

## Genshin's Criticism in the *Ichijō yōketsu* of Hossō Proofs for the Existence of *Ichchantikas*

Robert F. Rhodes

The *Ichijō yōketsu* (*Determining the Essentials of the One Vehicle*), written by Genshin (942-1017) sometime after the tenth month of 1006, is an important document in the history of the Buddhist debate over the question of whether or not all beings can attain Buddhahood.<sup>1</sup> This question was long a point of bitter controversy between the Tendai and Hossō sects in Japan. The Tendai sect, based on the teachings of the *Lotus* and *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtras*, claimed that the sole goal of Buddhist practice is the attainment of Buddhahood and argued that all beings have the potential to become Buddhas. In contrast, the Hossō sect argued that not all beings have the capacity to attain Buddhahood. Instead, they claimed that all beings belong by nature to one of five "lineages" (*gotras*).<sup>2</sup> The five lineages are:

- (1) the lineage of bodhisattvas<sup>3</sup>
- (2) the lineage of pratyekabuddhas
- (3) the lineage of śrāvakas
- (4) the indeterminate lineage
- (5) lineageless beings.

Hossō scholars claimed that only beings of the bodhisattva lineage (along with

<sup>1</sup>Despite its importance in the history of Japanese Buddhist thought, there are few studies on the *Ichijō yōketsu*. The only book-length study is Ōkubo Ryōjun, *Ichijō yōketsu*, Būten kōza 33 (Tokyo: Daitō shuppan, 1990). Genshin's theory of the Buddha-nature is treated in the following two works: Tokiwa Daijō, *Busshō no kenkyū* reprint (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1977): 413-432; and Fukihara Shōshin, *Chūgoku Nihon busshō shisōshi* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1988): 396-435. Also important is Yagi Kōe, *Eshin kyōgaku no kisoteki kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nagata bunshōdō, 1962). This is a comprehensive study of Genshin's Buddhist thought which provides a useful summary of the main points of the *Ichijō yōketsu*.

<sup>2</sup>On the Hossō theory of the Five Lineages, see Fukaura Seibun, *Yuishikigaku kenkyū* vol. 2 (Kyoto: Nagata bunshōdō, 1954): 638-658; Kuwayama Shōshin and Hakamaya Noriaki, *Genjō* (Tokyo: Daitō shuppan, 1981): 318-326; and Hosaka Gyokusen, "Goshō kakubetsu to jōbutsu fujōbutsu no mondai," *Komazawa daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 16 (1938): 1-14.

<sup>3</sup>In this paper, I will treat as English words those which appear in Webster's *Third New International Dictionary*, and leave them unitalicized. For a convenient list of these words, see Roger Jackson, "Terms of Sanskrit and Pāli Origin Acceptable as English Words," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 5-2 (1982): 141-2.

certain beings of the indeterminate lineage) can reach complete Buddhahood. Moreover, they further claimed that there exists a class of beings, called lineageless beings (or *icchantikas*), who can never achieve liberation from the cycle of birth-and-death. These *icchantikas* are eternally bound to transmigratory existence and have no hope for gaining release from it. For *icchantikas*, there is no nirvāṇa, much less Buddhahood.

The *Ichijō yōketsu* was written by Genshin in order to defend the Tendai position of universal Buddhahood against the Hossō position of limited Buddhahood. One of the most important points which Genshin makes in this work that all *icchantikas* will eventually reach Buddhahood. Genshin attempts to prove this in several ways. For example, in one section of the *Ichijō yōketsu*, he discusses a total of 44 passages cited by Chinese Fa-hsiang (Chinese for Hossō) and Japanese Hossō masters from the Buddhist canon as proof for the existence of *icchantikas* and demonstrates that these passages do not, in fact, support the Hossō position. Among these 44 passages, the first ten derive from *Ch'eng wei shih lun chang chung shu yao* (*Essentials within the Palm of the Treatise on Consciousness-only*; this work will be cited hereafter as *Shu yao*) by the important Chinese Fa-hsiang master Tz'u-en.<sup>4</sup> Tz'u-en, revered as the founder of the Hossō sect, was a prolific scholar who wrote a number of commentaries on many of the most important Hossō texts. Among them was the *Shu yao*, a four *chüan* exposition of the main points of the *Ch'eng wei shih lun*, the fundamental text of the Hossō sect. In this treatise, Tz'u-en presents a concise defense of the Five Lineages theory which proved influential in the subsequent development of the debate in China and Japan.<sup>5</sup> It was in connection with this defense that Tz'u-en quoted the ten scriptural passages discussed by Genshin. Because Tz'u-en's views were regarded as authoritative for the Hossō sect, Genshin took special pains to refute it in the *Ichijō yōketsu*. In the following pages, we will first review briefly the background of the *Ichijō yōketsu* and next consider Genshin's analysis of these ten passages from the *Shu yao*.

### The *Ichchantika* in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

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<sup>4</sup>Most studies and reference works refer to Tz'u-en as Kuei-chi. However, as Stanley Weinstein has argued, his name is not Kuei-chi, but simply Chi. See Stanley Weinstein, "A Biographical Study of Tz'u-en," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 15/1-2 (April-July 1959): 129-136. Following Weinstein, in referring to this monk, I have used the name Tz'u-en (which derives from the Ta-tz'u-en ssu, the temple in Ch'ang-an which served as his residence for some time), the name by which he is known in the Hossō sect.

<sup>5</sup>Tz'u-en's defense of the Five Lineages theory is found at T 43, 610a-612b.

One of the most important sources of the Tendai teaching of universal Buddhahood is the radical doctrine that "all beings, without exception, have the Buddha-nature"<sup>6</sup> found in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. According to this sūtra, there is no one in the world incapable of attaining Buddhahood. This is because each and every being possess within himself or herself the nature of the Buddha ("Buddha-nature").<sup>7</sup>

In its early chapters, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* asserts that all beings possess the Buddha-nature and are consequently able to achieve Buddhahood. However, the sūtra subsequently introduces a notion which apparently runs counter to this claim. This is the notion that there exists a class of beings called *icchāntikas* who can never attain Buddhahood. The question of how to reconcile the existence of such beings with the sūtra's central doctrine of universal Buddha-nature comes to dominate the later chapters of the sūtra.<sup>8</sup>

What, specifically, are *icchāntikas*? The definition of an *icchāntika* is not uniform throughout the sūtra, but they are generally considered beings who (1) hold incorrect views and are devoid of faith, (2) break the precepts, and (3) are prideful and lack any feeling of remorse and shame.<sup>9</sup> In many passages, they are also listed alongside beings who transgress against the four cardinal prohibitions,<sup>10</sup> commit the five grave offenses<sup>11</sup> and slander the Mahāyāna sūtras (particularly the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*) as representative examples of people incapable of attaining Buddhahood.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Standard studies on the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* include Fuse Kōgaku, *Nehanshū no kenkyū*, reprint, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1973), and Ōchō Enichi, *Nehangyō*, reprint (Kyoto: Heirakuji, 1981).

<sup>7</sup>On the Buddha-nature doctrine in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, see Ming-wood Liu, "The Doctrine of the Buddha-nature in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 5-2 (1982): 63-94, and Kawamura Kōshō, "Busshō, issendai," in *Kōza daijō bukkyō*, 6, Nyoraizō shisō, eds. Hirakawa Akira, Kajiyama Yūichi and Takasaki Jikidō (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1982): 85-118.

<sup>8</sup>On the *icchāntika* in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, see Liu Ming-wood, "The Problem of the *Ichchāntika* in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 7-1 (1984): 57-81.

<sup>9</sup>Liu, "The Problem of the *Ichchāntika*," 59-63.

<sup>10</sup>Four *pārājika* offenses that lead to expulsion from the Buddhist order: (1) engaging in sexual intercourse, (2) stealing, (3) killing humans, and (4) lying about one's spiritual attainments. See Nakamura Hajime, *Bukkyō daijiten* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Tokyo shoin, 1975), 522.

<sup>11</sup>Patricide, matricide, killing an arhat, causing blood to issue from the Buddha's body and causing disharmony within the Buddhist order. See Nakamura, *Bukkyō daijiten*, 1:357.

<sup>12</sup>A list of these passages is found in Mizutani Kōshō, "Issendai kō," *Bukkyō daigaku*

In its early stages, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* repeatedly insists that *icchantikas* are totally incapable of attaining Buddhahood. This position is enunciated most forcefully in the first seventeen chapters of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*,<sup>13</sup> particularly in its sixteenth chapter, "Chapter of Bodhisattvas."<sup>14</sup> The following statement characterizes the sūtra's treatment of the *icchantika* in these chapters.

Again, there may be a bhikṣu who preaches the Buddha's secret treasury and profound scripture (in this way): "All beings have the Buddha-nature. Because of this nature, they eliminate innumerable billions of defilements and fetters and are able to attain *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*. (However) *icchantikas* are excepted."<sup>15</sup>

In the "Chapter of Bodhisattvas," the *icchantikas* are further described as being totally devoid of wholesome roots which leads to nirvāṇa and incapable of arousing the aspiration for enlightenment. Hence they are likened to scorched seeds which have lost their ability to germinate.<sup>16</sup> As the sūtra states,

Son of good family! Even if innumerable beings should attain *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi* all at once, the Tathāgatas do not see (among them even one) *icchantika* (who) attains enlightenment.<sup>17</sup>

*kenkyū kiyō* 40 (1961): 93. However, as Liu notes, the *icchantika* is treated in different ways in different sections in the sūtra. This indicates both that the sūtra was composed in stages, and also that the *icchantika* was understood in different ways as the sūtra grew and developed. See Liu, "The Problem of the *icchantika*," 63-4.

