are omniscience 一切智 (which is insight into the emptiness, the first of the Three Truths) and knowledge of all modes 一切種智 (insight into the Middle, the third of the Three Truths).

²⁸These exact words are not found in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. However, there is a detailed explanation of what is meant by the "Real Truth" in connection with the discussion of the Four Noble Truths. T 12, 685a-686a; Yamamoto, I, 327-330. Chih-i is probably rephrasing this entire section here.

²⁹T 12, 685b; Yamamoto, I, 328. The *sūtra* says: "Next, good son! The so-called accumulation is that which can make the five aggregates come together and arise. It is also called suffering and it is also called impermanent. It is of the mark of what can be severed. This is the Real Truth. Good son! The *Tathāgata* is not of the nature of accumulation. He is not the cause of aggregates. He is not of the mark of what can be severed. For this reason, he is Real. The sky and the Buddha-nature are also like this."

³⁰In *chüan* 11 (T 46, 761b). *Chüan* 11 treats the stages of practice of the Complete Teaching.

³¹The innumerable delusions 塵沙惑 refer to the second kind of delusions enumerated in T'ien-t'ai Buddhism (the first is the delusions of views and

attitudes; see note 40 below). They obstruct the *bodhisattva*'s others-benefitting activities. These delusions are destroyed through contemplation of the Truth of Provisional Existence, the second of the T'ien-t'ai Three Truths. Delusion of ignorance 無明惑 is the third kind of delusions enumerated in T'ien-t'ai Buddhism. They are eradicated through contemplation of the Truth of the Middle, the third of the T'ien-t'ai Three Truths.

³²Refers to the passage quoted in note 24 above.

³³The explanation of the Real Truth in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, which forms the basis of Chih-i's analysis of the Uncreated Four Noble Truths (see note 28 above) is preached by the Buddha to Mañjuśrī.

³⁴I could not discover this passage in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra*.

³⁵The translation follows the 1661 and 1688 texts. See T 46, 726, note 27.

³⁶T 12, 733c; Yamamoto, II, 515. The *sūtra* says, "The Buddha said, 'Excellent, good son! The non-arising of the arising is inexpressible. The arising of the arising is also inexpressible. The arising of the non-arising is also inexpressible. The non-arising of the non-arising is also inexpressible. Arising is also inexpressible. Non-arising is also inexpressible. Because there are causes and conditions, they can also be expressed.'" According to the *sūtra* (T 12, 733b; Yamamoto, II, 513-4), "arising of the non-arising" refers to the birth of beings from their mothers' wombs; "non-arising of the non-arising" to *Mahā-(pari)-nirvāṇa*; "non-arising of the arising" to death; and "arising of the arising" to the existence of human beings.

³⁷The four *siddhāntas* are the four modes in which the Buddha preaches the *Dharma* to sentient beings. They are (1) worldly *siddhānta*, (2) *siddhānta* for each person, (3) remedial *siddhānta* and (4) *siddhānta* of supreme significance. The

four *siddhānta* are enumerated in the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* (T 25, 59b, ff; Étienne Lamotte tr., *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 1 (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1956): 27 ff).

³⁸“In accordance with emotions” and “in accordance with wisdom” are two of the ways in which the Buddha is said to preach the *Dharma*. The first is when the Buddha preaches in accordance with the level of understanding of his listeners. The latter is when the Buddha preaches the *Dharma* exactly as he understands it, without taking into consideration the listeners’ level of understanding. Along with these two, a third category of preaching, that “in accordance with emotions and wisdom” 隨情智 is enumerated. This is the case where the Buddha preaches the *Dharma* exactly as he understand it, and it fits with the understanding of the listeners. They are found in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* (T 12, 820b; Yamamoto, III, 868).

³⁹T 9, 10a; Hurvitz, 44.

⁴⁰The “delusions of views and attitudes” 見思惑 are defilements which bind sentient beings to birth-and-death within the Triple Realm (i.e., the realm of transmigration). As for the former delusions of views, there are 88 of them. They are destroyed when one attains insight into the Way (*darśana-mārga*). Next, there are 81 delusions of attitudes. They are destroyed through the cultivation of the Way (*bhāva-mārga*).