<sup>13</sup>This is according to the way in which the chapters are divided in the Southern edition. In the Northern edition, it corresponds to the first six chapters. The distinction between the Northern and Southern editions of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* will be taken up in the text below.

<sup>14</sup>Again, this is according to the chapter division of the Southern edition. In the Northern edition, this chapter corresponds to the final portion of the fourth chapter, "Chapter of the Nature of the Tathāgata."

<sup>15</sup>Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaikyoku, eds. *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* vol. 12 (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1934): 404c (Northern edition; all further references to the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* will be given as "T", followed by volume, page and column number[s]); T 12, 645b (Southern edition); Yamamoto Kōshō, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* vol. 1 (Ube, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan: Karinbunko, 11973-75): 166. In this and in all subsequent footnotes, reference to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* will consist of (1) reference to the Northern edition of the sūtra as it appears in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (the standard scholarly edition of the Chinese Buddhist Tripiṭaka), (2) reference to the Southern edition of the sūtra, and (3) reference to the corresponding volume and page of Yamamoto's English translation of the sūtra.

<sup>16</sup>T 12, 418a (Northern edition); T 12, 659a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, 1:226. A translation of this passage is found in Liu, "The Problem of the *icchantika*," 66.



This statement is the clearest expression of the sūtra's position in its early chapters.

However, in its later sections, the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* comes to claim that even *icchantikas* can arouse the aspiration for enlightenment and attain Buddhahood. The sūtra argues that this is possible because *icchantikas* do not have the immutable nature of an *icchantika*.<sup>17</sup> Just as all dharmas are empty and devoid of self-natures, *icchantikas*, too, are empty and without the eternal and unchanging nature of an *icchantika*. As long as *icchantikas* remain *icchantikas*, they cannot attain Buddhahood. But they do not remain *icchantikas* forever. Once they repent their past actions, they no longer are *icchantikas*, and thus are able to attain Buddhahood. For this reason, the sūtra claims that *icchantikas* can eventually become Buddhas. The sūtra states,

Suppose *icchantikas* meet good spiritual friends, Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and hear them preach the profound Dharma, and suppose they do not meet (these beings). (In both cases) they are simply unable to rid themselves of the *icchantika*-minds. Why? Because they have eliminated all wholesome dharmas. (But) *icchantikas* can gain *anutara-samyak-sambodhi*. Why? If they are able to arouse the aspiration for enlightenment, then they are no longer called *icchantikas*.<sup>18</sup>

According to this passage, *icchantikas* are incapable of arousing the aspiration for enlightenment even if they hear the Dharma from good spiritual friends, Buddhas or bodhisattvas. But once *icchantikas* resolve to seek Buddhahood, they cease to be *icchantikas* and are capable of attaining supreme enlightenment just like all other beings. In this way, although the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* originally defined the *icchantika* as being devoid of wholesome roots and incapable of reaching Buddhahood, it ultimately comes to the conclusion that they, too, have the Buddha-nature and can achieve Buddhahood.

### The Chinese and Japanese Background to the *Ichijō yōketsu's* Doctrine of the Buddha-nature

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<sup>17</sup>T 12, 418c (Northern edition); T 12, 659c (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra*, 1:228.

<sup>18</sup>T 12, 493c (Northern edition); T 12, 737a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra*, 2:530.

<sup>19</sup>T 12, 519a (Northern edition); T 12, 763a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra*, 2:634.

The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* was translated into Chinese in the early decades of the fifth century. The first version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* to be rendered into Chinese was the six *chüan Ta pan ni yüan ching*, translated by Fa-hsien and Buddhahadra (359-429) in 418 at Chien-k'ang in south China. This translation of the sūtra corresponded to the first section of the forty *chüan Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* which was translated in 421 by Dharmakṣema (385-431) in Ku-tsang in north China. In 436, this sūtra was revised for stylistic reasons by Hui-yen (363-443), Hui-kuan (?-453) and the poet Hsieh Ling-yun (385-433). This thirty-six *chüan* version is commonly called the "Southern edition" to distinguish it from Dharmakṣema's version, which is popularly known as the "Northern edition." It was this revised "Southern edition" which became the most widely read version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* in China and Japan.<sup>20</sup>

The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra's* teaching that all beings possess the Buddha-nature quickly spread throughout the Chinese Buddhist community and became one of the most fundamental presuppositions of its doctrinal speculations. This soteriological position was adopted by Chih-i (538-597) who founded the T'ien-t'ai (Chinese for Tendai) sect during the Sui dynasty (581-618). On the basis of the doctrine of universal Buddhahood proclaimed in this and other sūtras, Chih-i developed a complex meditational system aimed at enabling Buddhist practitioners to reach the goal of Buddhahood.<sup>21</sup>

However, the doctrine that all beings can reach Buddhahood was faced with a serious challenge in the T'ang dynasty. In 645, the great translator Hsüan-tsang returned to China after a seventeen year trip to India. After his return, Hsüan-tsang threw himself into the task of translating the 657 volumes of Buddhist texts he had brought back to his native land. By the time he died some two decades later, he had completed the translation of 74 works in 1338 *chüans*.<sup>22</sup>

Among his large output were many of the most important texts of Yōgācāra Buddhism, which was one of the most influential Buddhist philosophical schools in India during the time of Hsüan-tsang's travels there. These newly translated Yogācāra texts contained the startling (at least to the Chinese Buddhists of that age) doctrine that not all beings are capable of achieving

<sup>20</sup>Liu, "The Doctrine of the Buddha-nature," 63-4.

<sup>21</sup>An excellent outline of the T'ien-t'ai meditational theory is found in Andō Toshio, *Tendaigaku: konpon shisō to sono tenkai* (Kyoto: Heirakuji, 1968): 173-298. In English, see Daniel B. Stevenson, "The Four Kinds of Samādhi in Early T'ien-t'ai Buddhism," in *Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism* ed. Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986): 45-97.

<sup>22</sup>Weinstein, "A Biographical Study of Tz'u-en," 119.

Buddhahood. According to these texts, all sentient beings can be distinguished into five lineages (the lineages of bodhisattvas, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, indeterminate beings, and lineageless beings) in accordance with their innate spiritual abilities. Among these five types of beings, it was claimed that only those belonging to the bodhisattva lineage (together with a certain portion of beings of the indeterminate lineage)<sup>23</sup> are capable of practicing the long and difficult bodhisattva path to reach Buddhahood. Some beings, i. e., those belonging to the pratyekabuddha and śrāvaka lineages, as well as certain beings of the indeterminate lineage, can by nature only reach arhathood and pratyekabuddhahood. Moreover, the lineageless beings, or *icchantikas*, are considered so totally depraved and lacking in faith that they are eternally incapable of escaping from the round of transmigration. Although, in keeping with the teaching of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, certain *icchantikas* were believed capable of repenting their past evil and eventually reaching Buddhahood, other *icchantikas* were considered eternally incapable of achieving liberation. It was these latter type of *icchantikas* who constituted the "lineageless beings." This view was in marked contrast with the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, which claimed that all beings, *icchantikas* included, can attain Buddhahood.

Immediately after Hsüan-tsang translated the Yogācāra texts into Chinese, a fierce debate erupted over whether or not to recognize the newly transmitted doctrine of the Five Lineages.<sup>24</sup> One important early proponent of the Fa-

<sup>23</sup>The indeterminate beings are those who possess the seeds for attaining the fruits of two or more of the Three Vehicles (bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas and śrāvakas). These indeterminate beings are of four types: (1) those possessing the seeds for attaining both arhathood and Buddhahood, (2) those possessing the seeds for attaining both pratyekabuddhahood and Buddhahood, (3) those possessing the seeds for attaining both arhathood and pratyekabuddhahood, and (4) those possessing the seeds for attaining arhathood, pratyekabuddhahood and Buddhahood. Naturally, indeterminate beings who can reach Buddhahood are those possessing seeds for Buddhahood. See Mochizuki Shinkō, *Bukkyō daijiten* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Sekai seiten kankokai, 1931-1963): 1212-3.

<sup>24</sup>The first person to attack the new doctrine was Ling-jun (?-649?), a highly respected scholar of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* and an early member of Hsüan-tsang's team of translators. Ling-jun's critique was attacked in turn by Shen-t'ai, one of Hsüan-tsang's leading disciples. Later, another fierce debate erupted between Fa-pao (627?-705?), the author of the *I ch'eng fu hsing chiu ching lun* (*Ultimate Treatise on the One Vehicle and the Buddha-nature Doctrines*) in six *chüans*, and Hui-chao (648-617), who composed the *Neng hsien chung pien hui jih lun* (*Treatise of the Sun of Wisdom Revealing the Middle and the Extreme*) in four *chüans*. In the former work, Fa-pao presented an extremely detailed criticism of the doctrine of the Five Lineages. In reply to Fa-pao, Hui-chao composed the latter work, in which he gave a point-by-point refutation of the arguments advanced by Fa-pao. This exchange between Fa-pao

hsiang position (the sect based on the Yogācāra texts newly translated by Hsüan-tsang) was Tz'u-en, a leading disciple of Hsüan-tsang. Tz'u-en wrote a number of commentaries and studies which contributed enormously to the spread of the new Yogācāra teaching throughout China. As noted above, among his works was the *Shu yao* which contains a defense of the Five Lineages theory.

The debate over universal Buddhahood in China ultimately ended in the defeat of the Hossō position. However, this did not mark the end of the debate since it was soon renewed with vigor in Japan. During the early Heian period (794-1185), Tokuitsu (780?-842?) of the Hossō sect (the Japanese transplant of the Fa-hsiang sect) attacked the doctrine of universal Buddhahood advocated by Saichō (767-822), who had just recently transmitted the Tendai teachings to Japan. The debate between these two monks lasted a number of years and was marked by great bitterness on both sides.<sup>25</sup> Despite the length of the debate, however, neither monk was able to claim clear-cut victory, and the question of whether or not all beings can reach Buddhahood remained a burning issue for Japanese Buddhists.

Genshin wrote the *Ichijō yōketsu* almost two centuries after the Saichō/Tokuitsu debate in order to defend the Tendai sect's universal Buddhahood doctrine against the Hossō sect. In this work, Genshin considers a wide range of questions which had been raised during the course of the debate in China and Japan, and attempts to prove that the Tendai position of universal Buddhahood represents the true and final Buddhist standpoint. In developing his arguments, he naturally placed great emphasis on refuting the Hossō claim concerning the existence of *icchantikas* who can never reach Buddhahood. As stated above, in this work Genshin argues that the Hossō position concerning the *icchantika* - that certain *icchantikas* are eternally incapable of escaping from the cycle of birth-and-death - is incorrect. In his view, all beings, including all *icchantikas*, will achieve Buddhahood. As part of his effort to defend his position, Genshin provides detailed commentary to each of the ten passages cited by Tz'u-en in the *Shu yao* as scriptural authority for the existence of *icchantikas* devoid of the capacity to achieve liberation. In the remainder of this paper, I will examine Genshin's treatment of these passages and see how he tries to show that, if understood correctly, they actually reveal

and Hui-chao marks the high point of the One Vehicle/Five Lineages debate in China. On the course of these debates, see Tamura Kōyū, "Busshō ronsō," *Iwanami kōza Tōyō shisō* 12: Higashi Ajia no Bukkyō, eds. Nagao Gadjin et. als. (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1988): 242-252.

<sup>25</sup>For an excellent summary of the debate between these two monks, see Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1984): 88-106.

that all *icchāntikas* can attain Buddhahood.

### Passage One: *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

The first passage which Tz'u-en quotes as scriptural proof concerning the existence of *icchāntikas* who can never achieve liberation from the cycle of birth-and-death derives from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, *chüan* 36 (Northern edition; in the Southern edition of the sūtra, it is found in *chüan* 33). As quoted by Tz'u-en, it reads,

Son of good family! If someone should preach saying, "All beings definitely have the Buddha-nature," this person is called (someone who) slanders the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha. If he should preach saying, "All definitely do not have the Buddha-nature," this person is also called (someone who) slanders the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha.<sup>26</sup>

Tz'u-en does not give his own analysis of this passage, but immediately after quoting these lines, Genshin presents a typical Hossō interpretation proposed by Tokuitsu.

Since *icchāntikas* ultimately without the (Buddha-) nature do not have the practical Buddha-nature, to preach that (all beings) definitely have the Buddha-nature is called slandering the Three Treasures. Since both *icchāntikas* who have eliminated wholesome roots and *icchāntikas* without the (Buddha-) nature have the Buddha-nature as principle, to preach that (all beings) definitely do not have the Buddha-nature is called slandering the Three Treasures.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Tz'u-en cites this passage at T 43, 612a. The original passage is found in T 12, 580b (Northern edition); T 12, 827c (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* 3:901. This passage reads slightly different in the sūtra: "If someone should preach saying, 'All beings definitely have the Buddha-nature, or that they definitely do not have the Buddha-nature,' this person is also called (someone who) slanders the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha." Genshin treatment of these lines in the *Ichijō yōketsu* is found at T 74, 353a.

<sup>27</sup>None of Tokuitsu's writings dealing with the One Vehicle/Five Lineages debate with Saichō remains, but Saichō quotes extensively from these works in his treatises. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate this quotation in any of these works. However, in his *Shugo kokkaishō*, Saichō cites Tokuitsu's interpretation of this passage from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. Perhaps the quotation above is Genshin's paraphrase of these lines. As quoted in the *Shugo kokkaishō*, it reads, "The meaning of this sūtra (is as follows:) The existence or non-existence (of the Buddha-nature) is explicated in terms of the practical Buddha-nature. Some beings possess the practical Buddha-nature, while some beings do not possess the practical Buddha-nature. A person who preaches in this way is called (someone who) does not slander the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha. If a person preached in comprehensive and abbreviated (form

To understand Tokuitsu's interpretation, we must recall two important doctrines of the Hossō sect: (1) the doctrine of the two kinds of Buddha-natures, and (2) the doctrine of the two types of *icchantikas*. First, the Hossō sect distinguishes two kinds of Buddha-natures: (1) Buddha-nature as principle, and (2) practical Buddha-nature.<sup>28</sup> The former, the Buddha-nature as principle, refers to the Tathatā immanent in all beings.<sup>29</sup> The Tathatā is the essence of Buddhahood, since unenlightened beings achieve Buddhahood by fully realizing the pure and undefiled Tathatā within themselves. Because all beings possess this Tathatā as principle (whether it is actualized or not), all beings are said to possess the Buddha-nature as principle. On the other hand, the practical Buddha-nature refers to the undefiled seed within the *ālayavijñāna* which is the direct cause of Buddhahood. According to the Hossō sect, only certain beings (specifically beings of the determinate bodhisattva lineage and certain types of beings of the indeterminate lineage) possess this second type of Buddha-nature. Therefore, although all beings possess the Buddha-nature as principle, this does not mean that they can all in fact achieve Buddhahood. Buddhahood is attainable only by those beings who possess the practical Buddha-nature, i. e., the undefiled seed leading to Buddhahood. In other words, the universal existence of the Buddha-nature as principle does not translate into the actual attainment of Buddhahood by all beings. Only beings with the practical Buddha-nature can attain Buddhahood.

Also crucial to understanding Tokuitsu's argument is the Hossō doctrine that distinguishes two kinds of *icchantikas*. According to this doctrine, there is one kind of *icchantikas* who, although lacking in all wholesome qualities at present, are eventually able to arouse faith in the Buddha's teachings and attain Buddhahood. They correspond to the "*icchantikas* who have severed good roots (leading to enlightenment)" in the quotation above. The second kind of either that all have (the Buddha-nature) or that all do not have (the Buddha-nature) without specifying in this way, this person is called (someone who) slanders the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha." Hieizan senshūin fuzoku Eizan gakuin ed., *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, reprint, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Sekai Seiten kankōkai, 1975): 525-6.

<sup>28</sup>The theory of the two Buddha-natures is not found in any Yogācāra texts of Indian origin. It appears to have been first formulated by Hui-yūan of Ching-ying-ssu. See Mochizuku, *Bukkyō daijiten* 5:4456. After Hsüan-tsang's introduction of the Yogācāra teachings, this theory was quickly adopted by the followers of the new teachings to reconcile their theory of the Five Lineages with the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*'s position that all beings possess the Buddha-nature.

<sup>29</sup>This definition of the Buddha-nature derives from the *Fo-hsing lun* (*Buddha Nature Treatise*), which states, "Buddha-nature refers to the Tathatā revealed through the dual emptinesses of persons and dharmas....Once one attains this principle, one escapes from deluded attachments." See T 31, 787b.

*icchantikas* are those who are eternally bound to the cycle of birth-and-death and are forever incapable of achieving liberation. They correspond to the "*icchantikas* ultimately without the (Buddha-) nature" in the quote above.

According to Tokuitsu, the passage from the *sūtra* above must be understood in light of these two doctrines. In his opinion, the meaning of the passage from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* above is as follows. It is incorrect to say that all beings definitely have the Buddha-nature because *icchantikas* ultimately without the Buddha-nature do not possess the practical Buddha-nature which enable them to achieve Buddhahood. On the other hand, it is incorrect to say that all beings definitely do not have the Buddha-nature because every being (including *icchantikas*) possesses the Buddha-nature as principle within himself or herself. For this reason, if anyone proclaims that all being either do or do not have the Buddha-nature, that person slanders the Buddha, Dharma and the saṅgha.

This interpretation, argues Genshin, represents an illegitimate attempt to read the Hossō doctrine of the two kinds of Buddha-natures into the *sūtra*'s lines. It does not accord with what the *sūtra* itself wishes to express by these words. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* makes the statement above in order to stress that the Buddha-nature is empty, non-substantial and beyond all dualisms, such as those of existence and non-existence. To demonstrate that this is indeed the case, Genshin quotes the following passage which appears several lines after the words from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* quoted by Tz'u-en above.