⁴¹There are 53 stages in the path of practice set forth in the Distinct Teaching. They are grouped into (1) Ten Faiths, (2) Ten Abodes, (3) Ten Practices, (4) Ten Merit-transferences, (5) Ten Stages, (6) Attainment Equal to Awakening 等覺 and (7) Sublime Awakening 妙覺.

⁴²I.e., the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*.

⁴³Refers to the passage concerning the arising of the arising, etc., quoted in note 36 above.

⁴⁴Paraphrase of “Chapter on the Contemplation of the Four Noble Truths” (chapter 24) of the *Middle Treatise*. This passage is found in T 30, 32b-c. The *Treatise* says, “If every one of the things in the world are all empty and do not exist, then there should be neither arising nor perishing. Because there is neither arising nor perishing, then the Four Noble Truths do not exist.... Because the Four Noble Truths do not exist, then there is no insight into suffering, severing of accumulation, realization of cessation and cultivation of the Way. Because insight into suffering, severing of accumulation, realization of cessation and cultivation of the Way do not exist, then the four fruits of the *śramaṇa* do not exist. Because the four fruits of the *śramaṇa* do not exist, then there are neither those directed towards (the four fruits of the *śramaṇa*) nor those who have attained (the four fruits of the *śramaṇa*). If these eight sages do not exist, then there is no *Samgha* Treasure. Moreover, because the Four Sage Truths do not exist, there neither exists the *Dharma* Treasure. If neither the *Dharma* Treasure nor *Samgha* Treasure exists, how can there be a Buddha? The one who attains the *Dharma* is called a Buddha. If the *Dharma* does not exist, how can there be a Buddha? If you say all *dharma*s are empty, then you destroy the Three Treasures.”

⁴⁵Text emended by removing two character (不空) following the 1661 and 1688 texts. See T 46, 727, note 25. The next line is also emended in the same way.

⁴⁶This quotation is based on key verses of the “Chapter on the Contemplation of the Four Noble Truths.” These verses from the *Treatise* says,

“You here in reality do not

Know emptiness and the causes and conditions for emptiness.

Nor (do you) know the meaning of emptiness.

For this reason you give rise to anguish by yourself.... (Verse 7; T 30, 32c)

The various Buddhas rely on the Two Truths

To preach the *Dharma* to sentient beings.

First is the Conventional Truth.

Second is the Truth of Supreme Meaning.... (verse 8; T 30, 32c)

If people do not know

(How to) discriminate these Two Truths,

Then, concerning the profound Buddha *Dharma*,

They do not know the real meaning.... (verse 9; T 30, 32c)

Because there exists the meaning of emptiness,

All *dharma*s are accomplished.

If the meaning of emptiness did not exist,

All will then not be accomplished.” (verse 14; T33, 33a)

⁴⁷Verse 18 of the “Chapter on the Contemplation of the Four Noble Truth” (T 33, 33b). The verse reads as follows:

*Dharma*s arising from various causes and conditions,

I preach them to be nothingness.

They are also called provisional designation.

They are also what is meant by the Middle Way.

This verse holds a key position in T'ien-t'ai philosophy. A classic study of this verse and its role in T'ien-t'ai Buddhism is Ryodo Shioiri, “Ku' no

Chugoku-teki Rikai to Tendai no Kugan: Churonge no Toriatsukai o megutte,” *Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo Kiyo* 46 (March 1968): 139-204.

⁴⁸This passage is found in “Chapter on the Contemplation of the Twelve-fold Chain of Dependent Origination” (chapter 26), the next-to-the-last chapter of the *Middle Treatise*. It reads, “Question: You have explained the Way of Supreme Significance using the *Mahāyāna* (Teaching). Here I wish to hear you explain (how) one enters the Way of Supreme Significance by the *śrāvaka Dharma*.” (T 33, 36b).

⁴⁹This topic is taken up in the “Chapter on the Contemplation of Erroneous Views” (chapter 27), the final chapter of the *Middle Treatise* (T 33, 36c-39b).