Son of good family! If a person says that all beings definitely possess the Buddha-nature which is eternal, bliss, self, pure, uncreated and unborn and that it cannot be perceived because of the causes and conditions of defilements, you should know that this person slanders the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha. If a person should preach saying that all beings, each and every one of them, do not have the Buddha-nature, that (their Buddha-nature) is like horns on hares, that it arises through expedient devices, that (they are) originally non-existent but now existent, and that once existing, it returns to non-existence, you should know that this person slanders the Buddha, Dharma and saṅgha. Suppose a certain person should preach saying, "The beings' Buddha-nature is not existent like the sky, and is not non-existent like horns on hares. Why? Because the sky is eternal and horns on hares are non-existent. Therefore it is possible to say that (the Buddha-nature) neither exists nor does not exist. Because it exists, (it is possible to) negate (the view that the Buddha-nature is like) horns on hares. Because it is non-existent, (it is possible to) negate (the view that the

Buddha-nature is like) the sky." To preach in this way is to not slander the Three Treasures.<sup>30</sup>

Here the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* states that the Buddha-nature is beyond all dualistic extremes such as existence and non-existence. For this reason, Genshin concludes that the lines cited by Tz'u-en above only intends to point out that the Buddha-nature is empty, non-substantial and beyond all forms of dualism. In no way can this passage be understood as referring to the two kinds of Buddha-natures. Thus the sūtra's words here cannot be taken as proof for the existence of *icchantikas* who can never achieve liberation.

### Passage Two: *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

Tz'u-en's second quote is perhaps the most important of the ten passages he cites in his attempt to prove that *icchantikas* who can never achieve liberation truly exist. The passage he quotes here concerns the well-known parable of the three types of people with illness found in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. According to Tz'u-en, this parable clearly proves that this sūtra recognizes the existence of *icchantikas* who are forever incapable of attaining liberation. The parable as quoted in the *Shu yao* is as follows:

For example, there are three types of people with illness. As for the first person, whether he encounters a good physician and sublime medicine, or whether he does not encounter them, he will definitely be cured. As for the second person, if he encounter (a good physician and sublime medicine) he will be cured, but if he does not encounter them, he will not be cured. As for the third person, whether he encounters or does not encounter (a good physician and sublime medicine,) he will definitely not be cured. The first are (beings of the) determinate Mahāyāna (lineage). The next are (beings of the) indeterminate lineage. The third are beings of the determinate Two Vehicle (lineages) and lineageless (beings).<sup>31</sup>

According to this quotation, there are three types of beings who suffer from illness: (1) those who would recover if they are treated by a physician and given medicine, (2) those who would recover if treated, but would die if left untreated, and (3) those who would die whether or not they are treated by a physician. According to Tz'u-en, the first refer to beings of the determinate Mahāyāna lineage ( i. e., the determinate bodhisattva lineage) who are by nature

<sup>30</sup>T 12, 580c (Northern edition); T 12, 827c (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, 3:901. Quoted in the *Ichijō yōketsu* at T 74, 353a.

<sup>31</sup>T 43, 612a. In the *Ichijō yōketsu*, Genshin discusses this passage at T 74, 353a-354a.



destined to attain Buddhahood. The second refer to beings of the indeterminate lineage who will attain Buddhahood if they encounter a Buddha and are directed to practice the bodhisattva path but will not if they don't. Finally the third refer to *icchāntikas* and beings of the determinate śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha lineages who can never reach Buddhahood. In other words, Tz'u-en's argues that this passage sets forth the doctrine of the Five Lineages and proves that *icchāntikas* (as well as beings of the determinate śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha vehicles) can never attain Buddhahood.

Confronted by this argument, Genshin retorts that Tz'u-en's interpretation is contradicted by the words of the sūtra itself. Genshin points out that the parable of people with illness appears three times in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*: once each in *chüan* 11 (Northern edition; in the Southern edition, it is in *chüan* 10), *chüan* 26 (Northern edition; in the Southern edition, it is found in *chüan* 24), and *chüan* 33 (Northern edition; in the Southern edition, it is found in *chüan* 31). But in none of these passages are the three types of beings said to correspond, as Tz'u-en claims, to bodhisattvas, indeterminate beings, and *icchāntikas*/Two Vehicles, respectively.

First, the passage from *chüan* 11 states as follows:

There are three (types of) people in the world whose illness is difficult to cure. The first are those who slander the Mahāyāna. The second are those who commit the five grave offenses. The third are *icchāntikas*. These three illnesses are the most serious in the world. None of them can be cured by śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas or bodhisattvas.

Son of good family! For example it is like an illness that surely leads to death and is difficult to cure. Whether there is nursing, expert doctor and medicine, or whether there is no nursing, expert doctor and medicine, this illness can definitely not be cured. You should know that this person will, without doubt, surely die. These three types of people are also like this. Suppose there are śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas. Whether they preach (them) the Dharma or don't preach (them) the Dharma, it is impossible to make them arouse the aspiration for *anut-(tara-samyaksam-) bodhi*.

Kāśyapa! For example, it is like a person with an illness who can be made to recover if there is nursing, expert doctor and medicine. If these three do not exist, then he cannot be cured. Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are also like this. After hearing the Dharma from bodhisattvas, they can arouse the aspiration for *anut-(tara-samyaksam-) bodhi*. It is not that they arouse the aspiration without hearing the Dharma.

Kāśyapa! For example, it is like a sick person. Whether there is nursing, expert doctor and medicine, or whether there is no nursing, expert doctor and medicine, all can be cured. There is one type of person who is also like this. Whether he meets a śrāvaka or does not meet a śrāvaka, whether he meets a pratyekabuddha or does not meet a pratyekabuddha, whether he meets a bodhisattva or does not meet a bodhisattva, whether he meets a Tathāgata or does not meet a Tathāgata, or whether he is able to hear the Dharma or does not hear the Dharma, he will naturally achieve *anut-(tara-samyak-sam-)bodhi*. This so-called person (is one who) for oneself or for others, out of fear or to gain benefits, whether to curry favor or to deceive others, copies this *Great Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, or upholds, reads and recites, venerates, reveres, and preaches it to others.<sup>32</sup>

Although this passage enumerates three types people with illness difficult to cure, they refer to (1) beings who slander the Mahāyāna, (2) those who commit the five grave offenses, and (3) *icchāntikas*. As for the passage from *chūan* 26, it reads,

When the Tathāgata first set forth the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, he preached that there are three types of beings. As for the first: suppose there are people with illness. If they obtain good doctors, medicine and nursing, their illness is easily cured. If they do not obtain them, they cannot recover. As for the second, whether or not they obtain (good doctors, medicine and nursing), none of them can recover. As for the third, whether or not they obtain (good doctors, medicine and nursing), they will recover.

All beings are also like this. (The first type of beings are as follows.) If they encounter good spiritual friends, Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and listen to the sublime Dharma, then they are able to arouse the aspiration for *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*. If they do not encounter them, they cannot arouse (the aspiration for *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*). They are the *śrotāpannas*, *sakṛdāgāmins*, *anāgāmins*, arhats and pratyekabuddhas.

The second are those who, even though they encounter good spiritual friends, Buddhas and bodhisattvas and hear the sublime Dharma, are also unable to arouse (the aspiration for *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*). If they do not encounter (them) they are also unable to arouse (the aspiration for *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*). They are the

<sup>32</sup>T 12, 431b-c (Northern edition); T 12, 673a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* 1:277-278.

*icchāntikas*.

The third are those who, whether they encounter or do not encounter (good spiritual friends, Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and hear the sublime Dharma), all arouse the aspiration for *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. They are the bodhisattvas.<sup>33</sup>

In this passage, the first type of beings with illness are equated with those who attain the four fruits of the śrāvaka vehicle (*śrotāpannas*, *sakṛdāgāmins*, *anāgāmins*, and arhats) and pratyekabuddhas; the second type are equated with *icchāntikas*; and the third type are equated with bodhisattvas. This does not agree with Tz'u-en's interpretation, in which these three types of beings are equated with (1) beings of the determinate Mahāyāna lineage, (2) beings of the indeterminate lineage, and (3) *icchāntikas* and beings of the determinate śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha lineages.

The same is true with the third passage, that from *chüan* 33. This passage reads,

Son of good family! Suppose there are three types of people with illness who go together to a doctor's residence. The first are those easily cured. The second are those difficult to cure. The third are those impossible to cure. Good son! If the doctor were to cure them, who would he cure first?

World-honored One! He will first cure those easily cured, then attend to the second and the third. Why? Because they are his relatives. Those easily cured stands for bodhisattva monks. Those difficult to cure stands for śrāvaka monks. Those impossible to cure stands for *icchāntikas*.<sup>34</sup>

Although this passage also enumerates three types of people with illness, here they are given as (1) people easily cured, (2) people difficult to cure, and (3) incurable people, corresponding to bodhisattva monks, śrāvaka monks and *icchāntikas*, respectively. Here again, the three types of people enumerated in the sūtra differ from those found in the *Shu yao*. As these passages indicate, Tz'u-en's interpretation of the parable does not conform to the sūtra's own understanding of it. For this reason, Genshin concludes that it cannot be legitimately used as scriptural support for the Hossō position on *icchāntikas*. In Genshin's view, Tz'u-en twists the sūtra's words to conform to his own doctrinal presuppositions.

<sup>33</sup>T 12, 518a (Northern edition); T 12, 762a-b (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* 2:630.

<sup>34</sup>T 12, 560c (Northern edition); T 12, 807a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* 3:818.

However, in all three passages from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* above, *icchantikas* are likened to incurably sick people. Doesn't this indicate that *icchantikas* are forever incapable of gaining release from transmigratory existence and attaining Buddhahood? Not so, answers Genshin. Following the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, he argues that although *icchantikas* are presently devoid of all wholesome qualities leading to liberation, once they are enabled to hear the Dharma from bodhisattvas and other virtuous spiritual mentors, they are fully capable of arousing the aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*). As long as they remain *icchantikas*, they must be described as "incurably ill" because they are incapable of gaining liberation from the cycle of birth-and-death. However, once they attain faith in the Dharma and escape from their condition as *icchantikas*, they are able to arouse the aspiration for enlightenment and undertake practices leading to Buddhahood. Thus the sūtra's claim that *icchantikas* are incurably ill does not mean that they can never achieve Buddhahood.

### Passage Three: *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

The third passage quoted by Tz'u-en also derives from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* (*chüan* 35 of the Northern version; *chüan* 32 of the Southern version). The passage reads,

Son of good family! These accusations belong to the realm of the Buddhas. It is unknowable by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. If a person should arouse a mind of doubt, he well destroys innumerable defilements (as large as) Mt. Sumeru. If one arouses a mind (which believes it to be) definitive, this is called an attachment. Such attachments is not called "wholesome."<sup>35</sup>

Because it is quoted out of context, it is difficult to grasp the point of this passage. It makes more sense when we realize that it appears in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* after an extended discussion of how the Buddha's disciples were unable to understand the full meaning of the Buddha's teachings. Instead they came to consider one aspect of the teaching to be definitive and mistakenly became attached to it. For example, the Buddha preached that practitioners of the śrāvaka vehicle both do and do not attain complete Buddhahood, but his disciples became attached to either one or the other of these positions and were unable to comprehend the full significance of the Buddha's teachings. Likewise, the Buddha preached the concept of the Buddha-

<sup>35</sup>Tz'u-en cites this passage at T 43, 612a-b. The original is found at T 12, 569a (Northern edition); T 12, 816a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* 3:851. Genshin cites this passage at T 74, 354a but provides a fuller treatment at T 74, 352a-b.

nature in various ways, but his disciples falsely considered just one of these various explanations to be the definitive teaching, and became attached to it.

Coming after these lines, the passage above declares that the doctrines of the One Vehicle and the Buddha-nature can be fully comprehended only by the Buddhas. For this reason, the sūtra concludes that if people take a particular teaching preached by the Buddha to be definitive and absolute, this would be an unwholesome attachment. Based on this passage, Tz'u-en argues as follows. People who cling to the One Vehicle and universal Buddha-nature doctrines as being the Buddha's definitive teaching are guilty of one-sided attachment. The true Buddhist position is revealed in the Hossō doctrine of the Five Lineages, which holds that while certain beings can attain Buddhahood, others, most notably *icchantikas*, cannot.

Genshin responds to Tz'u-en's interpretation of these lines by citing Fa-pao's arguments against it. According to Fa-pao, there are three types of teachings: (1) those which are invariable throughout all the Buddha's sermons, (2) those that are preached in different ways in accordance with the capacities and inclinations of the audience, and (3) those concerning which the definitive position is preached only at the end of the Buddha's life. The passage above corresponds to the second type of teaching.<sup>36</sup> In other words, the Buddha preached differently concerning certain doctrines, including the teaching that all beings can reach Buddhahood, in order to match his sermons to the capacity of the audience. But this does not mean that there is no definitive teaching concerning them. The definitive teaching concerning the goal of Buddhist practice is that all beings can, and must, achieve Buddhahood. To be attached to one particular teaching before the definitive one is revealed is a serious error, and leads to mistaken views. However, once the definitive teaching is revealed, it is not an attachment to consider it definitive. The admonition above is meant to caution against becoming attached to a particular teaching before its final status is revealed.

#### Passage Four: *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

The fourth passage which Tz'u-en quotes in the *Shu yao* comes from *chüan*

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<sup>36</sup>According to Fa-pao, the first type of teaching refers, for example, to the doctrine that *srotāpannas* never fall back to be reborn in the three evil destinies (the realms of hell, hungry ghosts and animals). This doctrine remains unchanged throughout all the Buddha's sermons. The representative example of the third type of teaching is the doctrine of the One Vehicle of the *Lotus Sūtra*, which, according to the *Wu liang i ching* (T 9, 386a-b), was not preached for forty years after the Buddha's enlightenment. Genshin refers to Fa-pao's theory of the threefold teachings at T 74, 352a.

36 of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* (in the Northern edition; in the Southern edition, it is found in *chüan* 32). The passage in question states:

Son of good family! Although I preach saying that all beings without exception have the Buddha-nature, beings do not understand that these are words which accord with the Buddha's own intention. Son of good family! Even bodhisattvas in their final reincarnation (before attaining Buddhahood) cannot understand (these words). How much less can the (practitioners of the) Two Vehicles and other bodhisattvas!<sup>37</sup>

Although Tz'u-en quotes this passage as proof for the Hossō position that there truly exists *icchantikas* who can never attain Buddhahood, he himself does not provide any comments of these lines. But according to the Fa-hsiang scholar Hui-chao (whose interpretation is quoted by Genshin immediately after the passage above), the meaning of these lines is as follows.

Reflecting on the meaning of this passage (I [Hui-chao] conclude that it means as follows): if all beings have the Buddha-nature and the Buddha preaches this overtly, why can't bodhisattvas in their final reincarnation (before attaining Buddhahood) comprehend it? Why aren't they unable to comprehend it at once? For this reason, it should be known that (beings either) have or don't have the practical Buddha-nature, whereas the principle of the Tathatā (i. e., Buddha-nature as principle) is all-pervasive.<sup>38</sup>

According to Hui-chao, the teaching that all beings without exception have the Buddha-nature is plainly enunciated throughout the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. However, in this passage, the Buddha declares that this teaching is exceedingly difficult to fathom, and is beyond the comprehension of even those bodhisattvas who are in their final reincarnation before attaining Buddhahood. But how can the simple and uncomplicated doctrine that all beings possess the Buddha-nature be incomprehensible even to bodhisattvas of the highest attainment? Undoubtedly, this passage hints at the existence of another, more profound, teaching concerning the Buddha-nature behind the sūtra's apparent doctrine that all beings possess Buddha-natures. This passage from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, concludes Hui-chao, must be understood as a veiled reference to the existence of two kinds of Buddha-natures: the Buddha-nature as principle possessed by all beings and the practical Buddha-nature possessed only by a

<sup>37</sup>T 12, 574b-c (Northern edition); T 12, 821c (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* 3:874. Tz'u-en quotes these lines at T 43, 612b. Genshin discusses this passage at T 74, 354a-b.

<sup>38</sup>These lines derive from Hui-chao's *Neng hsien chung pien hui jih lun*. See T 45, 413c. Genshin quotes this passage at T 74, 354b.

limited number of beings.

This interpretation is rejected by Genshin. According to Genshin, the sūtra makes this statement in order to emphasize that the Buddha-nature is non-substantial and beyond all discrimination. As Genshin's states,

The substance of the Buddha-nature is neither existent nor non-existent. It is beyond the four alternatives and the hundred-fold negations. It is extremely profound and difficult to comprehend. It is for this reason that (the sūtra) states, "Not even (bodhisattvas in their) final reincarnation can understand (it)." It does not refer to the difference (such as whether one) has or does not have the practical (Buddha-) nature.<sup>39</sup>

The point which the sūtra wishes to make here, continues Genshin, is clearly revealed by the context in which this statement is made. Immediately following the passage above, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* continues with these well known lines which it attributes to the Buddha.

At one time in the past, I resided at Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa, and discussed the Conventional Truth (*saṃvṛti-satya*) with Maitreya Bodhisattva. Five hundred śrāvakas, including Śāriputra and others, were unable to comprehend this matter (i. e., the discussion concerning the Conventional Truth) at all. How much more so the supramundane Truth of Supreme Meaning (*paramārtha-satya*).<sup>40</sup>

Here the sūtra claims that not even accomplished arhats, such as Śāriputra, can comprehend the meaning of the Conventional Truth and the Truth of Supreme Meaning. The Buddha-nature is also like this. Because it is empty and beyond all discriminative thought, it is beyond the understanding of even the most advanced bodhisattvas. Seen from this perspective, continues Genshin, it is clear that Hui-chao's interpretation misses the import of the sūtra's words. This statement, concludes Genshin, is not evidence for the existence of two kinds of Buddha-natures. It is meant to show that the Buddha-nature is beyond all discrimination and is totally beyond the grasp of ordinary reasoning.

#### Passage Five: *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

The fifth scriptural passage cited by Tz'u-en to prove the existence of *icchantikas* incapable of reaching Buddhahood is also from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. As quoted by Tz'u-en in the *Shu yao*, it states,

Also (among) the seven types of people in the Ganges River, the

<sup>39</sup>T 74, 354b.

<sup>40</sup>T 12, 574c (Northern edition); T 12, 821c (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* 3:874.

seventh remains eternally (in the river).<sup>41</sup>

This line is an extremely terse summary of two lengthy parables found in the sūtra. The first is found in *chūan* 32 (Northern edition; in the Southern edition, it is found in *chūan* 30). What follows is Genshin's summary of this parable.

There are seven types of beings on the bank of the Ganges. Whether it is to bathe, or out of fear of a violent person, or perhaps in order to gather flowers, they enter the river. The first person is swept away upon entering the water. The second, after coming out (of the water, enters the river) once again and remains (there). The third, after coming out, no longer remains (in the river). The fourth, after coming out, abides and contemplates all the four directions. The fifth leaves after contemplating (the four directions). The sixth leaves after entering (the river), and abides in a shallow place. The seventh, upon reaching the further shore, scales a great mountain.