⁵⁰This translation follows the 1688 text. The Kamakura period Japanese Tendai scholar Hochibo Shoshin 寶池房證眞 says in his *Shikyogi Shiki* 四教義私記 (undated woodblock text in the Otani University library), p. 6b, that this simile derives from the following passage in Paramārtha’s translation of Asaṅga’s *Mahāyāna Saṃgraha* and its commentary by Vasubandhu: “The treatise (*Mahāyāna Saṃgraha*) says, ‘If the original consciousness and non-original consciousness arise together and perish together, they are like water and milk which are mixed together. How can the original consciousness perish and the non-original consciousness not perish?’... The treatise says, ‘It is like how a goose drinks only the milk from the water.’ The commentary says, ‘Although water and milk are mixed together, when the goose drinks, it drinks only the milk and does not drink the water. Therefore, although the milk is gone, the water still remains. The original consciousness and non-original consciousness are like this. Although they are united, one perishes while the other remains.’” (T 31, 175a).

⁵¹This *sūtra* enumerates (1) Truth of Existence, (2) Truth of Nothingness, and (3) Truth of the Supreme Significance of the Middle Way. The *sūtra* says, “The Buddha said, ‘Son of Buddha! The so-called Truth of Existence, Truth of Nothingness and the Truth of Supreme Significance of the Middle Way—these are the mother of the wisdom of all the various Buddhas and *bodhisattvas*.’” (T 24, 1018b).

Full title of this *sūtra* is *P’u sa ying lo pen yeh ching* 菩薩瓔珞本業經. Although its translation is attributed to Chu Fo-nien of the Former Ch’in Dynasty (351-395), it is considered to be a Chinese apocryphal text. See Sato, 699-703.

⁵²Chinese title: *Jen-wang pan-jo po-lo-mi ching* 仁王般若波羅蜜經. This text is considered a Chinese apocryphal *sūtra*, compiled probably between 452-515. See Sato, 686-693. This work does not explicitly set forth a theory of the Three Truths. However it does say, “Great king! *Bodhisattvas* and *mahāsattvas* always illuminate the Two Truths within the Supreme Meaning and converts sentient beings” (T 8, 829a). From this passage, it is clear that the *sūtra* is proposing a transcendental third Truth beyond the Two Truths. Further the *sūtra* does mention that “all *dharma*s are encompassed within the Three Truths” (T 8, 829b), but the Three Truths here are said to be (1) Truth of Emptiness, (2) Truth of Form and (3) Truth of Mind.

⁵³The 25 modes of existence consists of the 4 evil destinies (realms of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, *asuras*); the four continents (Pūrvavideha, Jambudvīpa, Aparagodānīya and Uttarakuru); six heavenly realms of desire; seven heavenly realms of form; and the four formless heavenly realms.

⁵⁴T 12, 684c; Yamamoto, I, 326.

⁵⁵T 12, 684c; Yamamoto, I, 326.

⁵⁶This passage is not found in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. See Koku, *Shikyōgi Shijiki*, *chüan* 2, p. 11b.

⁵⁷See note 36 above.

⁵⁸Detailed explanation of how the Three Truths are explicated in accordance with emotions, etc., is found in the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* (T 46, 26c-27a).

⁵⁹The text is corrupt here. I have translated this following the reading given in both 1661 and 1688 texts. See T 46, 728, notes 1 and 2.

⁶⁰Refers to a state in which they attain total physical and mental extinction in *nirvāṇa*.

⁶¹That is to say, it teaches the Three Truths to be independent from each other and do not reveal that they are one as in the Complete Teaching.

⁶²That is, contemplations and knowledges of the Two Truths.

⁶³*Bodhisattvas* of the Distinct Teaching follow a course of practice consisting of 52 stages which are divided into (1) Ten Faiths, (2) Ten Abodes, (3) Ten Practices, (4) Ten Merit-transferences, (5) Ten Stages, (6) Attainment Equal to Awakening and (7) Sublime Awakening. The thirty minds here refer to the Ten Abodes, Ten Practices and Ten Merit-transferences.

⁶⁴The First Stage is the first of Ten Stages in the 52 stages of the Distinct *bodhisattva*'s practice.