*Ichchantikas* are like the first person. Those who make acquaintance with good friends, acquire faith, receive the precepts and keep them, read and recite (the sūtras), dispense the alms of wisdom, but who subsequently encounter an evil friend and sever good spiritual roots, are like the second person. Those who firmly abide in faith and wisdom as a result of their sharp faculties, and who do not mentally retrogress, are like the third person. Those who contemplate all the four directions are (those who have attained) the four śrāvaka fruits. They are like the fourth person. Although pratyekabuddhas ferry themselves over (to the further shore beyond birth-and-death), their (salvific activities) do not extend to (other) beings. This is what is meant by "leaving." They are like the fifth person. Those who abide and do not leave refer to bodhisattvas. Because they wish to ferry over various beings to liberation, they abide and contemplate defilements. They are like the sixth person. The Tathāgatas are like the seventh person.<sup>42</sup>

A similar parable is found later on the sūtra (*chūan* 36 of the Northern edition; *chūan* 33 of the Southern edition). The parable is extremely long, taking up almost six pages in the Taishō Tripiṭaka edition of the sūtra. What follows is again Genshin's summary of this parable.

It is like (the case of) the Ganges River which contains seven kinds of

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<sup>41</sup>T 43, 612b. This passage is treated by Genshin at T 74, 354b-355a.

<sup>42</sup>Genshin's summary of this parable in the *Ichijō yōketsu* is found at T 74, 354b. The original is found in T 12, 554a-5a (Northern edition); T 12, 800a-1a (Southern edition); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* 3:790-793.



beings. The first are those who eternally remain (in the river). They refer to big fish. The second are those who come out of the water for a while, but return and remain in the water. These are also big fish. The third are those who come out (of the water) and abide (on land). They are the *chi mi* fish.<sup>43</sup> The fourth, after coming out, contemplate all the four directions. They refer to the file fish.<sup>44</sup> The fifth, after contemplating (the four directions), walk. They are also the file fish. The sixth, after walking, again abide. They are also the file fish. The seventh both walk on land and swim in water. They are the turtle.

The first, who eternally remain (in the water), are *icchantikas*, etc.. There are also those who remain eternally (in the water) but are not *icchantikas*. They are like people who nowadays practice charity, precepts and good (acts) for the sake of being. The second, those who come out but return to remain (in the water) are Devadatta,<sup>45</sup> Kokālika,<sup>46</sup> Sunakṣatra,<sup>47</sup> Punarvasu,<sup>48</sup> Śailā bhikṣuṇī,<sup>49</sup> the rich man Ching chieh, Ch'iu-yu *upāsikā*,<sup>50</sup> Yaśomatī *upāsikā*,<sup>51</sup> etc.. The third, who come out (of the water) and abide (on land) are beings of the four assemblies (monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen) such as

<sup>43</sup>In the *Ichijō yōketsu*, Genshin refers to a passage from Fa-pao's commentary on the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, *Ta pan nieh p'an ching shu*, which explains that the *chi mi* is a kind of large fish. See T 74, 354b.

<sup>44</sup>According to Fa-pao, whom Genshin cites in the *Ichijō yōketsu*, this fish is called a file fish because its teeth are sharp like saws and files. See T 74, 354c.

<sup>45</sup>Śākyamuṇi's cousin and disciple. Devadatta broke away from Śākyamuṇi's order and caused a schism within the Buddhist saṅgha. For this act, Devadatta is said to have fallen into hell alive. Akanuma Chizen, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, reprint (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1975): 151-156.

<sup>46</sup>A follower of Devadatta. He fell into hell because he falsely accused Śāriputra and Maudgalyayana of engaging in sexual relations with a woman. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 310.

<sup>47</sup>A bhikṣu who was once the Buddha's attendant, but became an apostate to the Buddha's teaching. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 660.

<sup>48</sup>A monk dwelling in Kṛtāgiri. He engaged in various evil acts, which resulted in the Buddha's establishing the thirteen offenses requiring temporary suspension and repentance (*saṃghāvaśeṣa*). Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 515-6.

<sup>49</sup>While meditating in a forest, this nun was beset by Māra. However, she overcame the temptations and reached nirvāṇa. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 609-10.

<sup>50</sup>These two are unidentified.

<sup>51</sup>A daughter-in-law of General Sīha, who aroused the aspiration for enlightenment upon seeing the Buddha. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 782.

Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyāna, Ajña-Kaundinya, the five bhikṣus,<sup>52</sup> Mahākāśyapa, Gautamī bhikṣuṇī,<sup>53</sup> King Bimbisāra,<sup>54</sup> the rich man Uggā,<sup>55</sup> the rich man Anāthapiṇḍika,<sup>56</sup> General Siha,<sup>57</sup> Abhayā upāsikā,<sup>58</sup> etc.. The fourth, who contemplate all the four directions, are those who reach the peak of the Dharma and contemplate the Four Noble Truths, and so on up to those who (attain) the *śrotāpanna* fruit. The fifth, who walk upon contemplating (the four directions) are the people of the (rank of) *sakṛdāgāmin*. The sixth, who after walking abide, are a parable for the *anāgāmins*. The seventh, who go both on land and in the water, are arhats, pratyekabuddhas, bodhisattvas and Buddhas. Perhaps one person possesses all seven (characteristics), or perhaps seven people each have one (characteristic).<sup>59</sup>

The line which Tz'u-en cites in the *Shu yao* refers to this pair of parables from the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra*. In both of these passages, the Ganges River represents the stream of birth-and-death, and the seven types of beings represent the various levels of liberation (or lack of liberation) that beings can attain. In both parables, *icchāntikas* are included among the seven types of beings. This must indicate that *icchāntikas* who can never achieve release from the stream of birth-and-death really do exist. Moreover, the second parable ends with the words, "Perhaps one person possesses all seven (characteristics), or perhaps seven people each have one (characteristic)." According to the Hossō perspective advanced, for example, by Hui-chao, this means that these seven types of beings refer to both (1) the seven stages through which a certain being passes in his or her quest for Buddhahood, and (2) the seven types of beings that are actually found in the world. Since, according to this

<sup>52</sup>The five mendicants to whom the Buddha first preached the Dharma after attaining enlightenment.

<sup>53</sup>Or Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, who raised the Buddha after his mother died during childbirth.

<sup>54</sup>King of Magadha.

<sup>55</sup>A Buddhist lay believer. While engaged in sexual activities in his garden at Vaiśālī, he heard the Buddha preach and became his lay follower. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 701.

<sup>56</sup>A lay follower of the Buddha. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 32-35.

<sup>57</sup>A general of Vaiśālī and a lay follower of the Buddha. Akanuma, *Indo Bukkyō koyū meishi jiten*, 614.

<sup>58</sup>Unidentified.

<sup>59</sup>Genshin's summary of the parable is found at T 74, 354b-c. The original story is found in T 12, 574c-580b (Northern edition); T 821c-7c (Southern version); Yamamoto, *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* 3:874-901.

interpretation, *icchantikas* represent not only one phase of spiritual development through which a person can pass, but also a category of beings who can actually be found in the world, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* recognizes the existence of *icchantikas* who can never reach Buddhahood.<sup>60</sup>

Predictably, Genshin rejects this argument. It is indeed true, he states, that the *sūtra* counts *icchantikas* among the seven types of beings in the world. However, it does not state that they eternally remain as *icchantikas*. Although *icchantikas* appear in both of these parables, they only represent the most depraved state which one can experience in the world. But according to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, no *icchantika* remains an *icchantika* forever. They all eventually arouse faith in the Dharma, practice the Buddhist path and attain Buddhahood. Thus, for this reason, the parables above cannot be understood as proof for the existence of *icchantikas*.

#### Passage Six: *P'u sa shan chiai ching*

Tz'u-en's next passage is taken from "Chapter on Lineages" of the *P'u sa shan chiai ching* (cited hereafter as the *Shan chiai ching*) translated by Gunavarman (377-431). This work corresponds to the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* portion of the *Yōgācarabhūmi*. In this work, there is the following line which Tz'u-en cites as proof that certain beings can never reach Buddhahood.

If one does not have the nature of the bodhisattva, even though one may arouse the aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), strive in one's practices and is diligent, one is ultimately unable to realize *anut-tara-samyak-saṃ-* *bodhi*. Therefore, it should be known that the nature of the bodhisattva exists apart from the arousing of the aspiration for enlightenment, striving in practice, and diligence.<sup>61</sup>

This passage holds that unless one has the nature of the bodhisattva, even if one arouses the aspiration for enlightenment and practices the six perfections, it is impossible to attain supreme enlightenment. On the basis of this passage, Tz'u-en argues that only beings belonging to the bodhisattva lineage can achieve Buddhahood. Beings of other lineages, including *icchantikas*, are excluded from Buddhahood.

In responding to this argument, Genshin relies heavily on the interpretation first advanced by Fa-pao in the *I ch'eng fu hsing chiu ching lun* (*Ultimate*

<sup>60</sup>Hui-chao makes this argument in the *Neng hsien chung pien hui jih lun*. See T 45, 441a. Genshin cites Hui-chao's argument in his *Ichijō yōketsu* at T 74, 354c.

<sup>61</sup>Tz'u-en cites this passage at T 43, 612b. The original passage from the *Shan chiai ching* is found at T 30, 962c. Genshin treats this passage at T 74, 355a-356b.

*Treatise on the One Vehicle and the Buddha-nature Doctrines*), an important T'ang dynasty work written to defend the One Vehicle and universal Buddha-nature teachings against the new Fa-hsiang doctrine of the Five Lineages.<sup>62</sup> Following Fa-pao's lead, Genshin first notes that in an earlier passage, the *Shan chiai ching* makes the following assertion.

As for the nature of the bodhisattva: the nature of the bodhisattva refers to the initial aspiration for enlightenment as well as the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment. For what reason? The aspiration for enlightenment of the bodhisattvas and *mahāsattvas* is the fundamental basis of all wholesome dharmas. Therefore (the aspiration for enlightenment) is called the support (*chih*). With the aspiration for enlightenment as the cause, they attain *anut-(tarasamyaksaṃ-) bodhi*. Therefore it is called the cause (*yin*). With the initial aspiration for enlightenment as the cause, they definitely attain *anut-(tara-samyak-saṃ-) bodhi* without fail. Therefore it is called the nature (*hsing*).<sup>63</sup>

Based on this statement, Genshin argues that the nature of the bodhisattva consists of the initial aspiration for enlightenment and the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment (*bodhi-pāṣṣika-dharma*). Thus, he concludes, the nature of the bodhisattva mentioned in the later passage quoted in the *Shu yao* cannot refer (as Tz'u-en claims) to the bodhisattva lineage innately possessed by beings of the determinate bodhisattva lineage. Instead, it must refer to the aspiration for enlightenment, which is the distinguishing characteristic of bodhisattvas. In Genshin's opinion, the *Shan chiai ching's* point is that unless one has aroused the aspiration for enlightenment, one can never reach Buddhahood even if one undertakes even the most arduous bodhisattva practices. Contrary to Tz'u-en's view, it does not mean that membership in the determinate bodhisattva lineage is necessary for the attainment of Buddhahood.

However, there is a serious problem with this interpretation. This is the fact that the passage quoted by Tz'u-en above clearly distinguishes between the nature of the bodhisattva and the aspiration for enlightenment. According to this passage, "If one does not have the nature of the bodhisattva, even though one may arouse the aspiration for enlightenment," one can never attain Buddhahood. This clearly appears to contradict Genshin's claim that the nature

<sup>62</sup>Fa-pao's theory is taken up by Genshin at T 74, 355a-b. Fa-pao's argument is found in Asada Masahiro, "Shinshutsu shiryō: Ishiyamadera shōzō *Ichijō busshō kukyōron* kan daiichi, kan daini no kenshutsu ni tsuite," *Ryūkoku daigaku ronshū* 429 (1986): 92-93. A concise discussion of Fa-pao's theory is found in Manaka Jun, "Nōken chūhen funbetsuron no kenkyū: *Ichijō busshō kukyōron* ni taisuru hanron o megutte," *Bukyōgaku kenkyū* 43 (1987): 54-58.

<sup>63</sup>Genshin quotes these lines from the sūtra at T 74, 355b. The original passage in the *Shan chiai ching* is found at T 30, 926b.

of the bodhisattva refers to the aspiration for enlightenment.

To resolve this discrepancy, Genshin, again following Fa-pao, claims that it is necessary to distinguish between different levels in the aspiration for enlightenment. The aspiration of enlightenment aroused by bodhisattvas who have reached the lineage of cultivation (*hsi chung hsing* = the stage of the ten abodes) is firm and resolute; there is no back-sliding by those who arouse the aspiration at this stage. In contrast, the aspiration of those who have yet to reach this stage is weak and unstable. For this reason, it is unable to ensure one's attainment of Buddhahood. As the *Benevolent Kings Sūtra* states, "Before the lineage of cultivation, (the aspiration for enlightenment is frail) like a small piece of hair. It cannot definitely assure the attainment of bodhi. Once one has reached the lineage of cultivation, one definitely (attains bodhi)."64

Based on this distinction, Genshin proposes the following interpretation. According to Genshin, when bodhisattvas initially arouse the aspiration for enlightenment, the seed of future Buddhahood is planted in their *ālayavijñānas*. It is for this reason that the *Shan chiai ching* states that the aspiration for enlightenment constitute the nature of a bodhisattva. However, at this point, the aspiration is still weak and cannot definitely assure the attainment of Buddhahood. Hence it cannot truly be called the nature of a bodhisattva.

The aspiration for enlightenment can truly be termed the nature of the bodhisattva when it becomes firm and resolute enough to enable one to attain Buddhahood without fail. (Genshin derives this definition of the word "nature" from the *P'u sa ti ch'i lun*, which states, "For this reason, the lineage-nature is called [that which] definitely maintains without fail [the quest for Buddhahood])."65 Before this point, the aspiration is called the bodhisattva's "cause" for enlightenment, but not their "nature." Only after bodhisattvas have reached the stage of the lineage of cultivation can their aspirations for enlightenment truly be called the "nature" of the bodhisattva. The statement Tz'u-en quotes from the *Shen chiai ching*, "If one does not have the nature of a bodhisattva, even though one may arouse the aspiration for enlightenment..., " simply means that bodhisattvas who have yet to reach the lineage of cultivation cannot be guaranteed Buddhahood even if they arouse the aspiration for enlightenment because their aspirations are not yet completely firm. It does not mean that it is impossible to reach Buddhahood even if they arouse the

<sup>64</sup>These exact words do not appear in the *Benevolent Kings Sūtra*. According to Manaka Jun, it is a paraphrase of the discussion of the bodhisattva's stages of practice found in Chapter Three, "On the Teaching of the Bodhisattvas" of the sūtra (T 8, 826b-c). See Manaka, "Nōken chūhen funbetsuron no kenkyū," 63, note 20.

<sup>65</sup>T 30, 888a.

aspiration for enlightenment unless they belong to the determinate bodhisattva lineage. Through such argument, Genshin maintains that the nature of the bodhisattva in the passage above refers to the aspiration for enlightenment, and not, as the Hossō scholars contend, to the innate bodhisattva lineage.

In this way, Genshin argues that the passage from the *Shen chiai ching* above does not prove the Hossō theory that membership in the bodhisattva lineage is a precondition for the attainment of Buddhahood. Admittedly, this argument is quite tortuous and reveals the difficulty this passage posed for Genshin. Yet the great ingenuity he displayed in the exegesis of this passage underscores the importance he attached to refuting the Hossō doctrine of the Five Lineages.

#### Passage Seven: *Shan chiai ching*

The seventh passage which Tz'u-en cites is as follows.

Lineageless beings are fulfilled only by means of the wholesome roots (leading to rebirth as) humans or heavenly beings.<sup>66</sup>

Although Tz'u-en states in his *Shu yao* that this line derives from the *Shan chiai ching*, these exact words are not found in this text. Instead, it actually comes from the *P'u sa ti ch'i lun*, Dharmakṣema's (385-433) translation of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. It is part of a longer passage of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* which divides all beings into four groups, each of whom are said to receive a different set of teachings.

There are four ways in which beings are nurtured. First, those of the śrāvaka lineage attain the śrāvaka path. Second, those of the pratyekabuddha lineage attain the pratyekabuddha path. Third, those of the Buddha lineage attain the Buddha path. Fourth, those of the lineage of humans and heavenly beings attain the pleasures of (the realms of) humans and heavenly beings.<sup>67</sup>

Here the sūtra divides all beings into four different lineages, each with distinct spiritual inclinations: (1) those belonging the śrāvaka lineages, (2) those belonging to the pratyekabuddha lineage, (3) those belonging to the Buddha lineage, and (4) those belonging to the lineage of humans and heavenly beings. According to Tz'u-en, the last group of beings correspond to the *icchantikas* who are inherently incapable of undertaking any form of Buddhist practice leading to liberation from the cycle of birth-and-death. These beings are taught the "teachings of humans and heavenly beings" (*jen t'ien chiao*), which

<sup>66</sup>T 43, 612b. Genshin treats this passage at T 74, 356b.

<sup>67</sup>T 30, 974a.

preaches the attainment of rebirth within the realms of humans and heavenly beings through meritorious actions (such as keeping the five precepts and the ten wholesome actions). If, the Buddha in his compassion reasoned, these beings cannot escape from the cycle of birth-and-death, they could at least be taught to avoid rebirth in the lower realms of existence (such as the realms of hell, animals, etc.). The fact that the Buddha refused to teach this group of beings any form of practice leading to liberation from birth-and-death, argues Tz'u-en, shows that these beings (the *icchantikas*) are by nature forever bound to transmigration.

This interpretation, argued Genshin, misrepresents the sūtra's position. Although lineageless beings are initially taught to undertake wholesome deeds to gain rebirth as humans and heavenly beings, they are not taught to adhere to this teaching forever. *icchantikas*, too, have the Buddha-nature and possess the potentials to become Buddhas. Once their abilities improve, they are no longer taught the "teaching for humans and heavenly beings," but are taught to practice the Buddha Dharma in order to attain Buddhahood. The teaching of humans and heavenly beings is only a temporary device to lead beings to more advanced teachings. Thus this passage is not to be taken as proof that *icchantikas* are eternally unable to attain Buddhahood.

#### Passage Eight: *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālamkāra*

The eighth passage which Tz'u-en cites comes from the *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālamkāra*, an important Yogācāra treatise traditionally attributed to Asaṅga. Tz'u-en summarizes the position of this treatise in the *Shu yao* as follows,

Also the *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālamkāra* (holds that) there are two types (of beings) without the nirvāṇa dharma: (1) (those who are) temporarily (without the *parinirvāṇa* dharma), and (2) (those who are) ultimately (without the *parinirvāṇa* dharma).<sup>68</sup>

As this is somewhat obscure, let us quote the words of the *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālamkāra* in full. This treatise states,

Those without the *parinirvāṇa* dharma are (those of) the rank of lineageless (beings). In brief, they are of two kinds: (1) (those who) attain the *parinirvāṇa* dharma with time, and (2) (those who are) ultimately without the nirvāṇa dharma. As for (those who) attain the *parinirvāṇa* dharma with time, there are four kinds of people: (1) those who solely practice evil actions, (2) those who have eliminated all wholesome dharmas, (3) those who have no wholesome roots (which lead to liberation), and (4) those who do not possess wholesome roots.