⁶⁵Incipient mind refers to the first of the Five Grades. These Five Grades precede the 52 stages in the stages of practice of the Complete *bodhisattvas*.

⁶⁶See note 45 above.

⁶⁷This actually is found in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* (T 14, 551a): "Priyadarśana Bodhisattva said, 'Form and emptiness of form are non-dual. Form is emptiness. It is not that form is eradicated (to attain) emptiness. In this way,

sensations, intellect, motivation and consciousness and emptiness are non-dual. Consciousness is emptiness. It is not that consciousness is eradicated (to attain) emptiness. The nature of consciousness is, of itself, emptiness. If one attains this, this is called “entrance into the Gate of Non-duality.”” (Lamotte, *Vimalakirti*, p. 195).

⁶⁸See note 24 above. However, the *sūtra* does not say that when the Absolute Truth is discriminated, there are infinite marks.

⁶⁹Translation follows the text as given in 1661 and 1688 texts. See T 46, 728, note 27.

⁷⁰See note 45 above.

⁷¹T 12, 684c; Yamamoto, I, 326. “(The Buddha said,) ‘Good son! The Worldly Truth is the Truth of Supreme Significance.’ ‘World-honored One! If this is so, are there two Truths?’ The Buddha said, ‘Good son! Because there are good skillful devices, it is preached that there are Two Truths in accordance with (the understanding of) sentient beings. Good son! If one follows linguistic conventions, then there are two kinds (of Truths): (1) Worldly Truth, and (2) Transworldly Truth....’”

⁷²This parable derives from the “Chapter of Grief” in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* (T 12, 616c-617a; Yamamoto, I, 51-53): “Why does the *Tathāgata* wish to abandon us and enter *nirvāṇa*? World-honored One! For example, a person who is drunk has no awareness and cannot distinguish who is near or far, or who is his mother or daughter, elder or younger sister.... At that time there is a good physician who gives him medicine and makes him take it. Once he took it, he vomits and regains memory and consciousness.... World-honored One! For example, the mind of a drunk person is confused, and he sees all the mountains,

rivers, castles, palaces, sun, moon and stars spinning around....”

⁷³Refers to a nihilistic emptiness, i.e., an objectified emptiness perceived by those who do not understand that emptiness itself is empty.

⁷⁴This is based on several passages in this *sūtra*. “World-honored One! For forty-odd years since the *Tathāgata* attained the Way, he has always preached the *Dharma* to sentient beings...” (T 9, 386a; Kato, 13). “For forty-odd years, the Truth had yet to be revealed....” (T 9, 386b; Kato, 14).

⁷⁵T 9, 3c; Hurvitz, 13.

⁷⁶T 9, 5b; Hurvitz, 21.

⁷⁷T 9, 6a; Hurvitz, 25.

⁷⁸T 9, 10a; Hurvitz, 45.

⁷⁹See note 45 above.

⁸⁰Pīngala’s commentary to Nāgārjuna’s *Middle Verses* was translated by Kumārajīva and forms a part of the Chinese *Middle Treatise* (Taisho text no. 1564).

⁸¹T 30, 33b.

⁸²T 12, 685b; Yamamoto, I, 327. The *sūtra* says, “The Real Truth is the One Way which is pure and without duality.”

⁸³Exact words not found in the *sūtra*. Perhaps Chih-i is referring to the following words from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*: “If the Truth is considered the Real Truth, the True *Dharma* is the *Tathāgata*, the sky and Buddha-nature.” (T 12, 685b; Yamamoto, I, 327-8).

⁸⁴Alludes to the “Chapter on Entrance into Non-duality” found in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* (T 14, 550b-551c; Lamotte, *Vimalakīrti*, 188-203).

⁸⁵Alludes to the famous story found in the “Chapter on Entrance into

Non-duality” of the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* cited above. In this chapter, the lay man Vimalakīrti challenges various *bodhisattvas* to explain the meaning of entering non-duality (i.e., attaining insight into emptiness and equality of all *dharma*s). Thirty-two *bodhisattvas* then express their opinions, but when Vimalakīrti himself is asked to state his insight, he remains silent. Mañjuśrī then praises this silence, stating it is the most eloquent expression of non-duality.