<sup>68</sup>T 43, 612b. Genshin treats this at T 74, 356b-c.

Because (those who are) ultimately without the nirvāṇa dharma do not have the cause (for nirvāṇa) they do not have the nature of *parinirvāṇa*. They refer to people who only seek birth-and-death and do not desire nirvāṇa.<sup>69</sup>

According to this work, there are two types of *icchantikas*: (1) those who attain *parinirvāṇa* with time, and (2) those who are eternally without the nirvāṇa dharma. The first type of *icchantikas* are only temporarily incapable of achieving *parinirvāṇa*. Although they have at present fallen into the state of an *icchantika*, once conditions are ripe, they are capable of arousing faith in the Buddhist teachings and embarking on the practice of the Buddhist path. Thus these *icchantikas* are eventually able to attain nirvāṇa. This, however, is not the case with the second kind of *icchantikas*, or those who are ultimately without the nirvāṇa dharma. These latter *icchantikas* constantly hanker after birth-and-death and do not desire to reach nirvāṇa. Thus they can never attain nirvāṇa.

To this argument, Genshin retorts that the teaching presented in the *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālaṃkāra* is only a provisional teaching, valid as an expedient teaching but not ultimately true. To support his view, Genshin refers to the *Buddha-nature Treatise*. According to this treatise, the position that *icchantikas* possess Buddha-natures and are capable of attaining Buddhahood is the Buddha's complete teaching (*nīta-artha*), whereas the position that they do not possess Buddha-natures is an incomplete teaching (*neya-artha*). This text further explains that *icchantikas* were declared incapable of attaining liberation only to induce them to cast aside their *icchantika*-minds (i. e., their lack of faith in the Mahāyāna). But these *icchantikas*, too, have the Buddha nature and are, for this reason, ultimately able to gain liberation.<sup>70</sup> On the basis of this text, Genshin argues that, the words of the *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālaṃkāra* notwithstanding, there is no *icchantika* who cannot attain Buddhahood in the end.

#### Passage Nine: *Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda-sūtra*

Tz'u-en takes the ninth passage from the *Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda-sūtra* (cited hereafter as the *Śrīmālā Sūtra*). The passage states,

As for those beings who distance themselves from good spiritual

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<sup>69</sup>T 31, 595a-b. We may also mention that in the *Ichijō yōketsu*, Genshin cites the lines as they are found in the *Mahāyāna-sūtra-ālaṃkāra* (with slight changes), and not as they appear in the *Shu yao*. See T 74, 356c.

<sup>70</sup>T 31, 800c. A similar statement is found in T 31, 788c.



friends, do not listen to the Dharma, and are not (worthy of) the Dharma, I fulfill them by means of the wholesome roots (leading to rebirth in the realms of) humans and heavenly beings. To those who seek the śrāvaka (path), I grant the śrāvaka vehicle. To those who seek the pratyekabuddha (path), I grant the pratyekabuddha vehicle. To those who seek the Great Vehicle, I grant the Great Vehicle.<sup>71</sup>

The argument presented in this passage is identical to that found in the second passage from the *Shan ch'ai ching* above. Here the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* claims that there exists four types of beings, each with different spiritual inclinations: (1) those beings with innate aversion to the Buddhist Dharma, (2) those who seek the śrāvaka vehicle, (3) those who seek the pratyekabuddha vehicle, and (4) those who seek the Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna). According to Tz'u-en, the first group of beings refer to the *icchantikas*, who are by nature unable to undertake any form of Buddhist practice leading to liberation from the cycle of birth-and-death. Out of pity for these beings, the Buddha preached the "teaching of humans and heavenly beings" in order to make them achieve rebirth in the realms of humans and heavenly beings.

In his response to this interpretation, Genshin replies by quoting the following words by Fa-pao.

Lord Pao states, "Therefore you should know that lineageless beings are not determinate. This is because, (although they) distance themselves from good spiritual friends, do not listen to the Dharma, and are not (worthy of) the Dharma, later they can approach good spiritual friends, have (the opportunity) to hear (the Dharma) and rely on the Dharma."<sup>72</sup>

According to this passage, as long as *icchantikas* refuse to approach the Buddhist Dharma, they are incapable of undertaking any practice leading to liberation. In order to make these *icchantikas* improve their spiritual conditions, the Buddha preached them the teaching of humans and heavenly beings. However, no *icchantika* remains an *icchantika* forever. Once they meet good spiritual friends and submit themselves to the Dharma, they are able to practice the Buddhist path and attain liberation. Thus, according to Fa-pao (and Genshin who follows his argument) this passage from the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* does not prove that *icchantikas* are forever unable to attain liberation.

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<sup>71</sup>This passage is originally found at T 12, 218b. In the *Shu yao*, it is found in T 43, 612b. Genshin quotes these lines at T 74, 356c.

<sup>72</sup>This passage derives from Fa-pao's *I ch'eng fu hsing chiu ching lun*. See Asada Masahiro, "Shinshutsu shiryō," 95b.

## Passage Ten: *Diamond Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*

The final passage which Tz'u-en cites is from the *Diamond Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*. The *Shu yao* states,

The *Diamond Sūtra* has, "The hair path arises." Here I state (that it should be), "Foolish beings arise." The Sanskrit text has *bāla* [departing tone]. This means "foolish being." The original (text) mistook it for *vala*. For this reason, it has "hair-path."<sup>73</sup>

This passage is quite obscure and very difficult to understand. However, according to Genshin, it is a reference to a passage found in Bodhiruci's translation of Vasubandhu's *Vajracchedika-sūtra-śāstra*, an authoritative Indian Yogācāra commentary to the *Diamond Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*. The passage in question is Vasubandhu's comments on the following lines from the sūtra (the sūtra is also Bodhiruci's translation).

Subhuti! (As to the words that) common beings of the hair path arises: the Tathāgata preaches that they do not arise. For this reason, he states that common beings of the hair path arise.<sup>74</sup>

Vasubandhu's commentary on these words state,

(Sūtra:) Also Subhuti! Common beings of the hair path arises. The Tathāgata preached that they do not arise. (Commentary:) This means that they do not arouse the holy Dharma. Therefore they are said "not to arise."<sup>75</sup>

Although there are several Chinese translation of the *Diamond Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, the term "hair-path" is used in this particular passage only in Bodhiruci's version. Tz'u-en's point here is that the translation "hair-path" results from a faulty reading of the original Sanskrit text. According to Tz'u-en, the original Sanskrit term was *bāla-(pṛthag-jana)*, meaning "young child" (= "foolish being"). However, for some reason (perhaps due to a faulty text?) Bodhiruci misread it as *vala-(patha)* or "hair-path."<sup>76</sup>

According to Genshin, Tz'u-en's point behind philological comments is to show that the term "hair path" found in Bodhiruci's translation of Vasubandhu's *Vajracchedika-sūtra-śāstra* in fact refers to common beings (*pṛthag-jana*) who have no capacity to escape from the cycle of birth-and-death. Using the commentary as his proof-text, Tz'u-en wished to show that there is a class of

<sup>73</sup>T 43, 612b. In the *Ichijō yōketsu*, Genshin treats this passage at T 74, 356c-7a.

<sup>74</sup>T 8, 756b.

<sup>75</sup>T 25, 794c.

<sup>76</sup>For a discussion of the term *vala/bāla* in the *Diamond Sūtra*, see Nakamura, *Bukkyōgo daijiten*, 2:1362a.

common beings (whom he identified here with *icchāntikas*) who are eternally unable to arouse the holy Dharma, and are thus incapable of attaining nirvāṇa. To this argument, Genshin retorts that although common beings may be incapable of arousing the holy Dharma while they are still common beings, this does not indicate that they are unable to do so forever. Eventually, after long practice, even these beings will arouse faith in the Buddha Dharma and attain Buddhahood. Thus, he concludes, this passage do not prove the existence of beings unable to attain nirvāṇa.

### Conclusion

In these ways, Genshin presents detailed arguments to disprove the Hossō theory that *icchāntikas* can never attain liberation from the cycle of birth-and-death. On the basis of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*'s doctrine of universal Buddha-nature, Genshin argues that all beings, *icchāntikas* included, can attain Buddhahood. The statement found in certain sūtras that *icchāntikas* are eternally bound to transmigratory existence is an expedient doctrine, and not the Buddha's true teaching. As long as *icchāntikas* remain *icchāntikas* (that is to say, as long as they refuse to believe the Mahāyāna teachings), they cannot gain liberation. But no one is an *icchāntika* by nature. *Ichchāntikas* become *icchāntikas* because of various causes and conditions. Likewise, once they encounter a different set of causes and conditions which enables them to seek the Buddha Dharma, they will be escape their *icchāntika* states. There will definitely come a time when even *icchāntikas* hear the Buddhist Dharma and arouse faith in its teachings. Once this occurs, they are released from their states as *icchāntikas*, and can practice the Mahāyāna bodhisattva path to achieve complete Buddhahood.